

FINAL EVALUATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA-UNITED NATIONS PARTNERSHIP FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT 2018-2022 EVALUATION MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

Evaluation Title/Year: Final Evaluation of the Republic of Moldova-United Nations Partnership Framework 2018-2022 / 2020

- **Preparation of the management response:** UNCT and Evaluation Steering Committee
- **Approval of the management response:** UNCT and the Joint National-United Nations Steering Committee
- **Follow-up monitoring and updating of the management response's implementation:** RC/UNCT
- **Frequency of monitoring and updating:** Semi-Annual
- **Entity responsible for response monitoring:** RCO

Recommendation 1: Streamline the intervention logic and the results framework

1.1 For the upcoming CF, UNCT and GoM should develop a less complicated and well-defined results framework, with baselines and targets to ensure better measurements of UN contribution to the results.

Selected indicators will require reliable longitudinal data and disaggregation by sex, age, location (rural/urban), etc. The outcome levels indicators should be aligned to the SDG nationalised indicators. The number of output indicators should be pared to a manageable level and meet the SMART criteria.

1.2 The UNCT should strengthen the capabilities of the joint results groups to identify and analyse outcome and output indicators, plan interventions, etc.

UNCT should organize joint trainings on RBM matters, which could be coordinated by the RCO.

1.3 UN agencies should seek to the extent possible to coordinate and harmonize their assessment and evaluative initiatives.

1.4 The UNCT should establish a sound monitoring process for the financial flows and ensure effective financial reporting.

As part of its accountability to the public, beneficiaries and donors, the UN system should track on a continued basis the financial resources it has mobilized and expended as a whole. The UN should establish a sound process for the collection of financial information from the agencies, its storage and analysis and effective reporting. The UN-INFO provides a good platform for achieving this. The RCO should monitor the process on a continuous basis and provide the necessary training to the UN agencies based on the challenges they encounter.

Partially accepted

Comments: The UNCT agrees that the results framework for the new CF should be well-defined and include indicators that can be tracked over time and for which disaggregated data is available. Also, as per the UNSDG CF guidance, outcome and output indicators should, by default, be linked to national SDG indicator frameworks. However, the number of indicators will be determined by the outputs that will be defined under the new CF to ensure that progress under each of them is appropriately measured and may change as outputs are revised.

Key actions		Timeframe	Responsible entities
1.1	Conduct 4-5 workshops with UN CF focal points and RG members to explain the methodology and provide them with the relevant training for the development of the results framework	02/22-03/22	RCO
1.2	Review and adhere to the UNSDG CF and RBM guidance in the development of the new CF, including the guidance on the development of indicators for results frameworks	02/22-03/22	CF focal points, UNCT, RCO
1.3	Conduct at least one refresher training session on output indicator development for the M&E Group and RG Groups during the first half of the new cooperation cycle	01/23-06/25	UNCT
1.4	Submit new CF, including the results matrix, for quality review to the regional office and address all comments received	03/22-04/22	RCO, UNCT
1.5	Develop a coordinated and harmonized CF M&E Plan in line with the latest CF guidance	05/22-06/22	M&E Group
1.6	Collect complete data on available, to be mobilized and spent resources, disaggregated by funding source, during the yearly planning and reporting processes for the joint work plans	1/22-12/27	RCO, RGs, SDG M&E TWG
1.7	Conduct at least one training session on UN INFO for agency focal points and interested SDG M&E/RG members at the beginning of each planning and reporting exercise to be completed in the system	1/22-12/27	RCO
Recommendation 2: Strengthen inter-agency cooperation			
<p>2.1 The UNCT should review existing inter-agency coordination structures with a view to streamlining the joint groups and strengthening their performance. <i>All agencies should engage more effectively with the joint coordination mechanisms – they should allocate the necessary resources and staff time to the UN coordination process. Streamline the coordination architecture of inter-agency thematic groups that currently exist. Redesign the joint structures to allow for the participation of government counterparts in the joint structures. Assess options for engaging civil society more effectively with the results groups and/or the thematic groups.</i></p> <p>2.2 Agencies should interact, communicate and collaborate more effectively on the planning process. <i>The UNCT should redesign the mandate and functionality of the Results Groups to enable them to engage more effectively with planning and joint programming as opposed to monitoring and reporting. Their role in planning should be strengthened to ensure that planning under the PFSD is not done as the sum of agency plans, but as a process that consolidates and integrates the efforts of the agencies. The number of annual meetings of result groups could increase to allow for more focus on planning.</i></p> <p>2.3 The RCO role in the planning process needs to be enhanced so as to contribute to the harmonisation of planning</p>		Partially accepted	

<p>and facilitate communication and flow of information among UN agencies on planning matters. <i>The RCO should also keep track of agencies’ planning processes and timelines, provide regular updates to agencies and identify opportunities for inter-agency consultations. The RCO could also facilitate a more harmonious alignment of UN planning processes with government planning approaches at the sectoral and national levels.</i></p> <p>2.4 The UNCT should promote joint programming by identifying and institutionalizing incentives for the agencies to engage in joint programmes. <i>RCO could supplement this process with training for agency staff on modalities and approaches of joint programming. The UNCT should promote a higher degree of awareness among UN staff members about the UN reform and its implications for joint delivery – i.e. key elements of the reform, its objectives, what it means for cooperation and joint implementation on the ground, etc. The RCO is well-positioned to facilitate this process through targeted training. The UNCT should organize team-building activities at the UN level with participation of multiple agencies, mixed teams etc.</i></p>			
<p>Comments: The UNCT agrees that inter-agency coordination structures need to be reviewed and will engage in the exercise as part of the development of the next CF. However, the suggestion related to the participation of government counterparts in joint UNCT structures requires further consideration. Part of the work of some inter-agency groups focuses on internal processes, which may not be relevant to government counterpart. In other cases, the work of inter-agency coordination structures may already feed or could feed into government working structures, in which case the participation of government counterparts in UNCT structures would be redundant. Hence, the UNCT will review its inter-agency coordination structures as part of the development of the next CF and will involve government counterparts in their work as appropriate and in line with the relevant UNSDG CF guidance in this regard. The UNCT will also assess the options for engaging civil society in the work of results groups and thematic groups in line with the comments provided under the recommendation on private sector and civil society engagement. Regarding agency planning processes and timelines, as per the UNSDG CF guidance, entity-specific country programmes need to be derived from the CF, not vice versa. In line with the guidance, agencies will develop their country programmes in alignment with the CF, ensuring the harmonization of planning. Finalizing the annual joint work plans during the first quarter of each year, as proposed below, will allow for the further harmonization of planning across the UNCT.</p>			
Key actions		Timeframe	Responsible entities
2.1	Develop the ToRs for statutory groups under the new CF in line with the CF guidance and requirements, taking into account the recommendation for government representation and assessing the options for greater civil society engagement	05/22-06/22	UNCT
2.2	Review the number, role, responsibilities and activity of thematic groups with the view of streamlining the coordination architecture under the new CF and adjust group ToRs as appropriate	05/22-09/22	UNCT
2.3	Ensure continuous communication with the State Chancellery and MoF on sectoral and national strategy development and update the UNCT on the process at least once a year	1/22-12/27	RCO
2.4	Finalize the annual joint work planning process during the first quarter of each year	01/22-03/2027	RGs
2.5	RGs to meet and discuss planning issues at least twice per year	01/22-12/2027	RG Chairs and Co-Chairs

2.6	Develop a UNCT planning, monitoring and reporting calendar based on CF guidance and DCO requirements and deadlines, including main requirements and guiding principles	01/23-03/23	RCO
2.7	Continue conducting town hall meetings with all UN staff on issues of joint concern, including the UN reform, its objectives and means of implementation, at least once a year	01/22-12/27	RC, UNCT
Recommendation 3: Enhance programming going forward			
<p>3.1 The joint UN-GoM response to the challenges that have emerged from the COVID-19 crisis should be central to and fully embraced by the upcoming cooperation framework. <i>PFSD’s JWPs and SERP became two parallel processes in 2020, with SERP taking a prominent role in programming. In the new cooperation framework, the UNCT should fully integrate the two streams into one framework under a single strategic document with a single results framework.</i></p> <p>3.2 The UNCT, in cooperation with the GoM, should explore joint support for national partners in the key areas identified by stakeholders of this evaluation and as a result of the analysis of performance under the current PFSD. <i>Specifically, the following areas of support identified by key stakeholders should be given consideration: anti-corruption, digitalization, migration, job creation, national capacity building, human rights, healthcare, environmental sustainability, rural development, green economy and infrastructure, as well as areas for which progress has been limited under the PFSD, while ensuring alignment with national development priorities.. Further, consideration should be given for increasing support for SDGs 4, 5, 10, 12 and 15, as well as SDGs 2 and 11 based on agencies’ comparative advantages. Although resources have been directed towards SDGs 6, 7 and 9, they have been concentrated in a handful of activities, hence further consideration should be given to these SDGs as well.</i></p> <p>3.3 In the upcoming CF, the UNCT should mainstream gender across programmes through targeted interventions and resource allocations. <i>UNCT should consider a twin track approach to GE in the next UNSDCF: 1) A separate result area focusing on GM in policy making and budgeting, including strengthening institutional mechanisms to GE; and 2) Mainstreaming gender equality perspective across all the priority thematic areas, in line with CEDAW recommendations as well as the GE scorecard recommendations.</i></p>		Partially accepted	
<p>Comments: In 2020, the UNCT developed a separate SERP and an associated JWP to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, an unexpected threat that called for a targeted response. The development of the SERP was also a globally mandated requirement. However, the SERP cannot be considered as being parallel to the PFSD given that each SERP outcome is expressly linked to the corresponding PFSD outcomes, a fact also acknowledged in the Evaluation Report. Furthermore, in 2021, the regular JWPs were developed to cover all areas of UN support, including COVID-19-related activities. While the UNCT disagrees with the assessment, it agrees that the new CF should cover all areas of UN support in the country, a goal that it has been pursuing all along. Regarding the suggested streams of work, the UNCT is already supporting the country in the key areas mentioned above through multiple projects, programmes and initiatives, as also highlighted in the evaluation report, and will continue to provide support to the country in these key areas moving forward in line with the current PFSD and the new CF. At the same time, the UNCT will implement several actions to enhance planning efforts moving forward and ensure that the new CF is fully responsive to national priorities as outlined below.</p>			
Key actions		Timeframe	Responsible entities

3.1	Develop an integrated CF, covering all areas of support of the UN development system in the country, including COVID-19 response and recovery support	10/21-12/22	UNCT, GoM, CF focal points, RCO
3.2	Derive the potential list of priorities for the new CF from the CCA, taking into consideration the key areas of support identified in the evaluation process	10/21-12/22	UNCT, GoM, CF focal points, RCO
3.4	Consider the implementation of the twin track approach to gender equality and the empowerment of women in the development of the new CF, particularly at the stage when priorities and outcomes are defined and agreed	10/21-12/22	UNCT, GoM, CF focal points, RCO
Recommendation 4: Step up resource mobilization			
<p>4.1 Results Groups should track the implementation of Joint Resource Mobilization Strategy.</p> <p>4.2 The UNCT should implement a more coordinated approach towards resource mobilization. <i>Agencies should approach resource mobilization in a more coordinated fashion by being more cooperative with each other under the PFSD framework. RCO should step up its role in coordinating resource mobilization among agencies by ensuring that agency efforts are harmonized and not creating overlaps.</i></p> <p>4.3 The UNCT should seek to diversify and strengthen its partnerships for financing development work. <i>Government co-financing should be pursued more systematically at the level of the UNCT and should become an integral part of UN's resource mobilization strategy. UNCT should also explore joint implementation opportunities with IFIs active in the areas covered by the PFSD to leverage their resources.</i></p>		Partially accepted	
<p>Comments: The Joint UN Moldova Resource Mobilization and Partnerships Strategy 2021-2022 developed and approved by the UNCT already aims to ensure a coordinated approach towards resource mobilization. The strategy covers the topics of government co-financing and partnerships with IFIs. However, since the document was only approved at the beginning of 2021, it is still in the early stages of implementation. Once implemented, the document is expected to strengthen UNCT partnerships and coordination of resource mobilization efforts. However, the UNCT agrees that it can step up its resource mobilization efforts even further and also put in place a system for tracking progress in the implementation of its RMS as reflected in the actions outlined below.</p>			
Key actions		Timeframe	Responsible entities
4.1	RGs to meet and take stalk of the progress made in the implementation of the Resource Mobilization Strategy and discuss joint resource mobilization issues at least once per year, including areas experiencing funding gaps	1/21-12/27	RG Chairs and Co-Chairs
4.2	An action plan to accompany the Resource Mobilization Strategy to be developed and approved by the UNCT with the support of the RCO and revised/updated at least once during the implementation of the new CF	6/22-12/27	UNCT, RCO

4.3	Government and IFI co-financing and joint implementation of initiatives to be pursued as per the current RMS and explored further as part of the development of the new Common Budgetary Framework and the new Resource Mobilization Strategy	6/22-8/22	UNCT, RCO
Recommendation 5: Step up engagement with the civil society and private sector			
<p>5.1 The UNCT should strengthen its engagement with civil society. <i>It will be important to have a more coherent approach at the UN level, across agencies, for how support to civil society, especially capacity building assistance, is designed and delivered. The UN should explore the harmonised approach to channel the support to build the capacity and network of civil society. The UNCT should explore possibilities for engaging the civil society more systematically in the UN joint coordination structures and make greater efforts in consulting civil society in UN-led processes.</i></p> <p>5.2 The UNCT should step up its engagement with the private sector to ensure that private sector resources are deployed more effectively towards the solution of development problems. <i>Options for engagement include further identifying potential partners among private companies with strong social responsibility, building new partnerships with environment-friendly private companies, further using partnerships with private companies to promote women’s empowerment, including through WEP, and promoting the PPP model in the public sector.</i></p>		Partially accepted	
<p>Comments: The UNCT has engaged CSOs in multiple key processes, including in the PFSD evaluation, the last two CCAs, the Gender Assessment, and the development of the disability inclusion ToC, among others. In the context of the COVID-19 response, CSOs were extensively engaged in the development of COVID-19 assessments conducted by the UN. A task force of 54 CSOs also informed several successful funding proposals developed by the UN aimed at supporting the most vulnerable and marginalized groups. The large number of consultative processes with CSOs is also acknowledged by the evaluators in their report. The UNCT will continue to involve CSOs in its key processes, including in the development of the next CF, which will allow for the voice of CSOs to be reflected in how support to the civil society will be designed and delivered moving forward. In line with the PFSD outputs, the UNCT will also continue to strengthen the capacity of civil society in key areas of work. Regarding the UN joint coordination structures, their main purpose is to improve internal coordination and coherence. Hence, the recommendation for the systematic engagement of CSOs in these structures is not aligned with the purpose of these groups. However, the UNCT will engage CSOs in the work of the joint coordination structures on topics of common interest and as appropriate. Multiple actions to improve the cooperation with the private sector are already outlined in the Joint UN Moldova Resource Mobilization and Partnerships Strategy 2021-2022 developed and approved by the UNCT. Hence, the UNCT will move forward with the implementation of its strategy to strengthen its partnerships with the private sector, including by implementing the actions outlined below.</p>			
Key actions		Timeframe	Responsible entities
5.1	Engage CSOs in the development of the next CF, particularly in the prioritization exercise and the development of the ToC	10/21-6/22	RCO, CF focal points, UNCT
5.2	Regularly engage CSOs in relevant key UNCT processes, such as the CCA development, specific RG and thematic group meetings as appropriate, etc.	10/21-12/2027	RCO, UNCT, RG Chairs and Co-Chairs

5.3	Organize a hackathon on development cooperation ideas with the private sector, showcase the results, and support the implementation of the best ideas to the extent possible	10/21-6/22	UNCT, RCO
5.4	Maintain a permanent dialogue with the private sector, including by signing more MoUs with companies and associations of private sector companies	10/21-6/22	RCO
Recommendation 6: Strengthen tracking of pilots and focus on policy implementation			
6.1 The UNCT should track the performance of pilots over time – the lessons they generate during the piloting stage and the extent to which they get replicated and scaled up. <i>As part of the monitoring system, the UN should seek to track pilot initiatives over time and after a pilot’s lifetime. The UN should document more effectively results, lessons, experiences, and good practices and share them more widely.</i>		Partially accepted	
6.2 The UNCT should take a more systematic approach to policymaking by paying particular attention to the issue of implementation. <i>Policy development should be clearly linked to public budgets. The UN should also strengthen the systems that track policy implementation results, rather than inputs/outputs and assess more rigorously the sustainability of achievements. The UN should support the implementation capabilities of the government and not act as a substitute for government’ shortcomings in implementation.</i>			
Comments: Tracking the performance of pilots over time falls within the responsibility of individual agencies developing and implementing pilot initiatives. UN agencies acknowledge the recommendation and will take it on board. At the level of the UNCT, pilot initiatives will continue to be monitored and reported on along with the other key activities. The UNCT will also conduct an assessment of UN supported pilots and document lessons learned to help strengthen pilot initiatives as required. The policy making and implementation functions rest with the GoM; however, the UNCT will continue to provide support to the country in this regard in line with the best practices in the field. The UNCT will also monitor the provided policy development and implementation support on a systematic basis and will continue to report on achievements as part of annual reporting processes.			
Key actions		Timeframe	Responsible entities
6.1	Conduct an assessment of UN supported pilots and document lessons learned for distribution to the UNCT and relevant partners	1/22-12/22	RCO, UNCT
6.2	Monitor support to policy development and implementation on a systematic basis and report on achievements as part of annual reporting processes	1/22-12/27	RCO, RGs, UNCT