

UNITED NATIONS STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR AFGHANISTAN

2023–2025



UNITED NATIONS
AFGHANISTAN



Published by:

United Nations Country Team in Afghanistan

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Suggested citation: UNCT in Afghanistan (2023). United Nations Strategic Framework for Afghanistan. Kabul.

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Executive Summary

The past several years have been extremely challenging for the people of Afghanistan. Already suffering from decades of conflict and instability, Afghanistan's human rights, governance, humanitarian, and development situations deteriorated sharply after the Taliban takeover in August 2021. This transition impacted not only the political and security situations but also had particularly severe implications for human rights, gender equality, and women's empowerment. The country's economy contracted by about 30 per cent between 2020 and 2022. With 24.4 million people in need of humanitarian assistance and more than 9 in 10 living in poverty, the country is in the midst of a crisis on an unprecedented scale.

The United Nations and its partners recognize that humanitarian aid alone will not be enough to sustainably address the large-scale and increasing human suffering of the Afghan people in the medium and long term. As such, humanitarian efforts should be complemented and reinforced with interventions addressing basic human needs that aim to reduce the humanitarian caseload over time and support Afghans, particularly women, girls, and other vulnerable groups, to a) build resilience to shocks, b) sustain livelihoods, c) protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, d) strengthen social cohesion and build social capital, and e) preserve hard-won development gains achieved over the past two decades, including with regard to service delivery. This approach is also important for the identification and achievement of durable solutions to displacement caused by conflict, climate change, and sudden onset natural disasters.

In close consultations with our Member States, partners, and stakeholders, the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) has identified three complementary and mutually reinforcing joint priorities as it supports the basic human needs of the Afghan people.

Priority 1: Sustained Essential Services

Priority 2: Economic Opportunities and Resilient Livelihoods

Priority 3: Social Cohesion, Inclusion, Gender Equality, Human Rights, and Rule of Law

With the Humanitarian Country Team, the UNCT has also agreed on two collective outcomes: to 1) reduce food insecurity and 2) reduce maternal and child mortality rates. Partners across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus have agreed to work together toward these outcomes.

The United Nations Strategic Framework for Afghanistan articulates the UN's approach to addressing basic human needs in Afghanistan. Anchored in the principle of leaving no one behind, the UN Strategic Framework prioritizes the needs and rights of those most vulnerable and marginalized, including women and girls, children and youth, internally displaced persons, returnees, refugees, ethnic and religious minorities, geographically isolated communities, sexual and gender minorities, the Kuchi community, persons with disabilities, human rights defenders, people who use drugs, and people living with and affected by HIV.

This Strategic Framework is an offer of assistance to the people of Afghanistan. Whether the UN can implement this framework depends in part on external factors, most notably on actions by the de facto authorities and on donor support. The UN expects to be deeply engaged in maintaining and expanding the access and operational space necessary for implementation.

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Abbreviations

ACG	Afghanistan Coordination Group
BOS	Business Operations Strategy
CCA	Common Country Analysis
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DSRSG/RC/HC	Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IDPs	Internally Displace Persons
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OMT	Operations Management Team
PMT	Programme Management Team
PSEA	Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
STWGs	Strategic Thematic Working Groups
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations
UN DCO	United Nations Development Coordination Office
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
US\$	United States Dollar
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

UN Entities Operating in Afghanistan

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
IFAD*	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ITC*	International Trade Centre
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNAIDS*	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDSS	United Nations Department for Safety and Security
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlement Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNITAR*	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

** Denotes non-resident UN entity*

1. Introduction



1. Introduction

In 2021, the United Nations in Afghanistan embarked on the development of a new multi-year integrated strategic planning framework to replace the outgoing *'One UN for Afghanistan 2018–2021.'* That framework was intended to be the basis of the UN's future partnership and engagement with the then-Government and the people of Afghanistan towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, just a few weeks later, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan was removed by the Taliban, which became the de facto authority in the country.

This transition impacted not only the political and security situation but also the country's overall development trajectory, with particularly severe implications for human rights, gender equality, and women's empowerment. Consequently, the United Nations in Afghanistan developed an interim *'Transitional Engagement Framework'* to guide its collective work in 2022, thereby enabling partners to continue meeting the basic human needs of the Afghan population, in addition to the ongoing humanitarian response. In December 2022, the Transitional Engagement Framework was extended until the end of June 2023.

The United Nations and its partners recognize that humanitarian aid alone will not be enough to sustainably address the large-scale and increasing human suffering of the Afghan people in the medium and long term. As such, humanitarian efforts should be complemented and reinforced with interventions addressing basic human needs that aim to reduce the humanitarian caseload over time and support Afghans — particularly women, girls, and other vulnerable groups — to a) build resilience to shocks, b) sustain livelihoods, c) protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, d) strengthen social cohesion and build social capital, and e) preserve hard-won development gains achieved over the past two decades, including with regard to service delivery. This approach is also important for the identification and achievement of durable solutions to displacement caused by conflict, climate change, and sudden onset natural disasters.

In accordance with its commitment to provide assistance to the people of Afghanistan, to prevent further regression on sustainable development outcomes, and to provide a longer-term planning horizon while adapting to evolving needs, the UNCT in Afghanistan has developed a new multi-year strategic planning framework, articulated in this document. This effort spanned the humanitarian, development, and peace mandates of the United Nations in Afghanistan.

This *'United Nations Strategic Framework for Afghanistan'* for 2023 to 2025 was developed in close coordination with donors and implementing partners. In the absence of a national development plan against which to align or a nationally led aid coordination architecture through which to coordinate non-humanitarian support, international partners — through the multi-stakeholder Afghanistan Coordination Group (ACG) — have developed the *'ACG Framework for International Partner Support in Afghanistan'* in parallel to the UN Strategic Framework. The ACG Framework outlines three complementary and mutually reinforcing joint priorities against which partners intend to align their support, including the UNCT through its own Strategic Framework. The priorities identified in both the ACG Framework and UN Strategic Framework are:

Priority 1: Sustained Essential Services**Priority 2:** Economic Opportunities and Resilient Livelihoods**Priority 3:** Social Cohesion, Inclusion, Gender Equality, Human Rights, and Rule of Law

These priorities are supported by three core outcomes as well as two Collective Outcomes shared with the humanitarian pillar to 1) reduce food insecurity and 2) reduce maternal and child mortality rates. Partners across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus have agreed to work toward these Collective Outcomes through their interventions. This cross-pillar approach will guide the design, coordination, and implementation of UN and partner activities that build the resilience of the most vulnerable and address the drivers of humanitarian needs, development reversals, and conflict and instability in Afghanistan, including climate change, environmental degradation, poverty, and human rights violations among others.

Reflecting on its intensive external and internal consultations as part of this strategic planning exercise, as well as on its deep experience in Afghanistan both before and after August 2021, the UNCT in Afghanistan has adopted the following vision statement and statement of commitment to the people of Afghanistan (Box 1).

Box 1: Vision and Commitment of the United Nations Country Team in Afghanistan

Our vision is that all people in Afghanistan, especially women, girls, children, minorities, and other marginalized individuals and groups, are empowered to protect and rebuild their lives and the lives of their families and communities.

From 2023 through 2025, the UNCT in Afghanistan will contribute to achieving this vision – in a context where it is operationally constrained – through delivery of inclusive, non-discriminatory assistance and services to address humanitarian and basic human needs.

Support to basic human needs will build resilience; strengthen local-level systems; protect human rights and human development gains; promote accountability; sustain food systems and livelihoods; support decent work; advance gender equality; and facilitate an inclusive, peaceful, and just society for all Afghans.

Our approach will be human-rights centered, gender-responsive, community-based, neutral, accountable, cross-pillar, data-driven, localized, and reflective of the core values and principles of the United Nations.

This Strategic Framework articulates the UN's approach to addressing basic human needs in Afghanistan, while the annual Humanitarian Response Plans encompass the complementary humanitarian approach.¹ Anchored in the principle of leaving no one behind, the UN Strategic Framework prioritizes the needs and rights of those most vulnerable and marginalized, including women and girls, children and youth, internally displaced persons, returnees, refugees, ethnic and religious minorities, geographically isolated communities, sexual and gender minorities, the Kuchi

¹ UNOCHA (2023). Humanitarian Response Plans. Available at <https://www.unocha.org/afghanistan>

community, persons with disabilities, human rights defenders, people who use drugs, and people living with and affected by HIV.

Given the complex and highly fragile circumstances in the country and the non-normalization of relations between the international community and the de facto authorities, this UN Strategic Framework follows the United Nations Sustainable Development Group guidance on country-level strategic planning for development in exceptional circumstances.²

It is important to emphasize that the primary duty bearers for delivering on the needs of all people in Afghanistan without discrimination and for protecting their rights in accordance with international norms and standards are the Taliban de facto authorities. Without a significant shift in their policies and practices — particularly in relation to the rights of women and girls — the people of Afghanistan will continue to face increasing hardship.

In addition, international humanitarian and basic human needs interventions will only be effective so long as the de facto authorities make adequate investments in the equitable delivery of essential services and economic enabling environment, including the removal of restrictions on access to essential services for women and girls and to economic opportunities for women. Such restrictions obstruct the trajectory of economic and social recovery and development in Afghanistan.

UN entities operating in Afghanistan will derive their respective country programming instruments directly from the UN Strategic Framework to ensure maximum coherence and coordination across the UN system for the delivery of collective results towards the SDGs. In addition, the UN Strategic Framework also serves as an Integrated Strategic Framework, thereby integrating the mandate of the UN special political mission in the country, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

The UN will configure its management, coordination, and implementation structures to enhance system-wide coherence, efficiency, collaboration, and impact in support of the UN Strategic Framework, including through the establishment of Results Groups aligned to its priorities and outcomes. In the absence of a nationally led aid coordination architecture or a Joint UN-Government Steering Committee, coordination of UN Strategic Framework implementation with external partners will be primarily undertaken through the ACG and its subsidiary Strategic Thematic Working Groups (STWGs).

The UN Strategic Framework will be made operational through output-level joint workplans towards which all UN entities will contribute. Performance assessments against the joint workplans will form the basis of an annual UNCT Results Report to ensure transparency and accountability of delivery. A final evaluation of the UN Strategic Framework will be undertaken in the penultimate year of implementation to inform the development of a successor plan.

Given the highly fragile and fluid context, the UN Strategic Framework will remain under regular review to ensure it remains adaptable, flexible, and responsive to an evolving country context, operational environment, and (most importantly) to the needs of the people of Afghanistan.

² UNSDG (2022). Guidance on UN country-level strategic planning for development in exceptional circumstances. Available at <https://unsdg.un.org/resources/guidance-un-country-level-strategic-planning-development-exceptional-circumstances>

2. Progress toward the 2030 Agenda



2. Progress toward the 2030 Agenda

Decades of conflict and instability have negatively impacted most aspects of social, economic, and political life in Afghanistan, with the most severe impacts being felt by the most vulnerable and marginalized. Even prior to August 2021, Afghanistan was projected to meet only 15 of the 169 global SDG targets by 2030. Since August 2021, the economy contracted sharply, the banking sector fell into crisis, and poverty increased, leading to an unprecedented humanitarian crisis with an imminent risk of a systemic collapse. The international community's focus has been largely on providing humanitarian aid and support to basic human needs through non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and UN agencies. The restrictive policies of the de facto authorities on women's social and economic rights, access of women and girls to education and work, inclusivity of the governance structures, violations of human rights and freedom of speech, and increased interference in the delivery of international assistance — including the bans on Afghan women working for the UN and international and national NGOs (see Box 2 below) — are the primary barriers preventing member states from considering a return to a broader development support.

Box 2: Bans on Afghan women working for the UN and NGOs.

In December 2022, de facto authorities banned Afghan women from working for national and international NGOs, a move roundly condemned by the international community. In April 2023, the de facto authorities extended this edict to ban Afghan women from working for the UN in Afghanistan. These bans were still in place as of 1 July 2023.

In addition to their impacts on women and girls, these decisions undermine the ability of the UN, donors, and partners to deliver critical assistance to the Afghan people, given that both Afghan women and men are essential to all aspects of their work. The UN, donors, and partners have consistently reiterated that these bans are unlawful under international law, including the UN Charter.

2.1 Governance, Human Rights, and Security Context

Since seizing power, the de facto authorities have focused on the transition from insurgency to administration, despite lacking international recognition. There has been no progress to date on national policies, frameworks, or inclusive, sectoral leadership, while key architectures established to promote and protect rights have been dismantled (e.g., Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, Ministry of Women's Affairs). While the de facto cabinet in Kabul was initially the main vehicle for decision-making, influence has shifted towards the more conservative Kandahar-based Taliban leadership. The de facto authorities lack gender, ethnic, religious, political, and geographical diversity. Pre-existing norms around male leadership have been consolidated and legitimized, undoing decades of gains that women had achieved in leadership and representation within public institutions. Restrictions have been imposed on the activities of civil society, NGOs, human rights defenders, and the media. Civic space and freedom of expression and assembly have been curtailed. While there has

been a notable improvement in the security situation, violent extremist groups are still active, and lingering tensions and grievances continue to pose a threat to stability and to the work of the UN.

Apart from UNAMA and a few donors, international political engagements with the de facto authorities have been limited, and close to no progress has been made since August 2021 on policy changes essential to restart more 'regular' development cooperation. Consequently, it has become extremely challenging to protect space for impartial, neutral, independent humanitarian action and principled basic human needs assistance, especially in the aftermath of the ban on women working for NGOs and the UN. As a result, the ability of the international donor community to deliver principled assistance to the people of Afghanistan has been dramatically reduced.

2.2 Socioeconomic Context

In recent years, socioeconomic and human development in Afghanistan has deteriorated, with the most severe consequences falling on the most vulnerable and marginalized, including women and girls. The gains made towards the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs over the past two decades have rapidly eroded, including economic decline and the systematic violation of the rights of women and girls. This trend will be compounded by continued population growth without a corresponding increase in economic performance and service delivery.

In addition to the many years of conflict, Afghanistan has suffered from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the global economic slowdown. Following the Taliban takeover, the country's economy was further impacted by the suspension of non-humanitarian international assistance and the isolation from the international financial system. The economy contracted by 20.7 per cent in 2021, followed by a further contraction of 3.6 per cent in 2022. Considering a population growth rate around 2 per cent, per capita income is estimated to have fallen by a total of 30 per cent between 2020 and 2022.³ In addition, the exclusion of women from the workforce is placing significant additional constraints on economic growth.

As of early 2023, the de facto authorities have appeared to stabilize the downward economic trajectory, including on taxation, regional trade, and internal commerce. However, despite improvements in exports during 2022, the current account deficit is expected to widen. Headline inflation receded from 18.3 per cent in July 2022 to 3.5 per cent in February 2023 year-on-year as global fuel and food prices trended downward and the exchange rate stabilized. The country's foreign-exchange reserves abroad remain frozen, and the financial system is still restricted. Firms and individuals continue to face difficulties withdrawing cash from banks, particularly for pre-August 2021 deposits. While significant international donor assistance has mitigated some economic decline, the economy has not recovered to its pre-2021 levels, and prospects are not favourable.

The current crisis has devastated the lives and livelihoods of many Afghans, especially in rural areas, with women and girls being particularly affected due to further restrictions placed on their education; freedom of movement; ability to work; and participation in social, economic, and political life. In September 2021, the de facto authorities re-opened secondary schools only for boys and in March

³ UNDP (2022). *Afghanistan Socio-Economic Outlook*.

2022, reconfirmed the ban on Afghan girls' secondary school education. In December 2022, the de facto authorities closed universities to female students across the country.

Economic shocks, drought, and other natural disasters have overtaken conflict as the primary drivers of humanitarian need.⁴ The impact of the multi-faceted economic crisis; increasing drought frequency and intensity — likely to be exacerbated by the impacts of climate change; human, plant, and animal disease outbreaks; and lingering effects of decades of conflict, as well as the consequences of the war in Ukraine on already high food prices, have resulted in almost half of the population facing acute levels of food insecurity, with women and girls being disproportionately affected.⁵ By mid-2022, two thirds of Afghan households could not afford food and other basic non-food items.⁶

In 2023, 875,000 children are expected to suffer from severe acute malnutrition and 2.3 million children and 840,000 women from moderate acute malnutrition. Prevalence for acute malnutrition for children ages 0–59 months is 10.3 per cent, with severe acute malnutrition at 1.5 per cent.⁷ Stunting prevalence for children under-5 years is 32.7 per cent, with 9.9 per cent being severe. The prevalence of acute malnutrition for pregnant and lactating women is 20.7 per cent.

This dire situation has forced families to resort to emergency livelihood coping strategies — including harmful practices such as early and forced marriage — in the absence of any functional safety nets.⁸ Without viable alternatives for farmers, opium poppy cultivation increased by 32 per cent in 2022 over the previous year to 56,000 hectares, the third largest area under cultivation since monitoring began in 1994.⁹

The economic crisis, erratic governance by the de facto authorities, the emigration of many civil servants, and deepening discriminatory policies — particularly against women and girls and ethnic and religious minorities — have further eroded already weak public service delivery capacities. This makes it more difficult for people in Afghanistan to have equitable access to health, education, water and sanitation, social protection, justice, and protection services, with severe consequences for the fulfilment of human rights, human development, and longer-term national stability and prosperity. The erosion of rule of law under the de facto authorities, including the lack of a constitutional framework, has worsened the business environment and impeded private sector investment. An alternative path is available for economic growth, improved revenues, and regional engagement, but this path is conditioned on inclusivity, the rule of law, respect for human rights, and the rights of women and girls, particularly for the rights to food, health, and education.

While the situation in the country affects all people in Afghanistan to varying extents, some groups are particularly vulnerable and marginalized, requiring specific attention to ensure they are not left behind or exposed to ever-greater threats to their security. These groups include women and girls, children, youth, refugees, internally displaced persons; migrants; ethnic and religious minorities — including Hazara Shias, Sufis, and Sikhs; nomadic pastoralist populations; persons with disabilities;

⁴ REACH (2022). Whole of Afghanistan Assessment 2022.

⁵ Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (2022). Afghanistan, IPC Acute Food Insecurity Analysis, September-October 2022.

⁶ World Bank (2023). Afghanistan Country Website. Available at <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/afghanistan/overview>

⁷ Afghanistan Nutrition Cluster (2022). Afghanistan National Nutrition SMART Survey.

⁸ WFP (2022). Pre-Lean Seasonal Assessment.

⁹ UNODC (2022). Opium Production in Afghanistan: Latest Findings and Emerging Threats.

sexual and gender minorities; human rights defenders; people who use drugs; and people living with and affected by HIV.

2.3 Marginalization and Exclusion

The 2030 Agenda and the SDGs have underpinned the principle of leaving no one behind, without which the Goals cannot be truly attained. Those at risk of being left behind in Afghanistan face multiple forms of exclusion, deprivation, disadvantage, and discrimination arising from circumstances or characteristics usually beyond their control. These vulnerabilities and characteristics are also often intersectional, overlapping, and evolving, and they usually apply to multiple groups or individuals simultaneously.

As previously highlighted, no other demographic group has been more impacted since August 2021 than **women and girls**. Most of their hard-won rights have been curtailed or eliminated, affecting every aspect of their lives. Repressive decrees limit their movement, dictate their appearance, restrict access to economic opportunities and services, and severely stifle their participation in civic space and social and political life.¹⁰

Youth, especially young women, face challenges related to their health, education, employment, and gender equality and equity. High rates of early marriage and pregnancy increase the risk of maternal mortality, illness, and disability. Constraints on access to education restrict already limited economic opportunities, while youth are also largely excluded from decision-making processes. Over 15 million **children** in Afghanistan are expected to be in need of humanitarian assistance in 2023.¹¹ Violence, abuse (including sexual), neglect, and exploitation remain serious concerns.¹² Children continue to be killed and maimed due to conflict and explosive remnants of war.¹³ Most experience violent discipline, including psychological violence.¹⁴

Approximately 3.4 million people in Afghanistan remain **internally displaced** due to conflict, of whom 58 per cent are children.¹⁵ Afghanistan also hosts 52,000 **refugees**, most without access to services and employment, while large numbers of **undocumented Afghan migrants** continue to be forcibly returned to Afghanistan.

Ethnic and religious minorities suffer from repressive policies, persecution, conflict, and intolerance, and their members have been arbitrarily arrested, tortured, summarily executed, evicted, and forced to flee the country. **Sexual and gender minorities** face grave threats to their safety and lives. The **Kuchi** population have seen their traditional nomadic pastoralist existence erode, leaving few who still follow their customary livelihood with limited access to education, health, clean water, and alternative

¹⁰ UN Women (2021). [Gender Alert 1: Women rights in Afghanistan: Where are we now?](#)

¹¹ OCHA (2022). [Humanitarian Needs Overview 2023](#).

¹² UN Security Council (2019). [Report of the Secretary General to the United Nations Security Council, Children and Armed Conflict in Afghanistan](#).

¹³ Information from the Country Task Force of Monitoring and Reporting of Grave Violations against Children (CTFMRM).

¹⁴ Central Statistics Organization and UNICEF (2013). [Afghanistan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2010-2011](#).

¹⁵ UNHCR (2022). [External Update: Afghanistan Situation #21](#).

livelihoods. **Human rights defenders** face significant risks, including arbitrary arrests, incommunicado detention, and threats and intimidation.

Persons with disabilities are often marginalized and stigmatized resulting in low levels of participation in education and employment and with many receiving little or no social security or specialized support.¹⁶ The number of **people who use drugs** has significantly increased — including among children, youth, and women — leaving more people vulnerable to drug use disorders.¹⁷ Afghanistan also has the third highest rate of increase in new HIV infections among Asia Pacific countries (since 2010), with people living with and affected by HIV — including sexual and gender minorities, people who use drugs, and intimate partners of those with HIV — being amongst the most marginalized and stigmatized.¹⁸

2.4 Opportunities for Achieving the 2030 Agenda

While the challenges facing Afghanistan prior to August 2021 were chronic, systemic, and severe, the situation following the Taliban takeover has deteriorated significantly. The change in context also has significant implications for how the international community can and should engage in the country to support the ever-increasing needs of the Afghan people, which require the exploration of alternative partnership arrangements and implementation modalities.

The primary focus of the UN and the broader international community will be to head-off a further worsening of the humanitarian situation by providing lifesaving assistance, ensuring people's basic human needs are met, and safeguarding human rights. However, this alone is not a sustainable solution. Interventions will need to be designed that stop people from falling further behind by tackling the underlying causes of their vulnerabilities, as well as the systemic causes of crisis and fragility that underpin them.

While the nature and scope of potential areas of support have become more limited, opportunities exist to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable Afghans through provision of sustained access to essential services and economic opportunities, enhanced social cohesion, reduced conflict risks, and mitigation of a further erosion of human rights, particularly those of women and children.

However, it must be realized that the ability of national and international partners to explore these opportunities will be significantly determined by factors on the ground in what is a highly fluid context, and it will require agility to adapt to situational changes, be they positive or negative. As such, this UN Strategic Framework has been developed in close collaboration with a wide range of partners to be ambitious but realistic and pragmatic in approach, targeted but flexible, and effectively coordinated across stakeholders, particularly across the nexus, to ensure maximum impact and sustainability.

¹⁶ OCHA (2020). [Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021](#).

¹⁷ UNODC (2021). [Drug Situation in Afghanistan 2021: Latest findings and emerging threats](#).

¹⁸ UNAIDS (2023). [UNAIDS Data 2022](#).

3. United Nations Support to the 2030 Agenda and SDGs



3. United Nations Support to the 2030 Agenda and SDGs

3.1 From Common Country Analysis to Strategic Priorities

In 2021, the UN in Afghanistan embarked on the development of a new Common Country Analysis (CCA) as its independent, collective, and forward-looking assessment of the situation in the country through the framework of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. Published in August 2021, the CCA was to provide the analytical foundation upon which the UN would develop a new multi-year integrated strategic planning framework to replace the outgoing *‘One UN for Afghanistan 2018–2021’* as the basis of future partnership and engagement with the then-Government and people of Afghanistan. However, just a few weeks later, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan was ousted by the Taliban, becoming the de facto authorities in the country and rendering much of the just-completed CCA out of date.

In response to the significant changes in the country, the UN developed the one-year ‘Transitional Engagement Framework’ to guide its collective work over the course of 2022 pending the development of a longer-term UN Strategic Framework, which would necessitate a comprehensive update of the CCA to reflect the new reality and dynamics in the country. This update process was undertaken over the second half of 2022 with contributions from UN entities working across the triple nexus in Afghanistan and extensive consultations with international and national partners and stakeholders.

In the absence of a national development planning framework against which to align or a nationally led aid coordination architecture through which to coordinate non-humanitarian support, international partners, through the multi-stakeholder Afghanistan Coordination Group (ACG) (*see Box 3 below*), highlighted the need for a collaborative approach towards supporting basic human needs, economic recovery, social cohesion, and human rights in the country. As such, ACG partners agreed to develop the *‘ACG Framework for International Partner Support in Afghanistan’* to articulate a shared set of priorities and outcomes which all partners would adopt and align their support.

The prioritization process was significantly informed by extensive consultations within the ACG and with various national stakeholders across the country. Over the course of October and November 2022, the UN held in-person consultations in 11 Afghan provinces — Badakhshan, Balkh, Bamyan, Faryab, Ghor, Herat, Kabul, Kandahar, Khost, Kapisa, Paktika (Giyani) and Maimana (Faryab) — with a total of 519 individuals participating. To the extent possible, the consultations sought to reflect a broad spectrum of Afghan society, including those most vulnerable and marginalized. Undertaken in Dari or Pashto, the consultations engaged 186 women, 109 community leaders and elders, 100 representatives of ethnic minorities, 74 civil society representatives, 78 private sector representatives, 51 youth, 26 representatives from academia, 14 farmers, 13 journalists, five persons living with disabilities, and 83 representatives from the de facto authorities.¹⁹

¹⁹ See Annex III for further information on stakeholder consultations.

In June 2023, the findings of these consultations were further validated through meetings with the Afghan private sector, non-governmental organizations, and civil society organizations (CSO). Despite the subsequent imposition of the ban on female Afghan staff at NGOs, CSOs, and the UN, the priorities and approaches articulated in the consultations in October and November 2022 remained broadly the same; participants encouraged the UN and the international community to continue the principled delivery of assistance to the Afghan people, particularly to women and girls.

Based on the outcomes of the updated analysis and consultations process, ACG partners formulated and agreed on three complementary and mutually reinforcing joint priorities and outcomes for the ACG Framework, which also form the basis of this UN Strategic Framework. These common priorities are:

Priority 1: Sustained Essential Services

Priority 2: Economic Opportunities and Resilient Livelihoods

Priority 3: Social Cohesion, Inclusion, Gender Equality, Human Rights, and Rule of Law

These priorities are supported by three *core* outcomes described in the section below, as well as two *Collective Outcomes* on **1)** reducing food insecurity and **2)** reducing maternal and child mortality rates, towards which partners across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus will endeavour to support through their interventions (*see Section 3.5 on operationalization of the triple nexus in Afghanistan*).

Box 3: Afghanistan Coordination Group

In the absence of a nationally led aid coordination architecture, the Afghanistan Coordination Group (ACG) was established in May 2022 to improve coordination and coherence and identify synergies among key international partners to enhance efficiency and aid effectiveness.

The ACG is currently comprised of representatives of the Governments of Australia, Canada, Czechia, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Finland, Japan, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Norway, Qatar, Sweden, Türkiye, Switzerland, the United States, and the United Kingdom, as well as the European Union, Asian Development Bank, International Monetary Fund, Islamic Development Bank, World Bank, and the United Nations. Civil society groups, international and national NGOs, regional partner countries, and private sector actors, are also engaged through the ACG structure. The ACG is supported by sectoral level Strategic Thematic Working Groups (STWGs) that conduct technical-level coordination between the ACG partners to improve the quality and coherence of aid and policy dialogue and coordinate existing and planned programmatic activities to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication.

While Afghanistan's neighbours are not all members of the ACG, both the ACG Framework and the UN Strategic Framework address the principles and priorities expressed by regional countries. For example, the May 2023 Samarkand Declaration of the Fourth Meeting of Foreign Ministers of Afghanistan's Neighbouring States expressed "the commitment to the development of Afghanistan as a peaceful, united, sovereign and independent state, free from the threats of terrorism and drug trafficking" and the "importance of building an inclusive and broad-based governance system in Afghanistan that reflects the interests of all segments of Afghan society."

The Parties also “called for further measures to improve the living conditions of the people and expressed confidence that the Afghan authorities will respect fundamental human rights, including the rights of all ethnic groups, women and children, and will provide every citizen of Afghanistan with equal rights to participate in the socio-political, economic and cultural life of the country.” The Parties noted “the key role of the United Nations in providing humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan, calling on the international community to intensify emergency humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan [and] emphasized that assistance to Kabul in restoring the national economy will allow creating decent living conditions for the population and reducing the flow of migration abroad.”

As noted throughout this Framework, the UNCT is committed to a program of assistance that advances the rights of all Afghans, particularly minorities, women, and girls; creates decent living conditions to reduce humanitarian needs over time; and addresses the drivers of conflict and instability through greater inclusivity, better governance, and economic growth. The UN in Afghanistan will continue working with Afghan and regional actors on solutions to cross-border and regional challenges, such as water management, climate change, and transnational organized crime and terrorism, and on mitigating the regional risks associated with them.

3.2 Theory of Change for the UN Strategic Framework Priorities

While the UN and its partners remain fully committed to advancing the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in Afghanistan, it is important to note that progress will be highly dependent on the actions of the de facto authorities. The fluidity and ever evolving situation in the country also presents significant obstacles to formulating planning assumptions and risks to implementation and achievement of outcomes.

Despite such challenges and uncertainties, the UN will endeavour to effect change that can have a positive impact on the lives of the people of Afghanistan, particularly for those most vulnerable and marginalized. This requires the identification and implementation of catalytic, nexus-oriented interventions with impacts across all SDGs. In support of this objective, the UN will leverage its collective mandates, capacities, expertise, partnerships, resources, and assets at country, regional, and global levels to maximize the impact of its work.

Ensuring **inclusive, equitable, and sustained access to affordable, quality essential services** across the country — particularly health and nutrition, education, water and sanitation, social protection, as well as protection — in a manner that builds on humanitarian interventions through strengthened cross-pillar coordination to enhance sustainability will be key. All efforts to mitigate and manage risks to unimpeded access for women and children, as well as other vulnerable groups, must be a priority. Realizing this objective will require strengthening community-based systems which contribute to meeting basic human needs, as well as leveraging and strengthening front-line service delivery providers whose capacities have been built over the past two decades with international support, while also ensuring women aid workers can continue to deliver services.

Reducing poverty and increasing resilience requires sustained and coordinated efforts to **create and preserve decent jobs, strengthen economic opportunities, and make livelihoods more resilient**. Private sector development — particularly through micro, small, and medium enterprises — can

significantly contribute to medium-term economic stabilization and job creation, including in sectors with substantial employment and growth potential. Concerted efforts will be needed to address financial sector constraints to facilitate access to financing and credit for individuals and enterprises, as well as expanding other business development services. Strengthening of the private sector will also be predicated on the availability of skilled personnel and improved development of human capital.

Resilient rural livelihoods will be essential to sustaining a significant source of employment for many in Afghanistan, particularly women, but also in helping the country to recover from chronic food insecurity. Considerable and coordinated efforts will be needed to ensure catalytic, multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder, and employment-intensive community infrastructure investments to support rural livelihoods, value chains, and food systems to make them more resilient, sustainable, and profitable, particularly for small-scale farmers. Alternative livelihoods will also be needed for farmers to reduce their reliance on poppy cultivation for income. Adoption of **disaster risk reduction and climate change mitigation and adaptation practices**, as well as environmental protection, with a focus on sustainable **natural resource management** and nature-based solutions will be needed to ensure the long-term sustainability and safety of rural communities.

Increased **participatory governance and decision-making** will be essential to building social cohesion and tackling the drivers of fragility and conflict. However, current dynamics suggest a continued consolidation and centralization of authority under the Taliban. Despite this, it will be imperative to explore opportunities to strengthen women's and marginalized groups' inclusion in multi-level governance and decision-making. Empowering of community-based institutions and civil society, employers' and workers' organizations, as well as activists and journalists — with a focus on exploring women-led structures and institutions — will be essential to increase inclusion, expand civic space, protect freedom of expression and association, and promote transparency and accountability.

Continued advocacy and support for inclusive community **reconciliation and peacebuilding** processes will help mitigate outbreaks of violent conflict and resolve existing disputes that can help facilitate delivery of durable peace dividends; foster equitable use of resources; reduce forced displacement; and enhance conflict prevention, mitigation, and resolution.

Fundamental to peace, security, and stability in Afghanistan is the protection and promotion of **human rights** and **access to justice** without discrimination. This requires clarity on the legal framework; sustaining gains made under previously adopted laws developed in line with international norms and standards; and formulating new ones for the effective, inclusive, and accountable governance of the country.

The UN will contribute towards these objectives through the following priorities, outcomes, and outputs.

Figure 1: UN Strategic Framework Theory of Change



3.3 Cross-Cutting Principles

The UN Strategic Framework, and all interventions undertaken in support of its implementation, are underpinned by various cross-cutting principles that will inform all aspects of the UN's work in Afghanistan. The UN will integrate a **human rights-based approach** to ensure that all interventions adhere to international standards and principles to promote and protect human rights that will ultimately lead towards the realization of the fundamental rights of the Afghan people as outlined in international and regional human rights instruments — including international labour standards, particularly those pertaining to the rights of women and girls that are being systematically eroded by the de facto authorities.

Underpinning the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, the principle of **leaving no one behind** and reaching the furthest behind first will ensure that this Strategic Framework prioritizes the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalized.

Given the rapid and severe deterioration in the rights of women and girls since August 2021, the UN will endeavour to promote and mainstream international standards and principles on **gender equality and women's empowerment** through its interventions. The UN recognizes that that Afghan women and girls are not only beneficiaries of support, but necessary agents and catalysts for building an inclusive, prosperous Afghanistan. As such, women must be central to the design and delivery of aid, including through their meaningful participation — as well as that of women-led and women's rights organizations — to ensure that women and girls across the country can safely and equitably access support. It is therefore imperative that women aid workers across all organization types are not replaced by men in the design and delivery of basic needs and services interventions. For its part, the UN in Afghanistan remains committed to the continued employment of female Afghan staff, as well as ensuring a diverse workplace representative of Afghan society.

Interventions must strive to **'do no harm'** or at least to minimize potential unintended harm when implemented, particularly those that may inadvertently contribute to further human rights violations and systemic discriminatory and harmful policies and practices, including those affecting women and girls and other vulnerable and marginalized groups. Accountability to do no harm principles also requires that basic needs support does not exacerbate inequalities between men, women, boys, and girls. To this end, the **centrality of protection** will be applied so that protection principles are placed at the centre of all actions, including through mainstreaming across all sectors and activities.

Cost-effectiveness in delivery must be considered in all interventions, especially considering the current economic challenges and dwindling aid resources. The UN will strive to optimize available resources to meaningful impact for the Afghan people, while ensuring **transparency and accountability** to the people of Afghanistan and to the international community through improved measurement and reporting on results of interventions undertaken in support of this Strategic Framework.

Furthermore, **climate resilience** must also be emphasized in interventions, given Afghanistan's vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters. The UN will aim to prioritize interventions that promote climate-resilient livelihoods and services and ensure that climate risks are systematically integrated into all project designs and implementation plans. This will contribute to building the resilience of Afghan communities. Assistance will continue to be delivered in a manner that minimizes the legitimization or benefit to the de facto authorities.

The UN will provide support based on the principle of **inclusion and participation** of all relevant stakeholders across geographical locations, particularly those most marginalized, in the spirit of equity, equality, diversity, fairness, and non-discrimination. However, as a consequence of the unprecedented attack on the rights of women and girls by the de facto authorities, the ACG will redouble its efforts promoting **gender equality and women's empowerment** in Afghanistan in a *'by women for women and girls'* approach, including by redirecting support for the direct benefit of women and girls. There will also be a focus on identifying and achieving **durable solutions to**

displacement to ensure that forcibly displaced women, girls, boys, and men become agents of development and fully participate in the stabilisation and reconstruction of Afghanistan.

Cultural sensitivity – the respect for local customs, cultures, and religions, while simultaneously adhering to international human rights and humanitarian standards – should be observed. Civil society and citizen engagement will be key in this regard.

Finally, the Strategic Framework is underpinned by a **triple-nexus** approach to strengthen coordination and complementarity, and to maximize synergies between humanitarian, development, and peace partners in Afghanistan and enhance the longer-term **sustainability** of interventions, including through **area-based approaches to programming**, while avoiding conditions that contribute to aid dependency.

The aid community aims to **stay and deliver** and remain guided by international norms and standards, as reiterated in the *“Guiding Principles and Donors’ Expectations following the recent bans by the Taliban in Afghanistan”* adopted by the humanitarian community in February 2023 and the *“Complementary principles and considerations for Afghanistan Coordination Group donors’ support to Basic Needs and Livelihoods in Afghanistan”* adopted by the ACG in April 2023.

The more egregious the violations on fundamental rights, the more critical support will be to the most vulnerable. Providing protection by presence and by bearing witness continue to be central elements of the continued presence by all aid partners. This Strategic Framework recognizes the need for strong and principled messaging on human rights to the de facto authorities and Afghan communities given the very strong expectation from affected people we serve and from the constituency around the globe.

3.4 Core Planning Assumptions and Risks

The UN Strategic Framework is predicated on the assumption that the context in Afghanistan will broadly remain as per the *status quo*, allowing for minor variations across thematic and sectoral areas. However, there are considerable risks that the situation may deteriorate which will affect progress towards the realization of UN Strategic Framework outcomes. While not exhaustive, below provides an outline of some of the key risk factors that should be considered and mitigated in the implementation of the UN Strategic Framework.

Political Stability and Inclusion: Deterioration in the political situation and increasingly fractious political dynamics contribute to further political instability and threats to peace. Exclusionary and non-representative governance with limited civic engagement and continued restrictions on civil society. Further constraints are imposed on democratic and civic engagement.

Donor Support: Trends in Afghanistan and globally leading to a reduction of financial support from the donor community to the United Nations and NGOs, limiting the scope and impact of humanitarian and basic needs assistance.

Operational Space: Additional constraints imposed on the delivery of humanitarian and basic human needs assistance, including on geographic access and through increased targeting of female Afghan NGO and UN staff.

Internal Security: Increases in violence and insecurity due to inter-communal tensions, resource-based conflict, fighting between the Taliban and opposition groups, increased activities of violent extremist groups, growing crime rates due to poverty, and others.

Justice and Rule of Law: A heterodox and highly conservative interpretation of Sharia law continues as the basis for the justice system, with the rights of women, children, and other vulnerable groups further undermined; discrimination against women and girls widespread; and the rule of law eroded.

Human Rights and Gender Equality: Continued non-adherence by the de facto authorities to international norms and standards on human rights and gender equality and increasingly harsh restrictions placed on the rights on women and girls.

Economic Stability and Human Development: Continued isolation of Afghanistan from global financial system and accelerated economic deterioration resulting in increased unemployment, poverty, food insecurity, and humanitarian needs. Further reduction in availability, quality, and accessibility of essential services resulting in declining human development outcomes.

Environment and Climate Change: Increased frequency, intensity, and duration of natural disasters, exacerbated by climate change, resulting in increased humanitarian needs and resource-based conflicts.

Humanitarian Needs: Predicted and unforeseen shocks and crises trigger significant increase in humanitarian needs, including large scale movements of people inside the country and outwards. The humanitarian needs of the country may lead to the prioritization of high-cost humanitarian aid over more longer-term, sustainable solutions.

4. United Nations Priorities, Outcomes, and Partnerships



4. United Nations Priorities, Outcomes, and Partnerships

In close consultations with our Member States, partners, and stakeholders, the UNCT has identified three complementary and mutually reinforcing joint priorities as it supports the basic human needs of the Afghan people. The UNCT and the Humanitarian Country Team have also agreed on two collective outcomes, described below.

Some of this work is already underway under the previous Transitional Engagement Framework. Other aspects of the new UN Strategic Framework are perhaps more aspirational, such as on human rights, governance, and the rights and inclusion of women and girls. The UNCT believes it is important to lay out a principled approach to these issues and make concerted efforts to resolve some of these complexities.

The United Nations Strategic Framework is an offer of assistance to the people of Afghanistan. Whether the UN can implement this framework depends in part on external factors, most notably on actions by the de facto authorities and on donor support. The UN expects to be deeply engaged in maintaining and expanding the access and operational space necessary for implementation.

4.1 Sustained Essential Services

OUTCOME 1.

By the end of 2025, more people in Afghanistan, particularly the most marginalized, can equitably access essential services that meet minimum quality standards.

Sustaining and improving equitable and inclusive access to essential, people-centred social services is crucial for people in Afghanistan — particularly the most vulnerable and marginalized — to improve their well-being, break the pattern of intergenerational poverty, support gender equity and equality, strengthen resilience to life-cycle risks, reduce vulnerability to shocks, and contribute to the country's recovery. Progress towards this outcome will depend on the extent to which essential health, nutrition, education, employment, water, sanitation, hygiene, social protection, and protection services are accessible to all, affordable, and can be delivered free from all forms of discrimination.

Essential service providers, including women, will require the operational access, knowledge, and skills so that service delivery meets minimum quality standards. Essential infrastructure and facilities should be improved and accessible to all — including persons with disabilities, gender-responsive, adequate, safe, and culturally and age-appropriate and have the requisite infrastructure and supplies at the point of delivery. The critical foundations, capacities, and systems built over the past two decades will also need to be sustained and strengthened. As such, the UN, in coordination with its partners, will focus their collective support towards the following areas.

Strategic Priority 1: Sustained Essential Services



SDGs Supported

SDG 1: No Poverty; SDG 2: Zero Hunger; SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being; SDG 4: Quality Education; SDG 5: Gender Equality; SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation; SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth; SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities; SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities; SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions; SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals.

UN Entities Supporting Outcome

ILO, IOM, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNMAS, UNODC, UNOPS, UNDP, UN Women, WFP, UN-Habitat, WHO, and UNITAR

Output 1.1: Health and nutrition systems have improved and resilient capacities and resources to deliver accessible, affordable, gender- and age-responsive, shock responsive, and culturally acceptable essential healthcare and nutrition services that prioritize the most vulnerable.

UN health and nutrition partners will strengthen collaboration and strategic partnership, including proactive information sharing, joint planning, and programming, to minimize preventable morbidities, mortality, and improve well-being, especially among women, children, youth, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable population groups.

Delivery of essential healthcare and nutrition services will be strengthened and expanded in underserved areas to reach vulnerable people at each stage of the life cycle, with emphasis on improved access, quality, and patient safety, especially for women and girls. Investments will prioritize evidence-based, effective maternal, child, and adolescent health and nutrition treatment, prevention, and promotion interventions.

Essential foundations of the public health systems will be sustained and strengthened, including progressive transitional strategies and guidelines, trained human resources (with a focus on sustaining and increasing female staff), small-scale critical infrastructure (such as solarization and water, sanitation, and hygiene), models of care (including area-based referral pathways), medical commodities, medicines and vaccines, a functional health information system, monitoring and surveillance, and more effective sub-national coordination. Capacities will be reinforced to prevent, detect, and respond to disease outbreaks and other health and nutrition shocks. The UN will advocate for harmonization and alignment of financial resources toward national health and nutrition priorities and increase transparency, accountability, predictability, adaptability, and efficiency of funding.

Development of policies, strategies, and guidelines in accordance with international standards and best practices may be supported while mechanisms for surveillance, monitoring, and periodic surveys will be enhanced.

Output 1.2: Formal and non-formal public, private, and community-based education systems are better able to sustain and increase access to inclusive, safe, and quality education opportunities for girls, boys, youth, and adults — especially girls and young women — across all levels of education.

UN partners will prioritize interventions at basic education (primary and secondary), technical and vocational education and training (TVET), and higher education levels through support to coordinated education initiatives. These initiatives will form a bridge from humanitarian response to longer-term, inclusive development to ensure continuity of learning while exploring alternative education modalities for those not reached by these initiatives. Targeted support will be provided to the formal and non-formal private and public education system with a focus on quality, monitoring, evidence generation, and planning. Advocacy at all levels for the right to education, especially for girls and women, will be prioritized.

To enable sustainable pathways, the UN will facilitate interventions that include, but not be limited to, in-service teacher/lecturer training and professional development (including for women), integrated school rehabilitation, provision of literacy, school feeding programmes, numeracy and skills development opportunities, alternative education modalities for out-of-school children and youth,

particularly girls, strengthening of school management *Shuras* — including the participation of women in these mechanisms — direct targeted support to basic and tertiary education students, improvement of learning assessments, and stakeholder capacity building on key sectoral functions, including evidence-based planning and monitoring. If education delivery by and for women and girls can be ensured, greater support to school-level management and oversight by sub-national education administrators may be possible, along with larger infrastructure work.

Output 1.3: Stakeholders at national and subnational level are better able to manage and provide access to equitable, gender responsive, sustainable, climate resilient, and safe drinking water, improved sanitation, and positive hygiene practices in rural and poor urban communities.

In collaboration with humanitarian partners, the UN will adopt a two-pronged approach that delivers emergency water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) support while simultaneously implementing longer-term, sustainable solutions that tackle the drivers of WASH-related humanitarian needs.

In coordination with water management and infrastructure-related activities under *Strategic Priority 2*, the UN will prioritize the expansion of access to safe drinking water through the rehabilitation, continuous operation, maintenance, and expansion of water infrastructure in rural and urban locations (enabling through the provision of energy access/services). The UN will also support the implementation of integrated water resources management solutions at all levels to substantially increase water-use efficiency and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity.

Efforts will also be expanded in tackling the poor availability of sanitation — one of the main causes of disease outbreaks in Afghanistan — through the provision of improved gender-responsive sanitation services and facilities, hygiene promotion, expansion of WASH services in communal centres, and the ensuring of availability of menstrual hygiene management for women and adolescent girls.

Output 1.4: Inclusive, equitable, shock responsive national safety net systems are established and operational providing support to and strengthen the resilience of the most vulnerable and marginalized people in Afghanistan.

In the absence of a national social protection system, the UN, with its partners, will coordinate to provide scalable and shock-responsive safety nets that complement humanitarian assistance and build the resilience of the most vulnerable. This will include gender-, age-, and disability-responsive cash or in-kind safety nets beyond 12 months, such as maternal child cash grants, cash for basic needs, protection-related support, school feeding (covered under educational support above), and take-home rations, especially for the most vulnerable groups such as female-headed households, the elderly, and persons with disabilities, among others.

Gender-responsive cash-for-work initiatives will prioritize the construction and rehabilitation of community assets that enhance community resilience by supporting livelihoods, improving access to essential services and markets, and reducing vulnerability to disasters and shocks (e.g., tertiary roads, irrigation systems, disaster risk prevention infrastructure, afforestation areas). In coordination with

related activities undertaken under *Strategic Priority 2*, cash-for-training initiatives will build the skills of the most vulnerable based on local labour market demand to enhance employability, livelihoods, and longer-term financial stability. The UN will also work with NGOs and donor partners to develop an interim strategy to enhance coherence in approaches and funding within the sector.

Output 1.5: Relevant providers and stakeholders have strengthened capacities to increase access to and improve the provision of preventive, mitigating, and responsive protection services — including on child protection, gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, and explosive hazards — to the most vulnerable at family and community levels.

The UN will work closely with protection partners, civil society, NGOs, employers' and workers' organizations, and other stakeholders to enhance their capacities and find entry points that are safe to deliver mental health and psychosocial support services — including psychosocial first aid — scale up comprehensive, quality, and survivors-centred gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and response services, including initiatives to address harmful socio-cultural norms that perpetuate GBV, and risk mitigation and response services, including for domestic violence, child labour, marriage, recruitment, and sexual exploitation and abuse — such as *bacha bazi*²⁰ — and other harmful practices. Provision of individualized support will be improved through the strengthening of service delivery, case management services, mapping of referral systems for women and girl survivors of violence and people with specialized needs, supporting legal identity systems (including for registration of births), and facilitating access to housing, land, and property. Community structures will be empowered with knowledge and skills and through dialogue and engagement to ensure local buy-in and ownership of protection services. Additional safe spaces will be created to ensure women facing restrictions continue to participate in community life and access essential services. Youth-friendly spaces, centres, and services will also be supported. Humanitarian mine action will mitigate the impact of explosive ordnance on civilians and enable the delivery of essential services. Direct advocacy and engagement will be undertaken with the de facto authorities on key protection concerns, particularly those related to women and children.

Leave no one behind: Interventions undertaken in support of this outcome will prioritize improving equitable access to essential services for those living in hard-to-reach areas, facing intersecting vulnerabilities, including those traditionally excluded and marginalized. Focus will be placed on improving access to women, children, and youth (particularly girls), the elderly, persons with disabilities, IDPs, returnees, refugees, those living in remote locations, people who use drugs, as well as high-burden urban communities. The UN will work with implementing partners and service delivery providers to ensure an intersectional approach that factors the specific needs of those that are left behind or at risk of being left behind into their planning and service delivery.

Partnerships and Sustainability: To achieve impact at scale, the UN will mobilize and engage with both national and international partners across the nexus to ensure standardization in approach, knowledge-sharing and iterative planning, equality in service provision, and equity in coverage. To ensure alignment in coverage, enhance complementarities, and avoid duplications across the humanitarian-development nexus, coordination and joint planning with the humanitarian cluster

²⁰ Child sexual abuse perpetrated by adult men on boys.

system will be institutionalized. Coordination among actors — including across sectors under this and other outcomes — will be strengthened for more inclusive and participatory collaboration and coordination to ensure a more holistic approach to increasing resilience.

The UN will leverage and build on the experience of local stakeholders to strengthen partnerships with community-level structures and service providers, including Community Development Councils, *Shuras* (including, where possible, women *Shuras*), NGOs, and civil society groups, especially women-led civil society organizations (CSOs) and youth groups, among others. Where appropriate and safe, private sector service providers, employers' and workers' organizations, and women and girls as individuals will be engaged as key partners and potential agents of change. Sectoral coordination with the international community will be undertaken through the ACG and its Strategic Thematic Working Groups.

Assumptions: The highly fluid and fragile nature of the context in Afghanistan poses significant challenges to formulate with confidence any planning assumptions for a multi-year period. Notwithstanding this caveat, progress towards this outcome is predicated on the following assumptions:

1. Political stability, the security environment, and de facto authorities' permissiveness for the delivery of international aid are sufficient to enable UN entities and other implementing partners' access to service delivery locations and principled delivery of services.
2. De facto authorities and beneficiary communities accept the need for essential services, particularly for the most vulnerable and marginalized, including women and girls, and there is clear and practical guidance on technical engagement with de facto authorities on delivery of basic services.
3. De facto authorities are willing to allow girls and women access to essential services without interference.
4. Donor support continues and is sufficient for funding non-humanitarian programmatic interventions.

UNCT Configuration: The following resident and non-resident UN entities working in Afghanistan will leverage their collective expertise, capacities, and assets in delivery support towards achievement of this outcome: ILO, IOM, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UN-Habitat, UNMAS, UNODC, UNOPS, UNDP, UN Women, WFP, and WHO.

SDGs supported: *SDG 1: No Poverty; SDG 2: Zero Hunger; SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being; SDG 4: Quality Education; SDG 5: Gender Equality; SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation; SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth; SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities; SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities; SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions; SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals.*

4.2 Economic Opportunities and Resilient Livelihoods

OUTCOME 2.

By the end of 2025, more people in Afghanistan, notably women and vulnerable groups, will benefit from an increasingly inclusive economy, with greater equality of economic opportunities, jobs, more resilient livelihoods, strengthened food value chains, and improved natural resources management.

Addressing Afghanistan's chronic economic challenges will require community-level resilience strengthening towards shocks and stressors — including natural hazards and economic shocks — and bottom-up and inclusive economic recovery that creates decent jobs, raises incomes, and increases agricultural and industrial production. This will require greater macroeconomic and fiscal stability and an enabling environment that facilitates economic growth and creates more decent work opportunities, especially for excluded groups such as women. Private sector-led economic development will depend on a more favourable policy and regulatory environment, as well as the availability of the requisite business development services, access to finance, and infrastructure that stimulates investment and growth. Functional tripartite forums with the engagement of trade unions and employers' associations will be required to ensure decent work and compliance of working conditions with labour standards. Strengthening a labour force that meets labour market needs will require investments in skilled personnel to deliver necessary market-relevant knowledge and skills.

More efficient, sustainable, and resilient agribusiness, handcraft, and garment value chains underpinned by sustainable natural resource management will support economic opportunities for rural livelihoods and contribute towards improved food security. Employment-intensive and climate-resilient approaches to the rehabilitation and construction of community assets will create jobs and build resilience. Additionally, the capacities of communities, ecosystems, food systems, and institutions across the country will also need to be strengthened to anticipate, absorb, manage, and adapt to natural shocks, including climate-related shocks and stressors, especially floods and droughts.

However, the country's potential can only be realized if restrictions on women's rights related to mobility, full participation in the economy, and education are removed and their participation is promoted and sustained. The UN, with its partners, will work in the following areas towards achievement of these goals.

Strategic Priority 2: Economic Opportunities & Resilient Livelihoods

Outcome 2

By the end of 2025, more people in Afghanistan, notably women and vulnerable groups, will benefit from an increasingly inclusive economy, with greater equality of economic opportunities, jobs, more resilient livelihoods, strengthened food value chains, and improved natural resources management



Output 2.1: Economic Stabilization

Economic and financial institutions and stakeholders have improved capacities to contribute to economic stabilization and pro-poor, private sector-led economic recovery.



Output 2.2: Private Sector Development

Private sector enterprises, particularly MSMEs, have improved access to finance, asset support and business development services, and increased business opportunities that stimulate growth and decent job creation.



Output 2.3: Sustainable Agriculture and Livelihoods

Rural communities can better and sustainably manage natural resources, increase agricultural productivity, and value addition, and manage and reduce disaster risks, enhance biodiversity, contributing to increased resilience, food security and nutrition, decent work, and sustainable livelihoods for all Afghans.

SDGs Supported

SDG 1: No Poverty; **SDG 2:** Zero Hunger; **SDG 4:** Quality Education; **SDG 5:** Gender Equality; **SDG 6:** Clean Water and Sanitation; **SDG 7:** Affordable and Clean Energy; **SDG 8:** Decent Work and Economic Growth; **SDG 9:** Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure; **SDG 10:** Reduced Inequalities; **SDG 12:** Responsible Consumption and Production; **SDG 13:** Climate Action; **SDG 15:** Life on Land; **SDG 17:** Partnerships for Goals.

UN Entities Supporting Outcome

FAO, ILO, IOM, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNODC, UNOPS, UN Women, UN-Habitat, UNESCO, WFP, and UNITAR.

Output 2.1: Economic and financial institutions and stakeholders have improved capacities to contribute to economic stabilization and pro-poor, private-sector-led economic recovery.

The UN and other international agencies will generate evidence-based scenario simulations using economic modelling tools to provide visibility on the future trajectories of the Afghan economy to inform economic recovery-related programmatic recommendations and contribute to more credible macroeconomic management policies that support price stability and inclusive economic growth.

Technical assistance will also be provided to financial sector institutions to develop industry- and client-specific financial products — including access to remittances and payment systems, promote learning and exchange of best practices in financing, and re-establish correspondent banking relationships with foreign banks that will foster international trade and transit.

Where appropriate, the UN and its partners will examine opportunities provided by existing/growing regional trade dynamics. Additionally, various financial guarantee schemes — such as deposit insurance and loan guarantees — will be provided with the aim of restoring trust in the banks and the market. These interventions will fuel the revitalization of banking services and the overall financial system in addition to rebuilding a pro-poor and inclusive microfinance industry.

Output 2.2: Private sector enterprises, particularly MSMEs, have improved access to finance, asset support and business development services, and increased business opportunities that stimulate growth and decent job creation.

The UN and its partners will support start-ups, MSMEs, agribusinesses, and the capacity development of business services providers, including employers' and workers' organizations, and business development mentors to facilitate private-sector-led growth and decent job creation. Women-owned enterprises, women-led organizations, and women-focused organizations will be key beneficiaries and partners. In coordination with TVET initiatives under *Strategic Priority 1*, the UN will support the development of vocational skills, entrepreneurship, and life skills that match market needs and demands and enhances the livelihoods, particularly of women, youth, persons with disabilities, and other marginalized groups, as well as their participation in the labour force.

The empirical findings from these assessments will inform efforts on the development of existing market infrastructure and creation of new infrastructure and opportunities for MSMEs to enhance productivity, build on pre-existing resilience, and increase the adoption of technologies to improve productivity and standards across value chains. With its partners, the UN will also focus on increasing business opportunities, availability of market information, linkages with producers, access to financial and energy services, and cost reduction measures, particularly in targeted population centres where economic activities are concentrated and where MSMEs are typically clustered in accordance with their specific value chains. The UN will work to promote women's participation in the economy by addressing barriers restricting their engagement, supporting women-led enterprises, and providing technical support to women entrepreneurs. The intended interventions will also promote international labour standards, including occupational safety and health and elimination of child labour and forced labour, in target MSMEs.

Output 2.3: Rural communities can better and sustainably manage natural resources, increase agricultural productivity and value addition, manage and reduce disaster risks, and enhance biodiversity, contributing to increased resilience, food security and nutrition, decent work, and sustainable livelihoods for all Afghans.

Interventions supporting rural livelihoods in an increasingly water-stressed environment will be undertaken that build the capacities of communities on the sustainable management and use of natural resources and ecosystem restoration in a conflict-sensitive manner and create opportunities to address gender inequalities. Water resource governance and management will be resourced to ensure improved access by all to clean water for human consumption (*in coordination with WASH-related activities under Priority 1*), equitable and stable storage and supply for agricultural production, and sustainable utilization of water resources at both community and watershed levels. Support will also promote knowledge transfer and sustainable solutions on extension services.

Geographically-tailored interventions will seek to increase food production, reduce food loss, mitigate the impact of natural disasters, improve productivity of vulnerable farmers and herders, and strengthen food value chains capable of improving food security and nutrition for the most vulnerable, including through improved knowledge and skills — such as through extension and farmer field schools — productive inputs and assets, and access to energy, credit, and markets. These initiatives will seek to create opportunities for women to improve access to access land, productive assets, credit, and markets and to engage women, who are most affected by food insecurity, in the food value chain. Construction or rehabilitation of small-scale community infrastructure using employment-intensive and climate-resilient approaches — including roads, bridges, water harvesting and storage structures, irrigation structures, water and soil conservation and clean energy technologies, flood mitigation infrastructure, reservoirs, cold storage, mini-power grids, and processing centres, and preservation of cultural heritage — will be supported in consultation with communities to strengthen community resilience to natural shocks, create jobs, and stimulate economic recovery and community development. The UN and its partners will also consider if and how infrastructure projects left incomplete after August 2021 could be finalized. Ownership, maintenance, and sustainability of facilities will be carefully considered on a case-by-case basis. Disaster risk reduction and early warning systems will be promoted to mitigate the impacts of drought, floods, and other natural disasters on agricultural production and livelihoods. Finally, in response to the opium poppy ban and its consequences, support will be provided for a swift transition of poppy-reliant communities to sustainable and licit livelihoods.

Leave no one behind: Inclusive and equitable poverty reduction will require those most marginalized to have improved access to economic opportunities and jobs. As such, the UN will prioritize those population groups traditionally most economically excluded throughout all its interventions under this outcome and design specifically tailored interventions to better serve these groups according to their needs, preferences, and constraints. These include women (including those in rural areas), youth (including those not in education, employment, and training), rural and geographically remote communities, landless farmers, livestock owners, minority ethnic and religious groups, persons with disabilities, IDPs, returnees, and refugees. Given the severe impediments to their participation in economic life imposed after August 2021, the UN will specifically target women to benefit from its interventions, including through skills development and training, protection against violence and

harassment, support to women-owned enterprises, and gender-responsive labour force participation and natural resource management.

Partnerships and Sustainability: The UN will continue to work with all relevant stakeholders and international financial institutions to facilitate productive, commercial, and financial activity in Afghanistan. The UN will coordinate its engagement with development partners, international financial institutions, and civil society — including women-led organizations — through the ACG structure, particularly within the STWGs on Economic Stabilization and Resilient Agriculture and Livelihoods.

The UN may engage relevant national institutions on activities aimed at supporting MSMEs, facilitating cross-border trade, market regulation, design and implementing policies and regulations that bolster competitiveness, macroeconomic stability, strategy development, and public finance management. Employers' organizations — including the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Investment and Afghanistan Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry, other private sector bodies, and traditional and formal trades associations will also be key partners in supporting economic development. Engagement with community-based organizations will be necessary in supporting agricultural and rural development initiatives.

Assumptions: The highly fluid and fragile nature of the context in Afghanistan poses significant challenges to formulate with confidence any planning assumptions for a multi-year period. Notwithstanding this caveat, progress towards this outcome is predicated on the following assumptions:

1. De facto authorities demonstrate capacity and willingness through its actions to address macroeconomic and fiscal impediments to economic development.
2. Policy and regulatory environment do not deteriorate further, a basic enabling environment exists for private sector enterprises to function, and workers are able to seek safe and secure working conditions and fair pay.
3. Policy space exists for advocacy and programming to improve women's participation in the economy.
4. Decisions and shocks in other countries do not substantially increase prices of key imports needed for business operations and of commodities necessary for basic subsistence.

UNCT Configuration: The following resident and non-resident UN entities working in Afghanistan will leverage their collective expertise, capacities, assets, and partnerships in the coordinated delivery of support towards the achievement of this outcome: **FAO, ILO, IOM, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNODC, UNOPS, UN Women, UN-Habitat, UNESCO, and WFP.**

SDGs Supported: **SDG 1: No Poverty; SDG 2: Zero Hunger; SDG 4: Quality Education; SDG 5: Gender Equality; SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation; SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy; SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth; SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure; SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities; SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production; SDG 13: Climate Action; SDG 15: Life on Land; SDG 17: Partnerships for Goals.**

4.3 Social Cohesion, Inclusion, Gender Equality, Human Rights, and Rule of Law

OUTCOME 3.

By the end of 2025, more people in Afghanistan can participate in an increasingly socially-cohesive, gender-equal, and inclusive society, where the rule of law and human rights are progressively upheld, and more people can participate in governance and decision-making.

Stability, gender equity and equality, inclusive and accountable governance, human rights, labour rights, and the rule of law, in line with international standards, are prerequisites for sustainable development and peace in Afghanistan. Inequality and exclusion are both cause and consequence of conflict. As such, progress towards *Strategic Priority 3* depends on addressing the root causes and the disproportionate impact of conflict on the excluded, particularly women and girls.

Support for citizen engagement and participation in all aspects and levels of political, governance, economic, social, and cultural life — particularly for women, youth, persons living with disabilities, and other excluded groups — will be essential for social cohesion and tackling drivers of inequality and conflict.

Strengthened civil society, especially women- and youth-led civil society, will contribute to locally led development initiatives, while inclusive community reconciliation and peacebuilding will help mitigate violence and resolve disputes through non-violent means. Accountability and transparency can be enhanced through support to independent media, increased access to information and freedom of movement, peaceful assembly, and expression. Strengthening the rights of women and other excluded groups will require addressing policies, structures, and harmful socio-cultural norms, including through engagement with the de facto authorities at all levels, and creating architecture to advance rights across all spheres of life. Measures will be needed to provide specialized and flexible support to women leaders and women-led civil society to support their work.

Coordinated advocacy for alignment of Afghanistan's normative and legal frameworks with international human rights instruments, especially women's rights, while enhancing access to formal and informal justice systems — in line with international standards — particularly for the most excluded will be required. The right to freedom of association and collective bargaining, elimination of forced, child labour, discrimination, and safe and healthy working environment should also be ensured to protect workers' rights, particularly of women. With its partners, the UN will work towards the achievement of this outcome through the outputs below.

Strategic Priority 3: Social Cohesion, Inclusion, Gender Equality, Human Rights, and Rule of Law



Output 3.1: Social Cohesion and Inclusion

Formal and informal governance mechanisms, community-based institutions, and decision-making platforms are more inclusive, responsive, accountable, and better able to contribute to social cohesion and reconciliation.

Output 3.2: Justice and Rule of Law

Justice institutions, including customary/traditional community systems, are better able to provide accessible, effective, equitable, inclusive, transparent, and timely services, and these services are increasingly provided in line with international norms and standards, benefiting all communities, especially vulnerable groups such as women, children, and minorities.

Output 3.3: Human Rights and Women's Rights

Communities, civil society organisations, vulnerable groups, women, and other relevant stakeholders, are more aware of and better able to promote and protect their human rights, aligned with international norms and standards, and mitigate threats to their safety and wellbeing.

SDGs Supported

SDG 5: Gender Equality; SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities; SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities; SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions; SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals.

UN Entities Supporting Outcome

ILO, IOM, OHCHR, UNAMA, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, UN Women, UN-Habitat, WHO, and UNITAR.

Output 3.1: Formal and informal governance mechanisms, community-based institutions, and decision-making platforms are more inclusive, responsive, accountable, and better able to contribute to social cohesion and reconciliation.

The UN will support relevant policy platforms to ensure that all Afghans, particularly women and other groups excluded from national and local decision-making processes, can influence policymaking impacting Afghanistan's future. Enhanced coordination across platforms — particularly those bringing Afghan women, youth, and other excluded groups together and ensuring that various forums inform international decision-making — will be key.

Interventions will advocate advancing inclusive participation in decision-making processes through formal institutions and informal platforms at all levels, to enhance responsive, inclusive, transparent, and accountable governance. This will include strengthening the capacity of Community Development Councils, among others, to enable transparent and gender-equitable decision-making and delivery of aid and promotion of rights.

The UN will promote and support the establishment of local, inclusive mechanisms to build social cohesion within and across communities, including within displaced communities, and address drivers of conflict and social inequalities. Social cohesion will integrate gender across all areas of work to ensure that all activities and interventions create spaces for women to participate and for gender equality concerns to be addressed.

Output 3.2: Justice institutions, including customary and traditional community systems, are better able to provide accessible, effective, equitable, inclusive, transparent, and timely services, and these services are increasingly provided in line with international norms and standards, benefiting all communities, especially vulnerable groups such as women, children, and minorities.

The UN will lead, support, and amplify coordinated advocacy initiatives that promote adherence to the rule of law and access to justice in Afghanistan, including by advocating for processes that clarify legal and constitutional frameworks that uphold international norms and standards, especially human rights. Given the absence of women's access to justice across the country, special emphasis will be placed on addressing severe gender gaps.

Support will create legal awareness among communities, focusing on women and girls, and sensitizing them on their human rights and access to justice mechanisms. Special focus will be placed on supporting gender and age-sensitive access to and meaningful participation in the justice system and reducing the impact of harmful and discriminatory practices against women, children, persons with disabilities, and minority groups.

Flexible, long-term funding will be provided to civil society — especially women-led civil society — in strengthening bottom-up approaches to social cohesion and inclusion, access to justice, protection, and the promotion of human rights while ensuring transparency and accountability. The UN will further advocate for legislation, institutional frameworks, and policies that comply with the United Nations Convention Against Corruption.

Output 3.3: Communities, civil society organizations, vulnerable groups, women, and other relevant stakeholders are more aware of and better able to promote and protect their human rights, aligned with international norms and standards, and mitigate threats to their safety and wellbeing.

The UN will advocate for the promotion and protection of human rights and the alignment of Afghanistan's normative and legal frameworks with international human rights instruments. Advocacy and behaviour change interventions will be pursued to address policies, structures, and harmful socio-cultural norms that perpetuate underlying drivers of social inequalities and conflict. Given the systematic erasure of the rights of women and girls across all spheres of life, the UN will work to restore women's rights and find practical ways to improve the daily lives of women and girls, including their labour rights. Through both technical and financial means, the UNCT will support grassroots organisations present in the country to preserve civic space.

Sex and age disaggregated data and reports will be produced to monitor excluded and at-risk groups, human rights threats, and violations to inform the UN response.

Awareness of human rights will be increased and capacities built, particularly of marginalized and at-risk groups, to identify and prevent rights violations (including those that have been normalized due to harmful socio-cultural norms) and effectively advocate for their rights. Flexible, long-term funding will be provided to community structures, civil society — especially women-led civil society — NGOs, human rights defenders, and labour-related organizations to advance human rights, labour rights, and gender equality. Freedom of association, access to information, ending impunity of violence against journalists, peaceful assembly, opinion, and expression will also be promoted, including through support for a free and independent media.

Leave no one behind: The primary purpose of this outcome is the promotion and protection of the human rights of all, focusing on the most excluded and marginalized groups — women, children, youth, refugees, refugee returnees, IDPs, migrants, ethnic and religious minorities, persons living with disabilities, sexual and gender minorities, people living with and affected by HIV, civil society, media, among others — in Afghanistan to ensure no one is left behind. The UN will continually advocate for the rights of such groups — in line with international standards — and provide direct support to national stakeholders, especially civil society, working to promote and protect the rights of excluded and marginalized groups.

Partnerships and Sustainability: The UN will work with diverse national and international stakeholders. Local structures, such as Community Development Councils, Shuras, and Jirgas, will be key partners to advance inclusive community-based decision making and dispute resolution. Given that these structures are primarily male-dominated, active efforts will be made to finding practical pathways for women's participation in local structures. In addition, partnerships with civil society, national and international NGOs, and human rights defenders will support implementing work related to rule of law and access to justice, promotion and protection of human rights, especially women's rights, socio-cultural norms, social cohesion, gender equality, research, and documentation.

Cooperation will be enhanced with relevant national and international organizations and institutions — such as the International Legal Foundation, International Development Law Organization, Organization for Islamic Cooperation, the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Center, Integrity Watch

Afghanistan, and the Al-Azhar University — on issues related to access to justice, Sharia Law, and anti-corruption.

The UN will continue to closely engage and coordinate with the international community partners providing support to Afghanistan, including through the ACG and particularly the Gender and Human Rights STWG. At the international level, the UN will continue to work closely with various international human rights mechanisms and international bodies, including UN Human Rights Council, Treaty Bodies, Special Rapporteurs, and ILO supervisory bodies.

The UN will enhance system-wide coherence in support of this outcome, including through expansion of UN inter-agency community-based planning initiatives — which give voice to displacement-affected communities and promote inclusive decision-making, local ownership, and social cohesion — and initiatives aimed at strengthening civil society, especially women-led civil society.

Assumptions: The highly fluid and fragile nature of the context in Afghanistan poses significant challenges to formulate with confidence any planning assumptions for a multi-year period. Notwithstanding this caveat, progress towards this outcome is predicated on the following assumptions:

1. Incremental progress is possible on agreeing and codifying national governance and constitutional and legal frameworks, in line with international standards, especially those related to the rights of women and minorities; and the de facto authorities are committed to accountability and tackling corruption.
2. De facto authorities and formal and informal institutions are open to engaging with the international community, particularly the UN, on human rights and gender equality, and women's participation related issues.
3. Notwithstanding restrictions already imposed, informal institutions, CSOs and NGOs, and other stakeholders continue to be able to operate and receive support from and freely consult with from international partners, including the UN, especially women-led organizations whose operations are also impacted by a broader set of gender-specific restrictions.
4. Despite potential difficulties and setbacks in advancing on stated objectives, the international community remains committed to supporting efforts to advance human rights, women's rights, labour rights, social cohesion, and the rule of law in Afghanistan.

UNCT Configuration: The following resident and non-resident UN entities working in Afghanistan will leverage their collective expertise, capacities, assets, and partnerships in the coordinated delivery of support towards achievement of this outcome: **ILO**, **IOM**, **OHCHR**, **UNAMA**, **UNDP**, **UNESCO**, **UNFPA**, **UNHCR**, **UNICEF**, **UNODC**, **UN Women**, **UN-Habitat**, and **WHO**.

SDGs supported: **SDG 5: Gender Equality**; **SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities**; **SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities**; **SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions**; **SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals**.

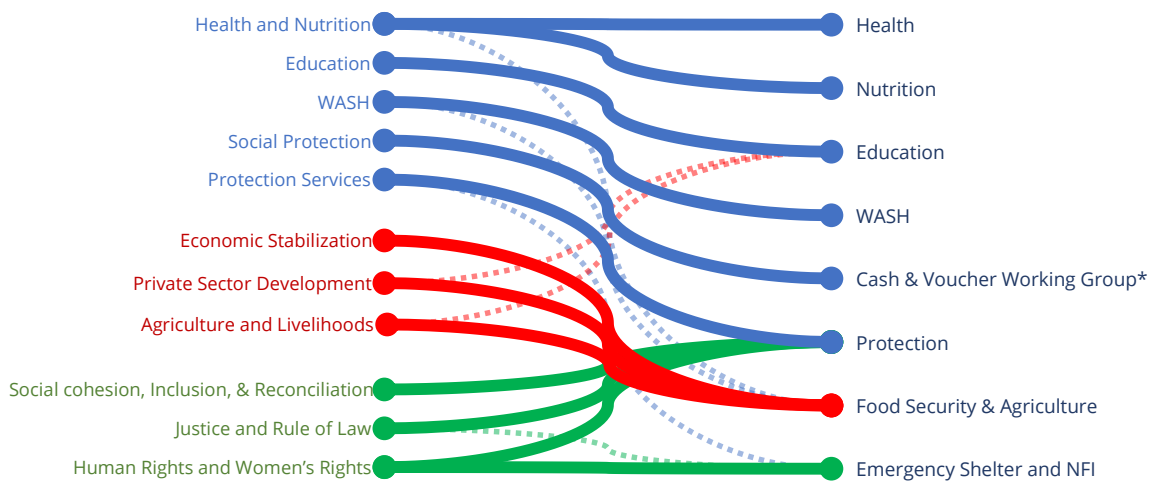
4.4 Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus

Where appropriate, the UN will endeavour to apply a humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach throughout the design, coordination, and implementation of its activities in support of this UN Strategic Framework.

The UN Strategic Framework complements humanitarian investments made through successive Humanitarian Response Plans in a manner that strengthens the resilience of the most vulnerable groups by promoting approaches that enable people to have their basic human needs met by reducing risks to their well-being; mitigating suffering from displacement; preventing conflict; and helping people and communities anticipate, prepare, respond, and recover from shocks and crises. Development of programmatic responses will be underpinned by multidimensional, cross-pillar analysis to help identify, prioritize, and sequence catalytic interventions that help to ameliorate the causes of vulnerability.

Operationalization of a cross-pillar approach requires close collaboration and coordination with actors across the humanitarian, development, and peace continuum. With due consideration to the primacy of humanitarian principles and space, the UN will strengthen its partnerships with humanitarian coordination mechanisms — notably the Humanitarian Country Team and the humanitarian cluster system — including through more regular and structured engagements with UN Results Groups and STWGs that will facilitate improved and complementary analysis, coordination, planning, and implementation. UN interventions will also be guided by the ‘IDP Solutions Strategic Framework,’ which integrates a cross-pillar approach to systematic and collaborative area-based planning and programming for solutions to protracted internal displacement in Afghanistan.

UN Strategic Framework & Humanitarian Response Linkages



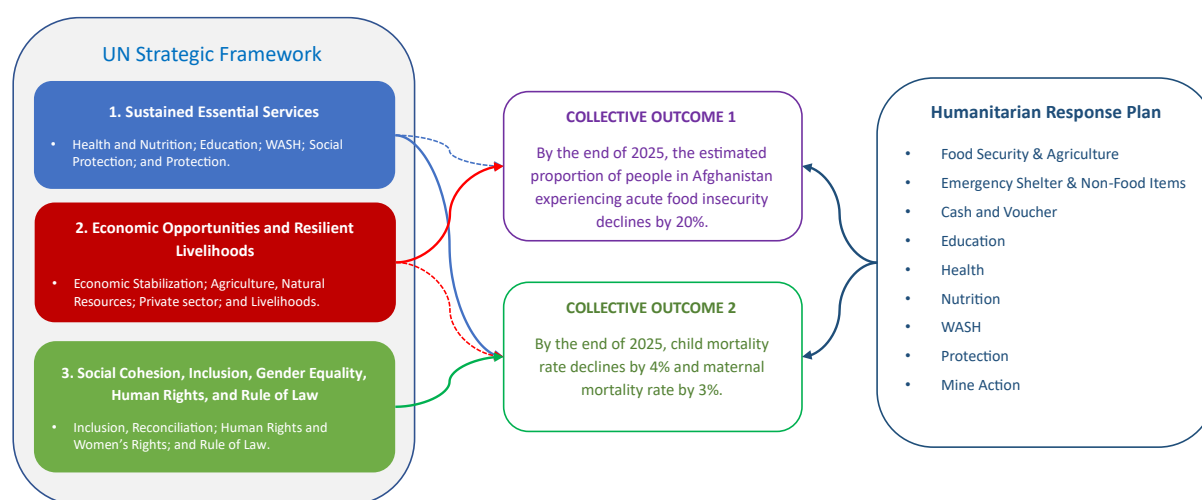
* Potential indirect linkages not exhaustive

In addition to its three *core* outcomes, the UN Strategic Framework also integrates a set of *Collective Outcomes*, outlining specific, jointly envisioned results with the aim of addressing and reducing needs, risks, and vulnerabilities, requiring the combined effort of humanitarian, development, and peace communities.²¹ UN entities will prioritize multisectoral and cross-pillar interventions undertaken in support of the UN Strategic Framework’s *core* outcomes that contribute to the achievement of the Collective Outcomes. These Collective Outcomes are:

- **CO1: By the end of 2025, the estimated proportion of people in Afghanistan experiencing acute food insecurity (IPC Phases 3 and 4) declines by 20%.**
- **CO2: By the end of 2025, child mortality rate declines by 4% and maternal mortality rate by 3%.**

The Collective Outcomes will be monitored through its own set of outcome indicators (*see Collective Outcome indicators in Annex I*) — many of which are also reflected within the indicator frameworks of the three core outcomes — and will be reported against through the annual monitoring and reporting process for the UN Strategic Framework.

Figure 2: UN Strategic Framework and Humanitarian Linkages to the Collective Outcomes



²¹ According to the [Inter-Agency Standing Committee](#), “a collective outcome is a jointly envisioned result with the aim of addressing and reducing needs, risks and vulnerabilities, requiring the combined effort of humanitarian, development and peace communities and other actors as appropriate...They should be developed through joint (or joined-up) analysis, complementary planning and programming, effective leadership/coordination, refined financing beyond project-based funding and sequencing in formulation and implementation.”

5. UN Strategic Framework Implementation Plan



5. UN Strategic Framework Implementation Plan

5.1 UN Strategic Framework Governance

In the absence of a nationally led aid coordination architecture or a Joint UN-Government Steering Committee, coordination of UN Strategic Framework implementation with external partners will be primarily undertaken through ACG.

Under the oversight of the ACG, STWGs will enable technical-level coordination between the UN entities, donors, international financial institutions, and NGOs to improve the quality and coherence of aid and policy dialogue in their respective sectors. STWGs will coordinate existing and planned programmatic activities across partners to ensure complementarity, avoid duplication, help identify programmatic gaps, and recommend potential interventions based on jointly identified needs. As necessary, STWGs will be supported by sector-specific sub-groups aligned to the key thematic priority areas of each Group.

For its part, the UN will directly structure its own internal coordination arrangements (Results Groups) against the ACG Framework/UN Strategic Framework priorities to enable a coordinated and coherent UN system-wide contribution to the work of the STWGs.

Based on the results of the partners' various reporting processes, as well as an assessment of the evolving country context, the ACG will undertake a comprehensive annual review of the ACG Framework to ensure it remains relevant to the prevailing needs and to make any necessary adjustments to the Framework, including to its priorities, outcomes, areas of intervention, targets, risks, and assumptions. Any changes made to the ACG Framework will be mirrored through simultaneous and correspondent adjustments to the UN Strategic Framework.

5.2 UN Strategic Framework Management Structure

To ensure effective implementation of the UN Strategic Framework, the UN in Afghanistan will configure its management, coordination, and implementation arrangements to enhance system-wide coherence, efficiency, collaboration, and impact in the delivery of their collective mandates.

Under the leadership of the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator (DSRSG/RC/HC) and with representation of the heads of UN entities, the **United Nations Country Team** (UNCT) is the primary mechanism for inter-agency coordination for delivery in support of the UN Strategic Framework and is responsible for the overall effectiveness of the UN system's contributions and results. UNCT members will align their respective country programming instruments to the priorities and outcomes of the UN Strategic Framework and in formulating programmatic interventions in support of its collective objectives.

Under the direction of the UNCT and comprised of the deputy heads of UN entities or senior programme managers, the **Programme Management Team** (PMT) is responsible for overall technical-level oversight and coordination of UN Strategic Framework implementation. The PMT will keep the UNCT informed on the status of implementation and provide strategic advisory support and

recommendations as necessary. **UN Regional Teams** will be key in facilitating sub-national coordination among UN partners and other stakeholders to strengthen area-based delivery of the UN Strategic Framework at provincial level.

Under the direction of the UNCT, the **Operations Management Team** (OMT) will continue to improve operational coherence, efficiencies, and cost-effectiveness of the UN's delivery in support of the UN Strategic Framework through its common Business Operation Strategy 2.0 (2020–2025) (*see section 4.6 for further information on the Business Operations Strategy*).

Structured against its priorities and outcomes, **Results Groups** will be responsible for the technical level operationalization of the UN Strategic Framework. Under the oversight of the PMT, and in coordination with their respective STWGs, Results Groups will undertake sectoral level coordination in their respective focus areas, assess programmatic gaps, develop programmatic interventions based on jointly identified needs, formulate output-level joint workplans, and report on progress through annual UN Country Results Reports (*see section 5.3 for further information*).

Under the leadership of the DSRSG/RC/HC with support from UNCT, the **National Durable Solutions Working Group** will be custodian of the *Strategic Framework on Solutions to Internal Displacement* and will be tasked with coordinating its implementation with partners across the nexus — including through programming in support of the UN Strategic Framework — to ensure concerted efforts are directed towards finding solutions to displacement.

The **Human Rights, Youth, Gender, and Disability and Inclusion** theme groups will support the UN's collective efforts towards, respectively, human rights, youth engagement and empowerment, gender equality and women's empowerment, and inclusion of persons with disabilities through the UN Strategic Framework. The **PSEA Taskforce** will ensure the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse by delivering programmes towards target beneficiaries.

The **Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Working Group** will provide technical advisory support to the PMT and Results Groups regarding data quality assurance, results planning, and ongoing monitoring and reporting of results against the UN Strategic Framework and its joint workplans in accordance with its Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan (*see chapter 5 for further information on the duties of the M&E Working Group*). The **Data Working Group** will ensure effective coordination of data collection and dissemination across the UN system to facilitate the design of data-driven programmatic interventions.

The **UN Communication Group** will coordinate joint strategic communications initiatives pertaining to the UN's collective activities and achievements towards the realization of UN Strategic Framework priorities, including through the UN Afghanistan website and related social media platforms, as well as through those of individual UN entities.

The UNCT will be supported by a **Risk Management Team** comprised of agency risk management experts and focal points responsible to assess and advise the UNCT on the strategic common risks associated with UNSF implementation, identify opportunities, and recommend strategies and tools for joint risk mitigation. Through enhanced collaboration and information sharing, common risks, such as fraud and corruption, can be addressed more effectively, in addition to matters relating to

inconsistent donor conditionalities, staff duty of care, application of engagement principles, strategic communication, and restrictions on women’s rights, among others. The Risk Management Team is chaired by the Chief of the Risk Management Coordination Section, under the direction of the DSRSG/RC/HC.

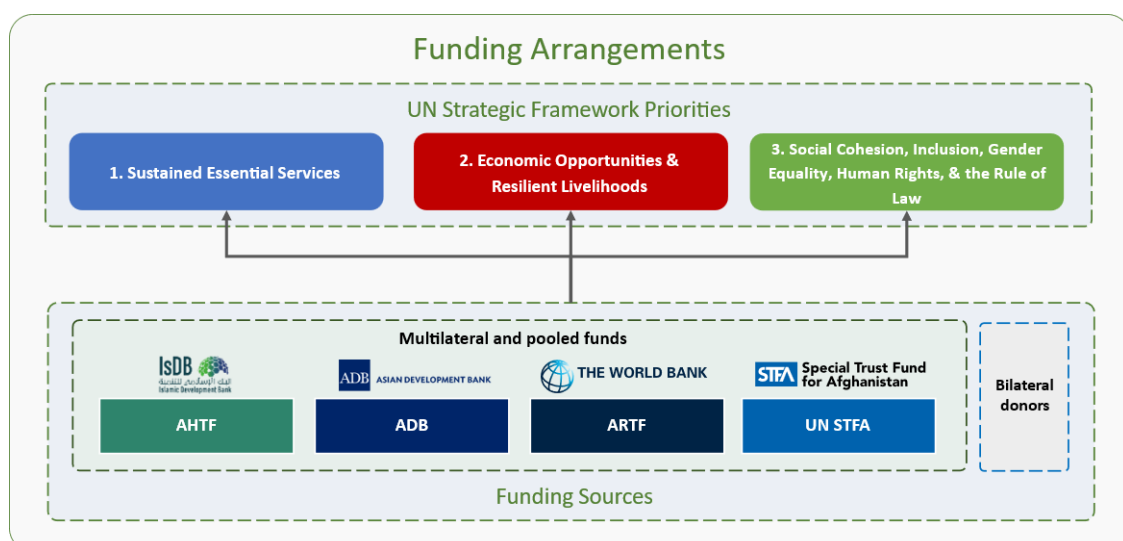
Embedded in the Development Pillar of UNAMA, the **Resident Coordinator’s Office**, led by the Head of the Resident Coordinator’s Office under the overall direction of the triple-hatted DSRSG/RC/HC, will coordinate and guide all interagency mechanisms and will facilitate UN system engagement with external multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms. The Office will further enable non-resident UN entities to participate and engage in UN interagency coordination mechanisms and processes for the implementation of the UN Strategic Framework.

5.3 Resourcing the UN Strategic Framework

The significant decline in non-humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan following August 2021 necessitates the UN to leverage and utilize financial resources from a wide range of sources to deliver on its commitments to the people of Afghanistan. This will require greater effectiveness and coordination with internal and external partners in the delivery of common objectives.

In line with the commitments in the global Funding Compact, the UN in Afghanistan will develop a funding framework that will assess the amount, type, source, duration, and sequence of financial resources that are required, available, projected, and those required to be mobilized to deliver on the outcomes and outputs of the UN Strategic Framework. The funding framework will form the basis of periodic funding dialogues with donor partners.

The UN will prioritize joint programming and pooled funding mechanisms, particularly the Special Trust Fund for Afghanistan, as the preferred programming and funding modalities. Effective inter-fund coordination through the ACG across the UN, World Bank, Asian Development Bank, and Islamic Development Bank trust funds — as well as with bilateral donor funding — will be undertaken to maximize coherence and effectiveness and to harmonize strategies as well as monitor portfolios, pipelines, objectives, activities, and results.



The UN will also explore opportunities to mobilize finances for innovative and catalytic programmatic interventions through global UN funds, including the Joint SDG Fund, Peacebuilding Fund, and Human Security Trust Fund.

In line with the Management and Accountability Framework of the UN Development and Resident Coordinator System, the DSRSG/RC/HC will support joint resource mobilization initiatives while UN entities will keep the DSRSG/RC/HC informed of their resource mobilization plans.

The UN system agencies will provide support to the development and implementation of activities within the UN Strategic Framework, which may include technical support, cash assistance, supplies, commodities and equipment, procurement services, transport, funds for advocacy, research and studies, consultancies, programme development, monitoring and evaluation, training activities and staff support. Part of the UN system entities' support may be provided to non-governmental and civil society organizations as implementing partners, as agreed within the framework of the individual workplans and project documents.

Additional support may include access to UN organization-managed global information systems, the network of the UN system agencies' country offices and specialized information systems — including rosters of consultants and providers of development services, and access to the support provided by the network of UN specialized agencies, funds, and programmes. The UN system agencies shall appoint staff and consultants for programme development, programme support, and technical assistance, as well as monitoring and evaluation activities.

Subject to annual reviews and progress in the implementation of the programme, UN agency funds are distributed by calendar year and in accordance with the UN Strategic Framework. These budgets will be reviewed and further detailed in the workplans and project documents. Funds not earmarked by donors to UN development system agencies for specific activities may be reallocated to other programmatically equally worthwhile activities.

5.4 Moving from the Strategic Framework to Programming Instruments

As the primary overarching strategic planning framework against which all UN development system entities must contribute, the UN Strategic Framework will inform respective country programming instruments to all UN entities operating in Afghanistan.

To ensure maximum coherence and coordination across the UN system for the delivery of collective results, UN entity country programming instruments will integrate verbatim the priorities and outcomes of the UN Strategic Framework. Notwithstanding core humanitarian interventions covered within the Humanitarian Response Plan, all activities undertaken by UN entities will contribute to UN Strategic Framework outcomes and outputs. As it also serves as an Integrated Strategic Framework, UNAMA will align its results-based budgeting processes against the priorities and outcomes of the UN Strategic Framework.

The DSRSG/RC/HC will engage with UN entities on the alignment of their respective country programming instruments to ensure their derivation from and alignment to the UN Strategic Framework in accordance with the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework Guiding

Principles and Guidance and in line with UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/72/279 (2018).²² The DSRSG/RC/HC will provide written confirmation to respective UN entities' Regional Directors or equivalent that their draft country programming documents are derived from and aligned to the UN Strategic Framework.

5.5 Joint Workplans

The UN Strategic Framework will be made operational through the development of joint workplans,²³ which describe the specific results to be achieved and will form an agreement between the UN system agencies and each implementing partner as necessary on the use of resources. To the extent possible, the UN system agencies and partners will use the minimum documents necessary, namely the UN Strategic Framework and joint workplans, to implement programmatic initiatives. However, as necessary and appropriate, project documents can be prepared using, inter alia, the relevant text from the UN Strategic Framework and joint workplans.²⁴

Developed by the respective Results Groups, the joint workplans will ensure transparency and accountability in their implementation and help translate outcomes into concrete, measurable, and time-bound outputs. All resident and non-resident UN entities implementing in support of UN Strategic Framework outcomes will contribute to the joint workplans. Joint workplans will be updated on a regular basis to reflect changes in programmatic responses based on the evolving context and changing priorities and needs. The joint workplans will also represent the UN's consolidated contribution to sectoral-level planning processes that may be undertaken through the STWGs.

Aligned to the priorities and outcomes of the UN Strategic Framework, joint workplans will be reflected on the online UNINFO platform for increased transparency and accountability and to facilitate streamlined annual reporting through UN Country Results Reports.

5.6 The Business Operations Strategy

Recognizing the importance of the harmonized approach, the UN in Afghanistan initiated the formulation of a results-based Business Operations Strategy (BOS 2.0), which was finalized in December 2020.

Underpinned by the principles of mutual recognition, client satisfaction, and cost effectiveness, the BOS 2.0 aims to reduce duplication, leverage the common bargaining power of the UN, maximize economies of scale, and reduce transaction costs across its common service lines. These include administration, human resources, premises and facilities, finance services, information and communication technology, logistics, and procurement.

²² United Nations General Assembly Resolution (2018). Repositioning of the United Nations development system in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system.

²³ As per the UNDG Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for countries adopting the "Delivering as One" approach.

²⁴ In the case of UNDP, reference to "Implementing Partner(s)" shall mean "Executing Agency(s)" as used in the SBAA. Where there are multiple implementing partners identified in a workplan, a Principal Implementing Partner will be identified who will have responsibility for convening, coordinating and overall monitoring (programme and financial) of all the Implementing Partners identified in the workplan to ensure that inputs are provided and activities undertaken in a coherent manner to produce the results of the workplan.

The BOS 2.0 focuses on quality and efficiency gains aimed at reducing internal transaction costs and providing significant cost savings on externally sourced goods and services. The projected cost avoidance and efficiency gains of the BOS 2.0 amount to US\$ 28.7 million over the period 2020–2025. The realized savings for 2020–2022 amounted to US\$ 14 million.

6. CCA Update and Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan



6. CCA Update and Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan

6.1 Updating the UN Common Country Analysis

Afghanistan's rapidly evolving context necessitates an analytical framework that provides accountability and is adaptive and responsive to shifting dynamics, trends, and needs to ensure that programmatic interventions remain evidence-based, appropriate, relevant, effective, and risk-informed. As such, the UN CCA will be updated annually or on an ad hoc basis should it be required due to a significant change in the situation in the country.

All resident and non-resident UN entities will contribute to the CCA update process, including through the UN's various interagency coordination mechanisms and theme groups. The update process will also engage all relevant national and international partners and stakeholders as appropriate. The updated CCA will inform any adjustments that may be necessary to the theory of change, priorities, outcomes, interventions areas, and results frameworks within both the ACG Framework and UN Strategic Framework upon collective agreement of the ACG and the UNCT.

6.2 Monitoring Implementation of Joint Workplans

Timely and comprehensive monitoring and reporting are essential to assess the impact of programmatic interventions and aid effectiveness. Monitoring and reporting also provide accountability to the people of Afghanistan through greater transparency on activities and achievement of results, and they enable effective resource allocation and promote evidence-driven decision-making. The UN Strategic Framework includes an outcome-level indicator framework to assess progress against the key thematic targets consistent with the achievement of the SDGs (*see Annex I*).

To the extent possible, and where relevant, the UN Strategic Framework draws from the global SDG indicator framework. Given the significant change in the country context rendering existing baseline data irrelevant or inappropriate and the availability of updated data more challenging, the UN identified additional proxy indicators to enable measurement of outcome level progress on datasets that will be updated on a periodic basis. Collective implementation against the UN's joint workplans will be assessed against a high-level output indicator framework which, to the extent possible, draws from UN DCO's global output indicator framework to contribute to the UN's global-level reporting on contributions towards the SDGs.

Progress on UN Strategic Framework implementation will be assessed on an annual basis, including through joint periodic programme reviews, quality assurance activities, and reporting — including financial reporting — through UNINFO. Specific attention will be given to assessing the impact of interventions on vulnerable and marginalized groups, including women and girls, through disaggregated reporting in accordance with UNCT system-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality.

The UN's joint research, monitoring, and evaluation activities are reflected in an integrated and adaptive multi-year Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) plan (*see Annex II*) developed by the M&E Working Group with the objective of strengthening its results-based management through

coordinated and collective monitoring of progress towards the UN Strategic Framework's objectives. This includes strategies for innovative disaggregated data collection, joint field-level monitoring visits, and annual reviews.

The fragile and fluid nature of Afghanistan's country context poses significant multidimensional risks to the achievement of UN Strategic Framework results. The UN will continue to monitor these risks and their potential implications for UN programming, including through the CCA review process, the MEL, and joint analysis with ACG partners. The UN will integrate risk analysis and contingency planning into programme planning and implementation to mitigate the potential impact on delivery. Delivery will also be guided by the UN's security risk management approach to programming, including through periodic Programme Criticality processes, to ensure the UN stays and delivers in a risk-informed and safe manner.

6.3 Annual Performance Review and Country Results Reporting

On behalf of the UNCT, the Results Groups and M&E Working Group will undertake an annual review of UN Strategic Framework implementation against joint workplans and the UN Strategic Framework results framework which will inform the production of an annual UNCT Results Report and any additional ad hoc reporting as required. All resident and non-resident UN entities implementing in Afghanistan will contribute to the Results Report. The Results Report will highlight the impact of the UN's collective interventions, as well as achievements, risks and challenges, opportunities, lessons learned, best practices, and key focus areas for the subsequent year of implementation. UN entities will endeavour to align their annual reporting cycles to that of the UN Strategic Framework so agency-specific reports can be utilized in the compilation of the Results Report.

In the absence of a Joint Steering Committee, the UN will share the Results Report with the ACG as its collective and consolidated contribution to the overall ACG Framework annual monitoring and reporting process. Based on an assessment of the findings captured within the Results Report and other ACG entity reporting processes — as well as the updated analysis through the CCA — the ACG will determine whether amendments are required to the theories of change, priorities, and outcomes of the ACG Framework which will also be reflected into the UN Strategic Framework.

The Results Report will also be disseminated to other relevant national and international partners and stakeholders and made publicly available on the [UN Afghanistan website](#) and through the UN's various social media platforms.

6.4 Evaluation Plan

A final evaluation of the UN Strategic Framework will be conducted by an independent consultant(s) in the penultimate year of the programme cycle. The terms of reference for the final evaluation will ensure the independence and impartiality of the evaluation team and stipulate the requirements for an inclusive and participatory approach involving all stakeholders. The evaluation will adhere to UN Evaluation Group norms and standards, follow OECD-DAC evaluation criteria, and utilize a gender equality and human rights-based approach. The M&E Working Group will review the outcome of the evaluation to ensure that it meets the necessary requirements and standards.

Where possible and appropriate, UN system entities will coordinate and sequence their respective programmatic framework evaluation activities to contribute to the UN Strategic Framework evaluation process and reduce transaction costs. Stakeholder consultations for UN Strategic Framework and UN entity-specific evaluations will be coordinated and, where appropriate, combined to mitigate duplication and consultation fatigue among partners and stakeholders.

The outcomes and the lessons learned from the UN Strategic Framework final evaluation, as well as those of UN entity-specific evaluations, will inform the development of a new UN Strategic Framework upon the expiry of this document.

ANNEX I: UN Strategic Framework Results Matrix

Joint Priority 1: Sustained Essential Services			
Outcome 1: By the end of 2025, more people in Afghanistan, particularly the most marginalized, can equitably access essential services that meet minimum quality standards.			
<p>UN Partners: ILO, IOM, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNMAS, UNODC, UNOPS, UNDP, UN Women, WFP, UN-Habitat, and WHO.</p> <p>External Partners: Community Development Councils, <i>Shuras</i>, International and national NGOs, Private sector service providers, Technical and vocational education and training institutions, Afghanistan Coordination Group, CSOs, Women's groups, Youth groups, Employers' and workers' organizations, International donor community, and International financial institutions.</p> <p>Related SDG Targets: SDG 1: No Poverty (1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5); SDG 2: Zero Hunger (2.1, 2.2); SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being (3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.7, 3.8, 3.c); SDG 4: Quality Education (4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.a); SDG 5: Gender Equality (5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6); SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation (6.1, 6.2, 6.4, 6.5, 6.b); SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth (8.6); SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities (10.2, 10.b); SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities (11.1, 11.6); SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions (16.1, 16.2, 16.9); SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals (17.3, 17.14).</p>			
Thematic Area: Health & Nutrition			
<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Baseline (year)</i>	<i>Target (end 2025)</i>	<i>Means of Verification</i>
1.1.a: Maternal Mortality Ratio. <i>(SDG indicator 3.1.1)</i> <i>Reporting focal point(s): WHO, UNFPA</i>	620 deaths per 100,000 live births. (2020)	600 deaths per 100,00 live births.	MMEAG-WHO.
1.1.b: Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel. <i>(SDG indicator 3.1.2)</i> <i>Reporting focal point(s): WHO, UNFPA</i>	58.8% (2018)	65%	Afghanistan Health Survey.
1.1.c: Mortality rate for children under-five years of age. <i>(SDG indicator 3.2.1)</i> <i>Reporting focal point(s): UNICEF</i>	56 deaths per 1,000 live births. (2021)	54 deaths per 1,000 live births.	UN-IGME-UNICEF.
1.1.d: Percentage of married women who are currently using modern methods of contraception (mCPR). <i>(Proxy for SDG indicators 5.6.1 and 5.6.2)</i>	17.4% (2018)	23% <i>Average estimated annual growth between 2016-2022 is 0.8% per year (Track20)</i>	Afghanistan Health Survey.

<i>Reporting focal point(s): WHO, UNFPA</i>			
1.1.e: Proportion of children under 5 who are (i) wasted ²⁵ and (ii) stunted (disaggregated by gender). <i>(SDG indicators 2.2.1 and 2.2.2)</i>	(i) Wasted: 10.3% (ii) Stunted: 36.6% (2018)	(i) 8% (ii) 30%	Afghanistan Health Survey; National Nutrition Survey; National Smart survey or MICS.
<i>Reporting focal point(s): UNICEF</i>			
1.1.f: Proportion of the population with access to essential health services within 0.5 hour reaching distance. <i>(Non-SDG indicator)</i>	56.6% (2018)	85-90%	Afghanistan Health Survey.
<i>Reporting focal point(s): WHO, UNDP, UNFPA</i>			
1.1.g: Proportion of children (12-23 months) who received (i) Penta-3 and (ii) measles vaccinations. <i>(Proxy for SDG indicator 3.b.1)</i>	(i) 61% (2018) (ii) 74% (2022)	(i) 80% (ii) 90%	(i) Afghanistan Health Survey. (ii) Ministry of Public Health EPI-MYP.
<i>Reporting focal point(s): WHO</i>			
1.1.h. Number of drug users who have access to treatment and rehabilitation services. <i>(Proxy for SDG indicators 3.5.1)</i>	30,000 drug users.	20% increase in coverage per annum.	UNODC Reports on drug use situation.
<i>Reporting focal point(s): UNODC</i>			
Thematic Area: Education			
Indicator	Baseline (year)	Target (end 2025)	Means of Verification
1.2.a: Proportion of children and young people in Grade 3 achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex. <i>(SDG indicator 4.1.1)</i>	TBD pending results of sampled student assessment expected by end of 2023.	TBD based on results of forthcoming sampled student assessment.	Early grade reading and math assessments (UNESCO).
<i>Reporting focal point(s): UNESCO</i>			
1.2.b: Number of youth and adults (15 years and above) enrolled in basic general literacy courses disaggregated by sex. <i>(Proxy for SDG indicator 4.6.1)</i>	7,500 <i>(3,750 females; 3,750 males).</i> (2022)	150,000 <i>(90,000 females; 60,000 males).</i>	UNESCO monitoring reports.

²⁵ The share of child under five years old that fall two standard deviations below the expected weight for their height.

<i>Reporting focal point(s): UNESCO</i>			
Thematic Area: Water, Sanitation & Hygiene			
Indicator	Baseline (year)	Target (end 2025)	Means of Verification
1.3.a: Proportion of population having access to safely managed water services. <i>(SDG indicator 6.6.1)</i> <i>Reporting focal point(s): UNICEF</i>	34.64% (2020)	(i) 40%	UNICEF/WHO Joint Monitoring Programme; REACH Whole of Afghanistan Assessment; WASH Cluster.
1.3.b: Proportion of the population having access to basic managed sanitation services. <i>(SDG indicator 6.2.1)</i> <i>Reporting focal point(s): UNICEF</i>	40.38% (2020)	45%	UNICEF/WHO Joint Monitoring Programme; REACH Whole of Afghanistan Assessment; WASH Cluster.
1.3.c: Proportion of the population having access to basic hygiene services. <i>(SDG indicator 6.2.1)</i> <i>Reporting focal point(s): UNICEF</i>	46.99% (2020)	50%	UNICEF/WHO Joint Monitoring Programme; REACH Whole of Afghanistan Assessment; WASH Cluster.
Thematic Area: Social Protection			
Indicator	Baseline (year)	Target (end 2025)	Means of Verification
1.4.a: Proportion of households classified under “high” levels of food-based coping strategies. <i>(Non-SDG indicator)</i> <i>Reporting focal point(s): WFP</i>	16% (29% for female headed households and 22% for households with persons living with disabilities). (Feb-Mar 2023)	10% (25% for female headed households and 15% for households with persons living with disabilities).	Agriculture-Food Security Monitoring System
1.4.b: Proportion of households finding it difficult to meet basic food and non-food needs. <i>(Non-SDG indicator)</i> <i>Reporting focal point(s): WFP</i>	64% (Nov 2022)	35%	World Bank Afghanistan Welfare Monitoring Survey Round 2.
1.4.c: Proportion of households classified under “crisis” or “emergency” levels of livelihood coping strategies.	66% (2023)	50%	Agriculture-Food Security Monitoring System

<p><i>(Non-SDG indicator)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): WFP</i></p>			
Strategic Thematic Area: Protection			
Indicator	Baseline (year)	Target (end 2025)	Means of Verification
<p>1.5.a: Proportion of women and girls who experienced violence who were able to access support services.</p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): UN Women, UNFPA, UNDP</i></p>	<p>25% (2022)</p>	<p>50%</p>	<p>Partner reports, Whole of Afghanistan Assessment.</p>
<p>1.5.b. Number of people killed or injured by explosive ordnance.</p> <p><i>(Non-SDG indicator)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): UNMAS, UNDP</i></p>	<p>90 per month (2021)</p>	<p>5-10% reduction</p>	<p>Information Management System for Mine Action database.</p>

Joint Priority 2: Economic Opportunities and Resilient Livelihoods

Outcome 2: By the end of 2025, more people in Afghanistan, notably women and vulnerable groups, will benefit from an increasingly inclusive economy, with greater equality of economic opportunities, jobs, more resilient livelihoods, strengthened food value chains, and improved natural resources management.

UN Partners: FAO, ILO, IOM, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNODC, UNOPS, UN Women, UN-Habitat, UNESCO, WFP, and UNITAR.

External Partners: Financial institutions, private sector bodies (*including the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Investment and Afghanistan Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry*), Training institutions, Community based organizations, Women's groups, Youth groups, Employers' and workers' organizations, Traditional and formal trades associations, Afghanistan Coordination Group, International donor community, and International financial institutions.

Related SDG Targets: **SDG 1:** No Poverty (1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 1.a, 1.b); **SDG 2:** Zero Hunger (2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.a, 2.c); **SDG 4:** Quality Education (4.4, 4.5); **SDG 5:** Gender Equality (5.1, 5.2, 5.5, 5.a); **SDG 6:** Clean Water and Sanitation (6.4, 6.5, 6.b); **SDG 7:** Affordable and Clean Energy (7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.a, 7.b); **SDG 8:** Decent Work and Economic Growth (8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.5, 8.6, 8.7, 8.8, 8.9, 8.10); **SDG 9:** Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure (9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 9.4); **SDG 10:** Reduced Inequalities (10.1, 10.2, 10.3, 10.4); **SDG 12:** Responsible Consumption and Production (12.2, 12.3, 12.8); **SDG 13:** Climate Action (13.1, 13.3); **SDG 15:** Life on Land (15.1, 15.2, 15.3, 15.9); **SDG 17:** Partnerships for Goals (17.3).

Thematic Area: Economic Stabilization

Indicator	Baseline (year)	Target (end 2025)	Means of Verification
2.1.a: Real GDP Growth Rate, at constant factor prices (annual percentage change). <i>(Proxy for SDG indicator 8.1.1)</i> <i>Reporting focal point(s): UNDP</i>	-20.7% (2021) (-3.6% - UNDP projection for 2022)	2.5%	NSIA, Annual Yearbook.
2.1.b: Employment Rate (of those participating in the labour market) (15-65 years old). ²⁶ <i>(Proxy for SDG indicator 8.5.2)</i> <i>Reporting focal point(s): ILO, UNDP, UN Women</i>	Total: 50% (Men: 69%, Women 32%) (Jun-Aug 2022)	10% increase	World Bank Afghanistan Welfare Monitoring Survey; Income and Expenditure and Labor Force Survey.
2.1.c: Employment to Population Ratio <i>(Proxy for SDG indicator 8.5.2)</i> <i>Reporting focal point(s): ILO, UNDP, UN Women</i>	Total: 34.1% (Men: 58%, Women: 11.2%) (2021)	5% increase	World Bank Afghanistan Welfare Monitoring Survey; Income & Expenditure and Labor Force Survey.

²⁶ Unemployment rate in 2020 was 18.6% according to the Income and Expenditure and Labor Force Survey.

<p>2.1.d: Domestic credit to private sector by banks (% of GDP)</p> <p><i>(Proxy for SDG indicator 9.3.2)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): ILO, UNDP, UN Women, IOM</i></p>	<p>3% (2020)</p>	<p>10%</p>	<p>IMF, World Bank and OECD estimates. DAB publications, annual statements. NSIA publications.</p>
<p>Thematic Area: Private Sector Development</p>			
<p>Indicator</p>	<p>Baseline (year)</p>	<p>Target (end 2025)</p>	<p>Means of Verification</p>
<p>2.2.a: Proportion of total working age population (15-65 years old) in salaried employed in the private sector by sex (<i>paid private salary includes all nongovernment jobs with a regular paycheque</i>).</p> <p><i>(Non-SDG indicator)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): ILO, UNDP, UN Women, UNESCO, IOM</i></p>	<p>Total: 6% <i>(Men: 10%; Women: data available)</i></p> <p>(2022)</p>	<p>10%</p>	<p>World Bank Afghanistan Welfare Monitoring Survey</p>
<p>2.2.b: Number of new domestic and foreign sectorial businesses registered.</p> <p><i>(Non-SDG indicator)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): UNDP, UN Women</i></p>	<p>8,440 (Mar 2021 – Mar 2022)</p>	<p>12,000</p>	<p>NSIA Yearbook</p>
<p>2.2.c: Value of Private Industrial Production.</p> <p><i>(Non-SDG indicator)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): UNDP</i></p>	<p>AFN 3,075 million <i>(Mar 2021 – Mar 2022)</i></p>	<p>AFN 4,000 million</p>	<p>NSIA Yearbook</p>
<p>2.2.d: Proportion of surveyed firms facing difficulties with (i) domestic payments, and (ii) international payments.</p> <p><i>(Non-SDG indicator)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): UNDP</i></p>	<p>(i) 58% (ii) 76%</p> <p><i>(June 2022)</i></p>	<p>(i) 10% (ii) 20%</p>	<p>World Bank Private Sector Rapid Survey.</p>
<p>2.2.e: Value of goods and services exported.</p> <p><i>(Non-SDG indicator)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): UNDP</i></p>	<p>US\$ 1.9 billion (2022)</p>	<p>US\$ 2.185 billion (15% increase)</p>	<p>ASYCUDA data, NSIA Yearbooks</p>
<p>Thematic Area: Rural Development, Agriculture, and Natural Resource Management</p>			
<p>Indicator</p>	<p>Baseline (year)</p>	<p>Target (end 2025)</p>	<p>Means of Verification</p>

<p>2.3.a: National wheat production (MTs).</p> <p><i>(Non-SDG indicator)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): FAO</i></p>	<p>Total: 4,448,000 <i>Irrigated: 3,845,000</i> <i>Rainfed: 602,000</i></p> <p><i>(Average of 16 years from 2006-2021)</i></p>	<p>Total: 5,100,000 <i>Irrigated: 3,900,000</i> <i>Rainfed: 1,200,000</i></p>	<p>Agriculture Prospective Report (APR)</p>
<p>2.3.b: Proportion of settlements where (i) agriculture is main source of income and proportion of settlements where (ii) livestock is main source of income where key informants report perception that agricultural production has increased for many or almost all households.</p> <p><i>(Non-SDG indicator)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): FAO</i></p>	<p>(i) 38% (ii) 26%</p> <p><i>(Oct 2022)</i></p>	<p>(i) 46% (ii) 31%</p>	<p>Whole of Afghanistan Assessment.</p>
<p>2.3.c: Improvement in Rural Household Resilience.</p> <p><i>(Non-SDG indicator)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): FAO</i></p>	<p>Baseline to be published in Q3 2023</p>	<p>10% increase</p>	<p>Resilience Index and Measurement Analysis (RIMA).</p>
<p>2.3.d: Forest area as a proportion of total land area.</p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): FAO</i></p> <p><i>(SDG indicator 15.1.1)</i></p>	<p>1.9%</p> <p><i>(2020)</i></p>	<p>1.9%</p> <p><i>(Maintained)</i></p>	<p>FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA).</p>
<p>2.3.e: Average number of people per year expected to require humanitarian assistance due to disasters, stress, and shocks (classified as shock-affected non-displaced people).</p> <p><i>(Non-SDG indicator)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): OCHA, WFP, UNDP, IOM</i></p>	<p>183,333 (annual average over years 2021 to 2023).</p>	<p>146,667 (annual average over years 2023 to 2025).</p>	<p>OCHA Humanitarian Needs Overview.</p>
<p>2.3.f: Illicit opium poppy cultivation, production and dependence on opium economy as measured by (i) amount harvested; (ii) opium sales; and (iii) land area cultivated with opium poppy.</p> <p><i>(Non-SDG indicator)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): UNODC</i></p>	<p>(i) 6,200 metric tons. (ii) US\$ 1.4 billion. (iii) 233,000 hectares.</p> <p><i>(2022)</i></p>	<p>(i) 2,480 metric tons. (ii) US\$ 560 million. (iii) 93,200 hectares.</p> <p><i>(60% reduction across each sub-category)</i></p>	<p>UNODC annual opium cultivation survey</p>

Joint Priority 3: Social cohesion, Inclusion, Gender Equality, Human Rights and Rule of Law

Outcome 3: By the end of 2025, more people in Afghanistan will be able to participate in an increasingly socially cohesive, gender equal, and inclusive society, where the rule of law and human rights are progressively upheld, and more people can participate in governance and decision-making.

UN Partners: ILO, IOM, OHCHR, UNAMA, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, UN Women, UN-Habitat, WHO, and UNITAR.

External Partners: Community Development Councils, *Shuras, Jirgas*, National and international NGOs, CSOs, Human rights and women's rights advocates and activists, Women's groups, Youth groups, Journalists and media groups, Employers' and workers' organizations, International human rights mechanisms and bodies (including UN Human Rights Council, Treaty Bodies, and Special Rapporteurs), International Legal Foundation, International Development Law Organization, Organization for Islamic Cooperation, the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Center, Integrity Watch Afghanistan, Al-Azhar University, Afghanistan Coordination Group, and International donor community.

Related SDG Targets: **SDG 5:** Gender Equality (5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.5, 5.c); **SDG 10:** Reduced Inequalities (10.2, 10.3, 10.7); **SDG 11:** Sustainable Cities and Communities (11.7); **SDG 16:** Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions (16.1, 16.2, 16.3, 16.5, 16.6, 16.7, 16.10, 16.b); **SDG 17:** Partnerships for the Goals (17.3).

Strategic Thematic Area: Social cohesion, Inclusion, and Reconciliation

Indicator	Baseline (year)	Target (end 2025)	Means of Verification
<p>3.1.a: Number / proportion of seats in the <i>de facto</i>/caretaker cabinet and other key positions at the national and provincial levels disaggregated by gender, ethnic, religious, political and/or geographical representation.</p> <p>(Proxy for SDG 5.5.1)</p> <p>Reporting focal point(s): UNAMA</p>	<p>(i) Zero in <i>de facto</i> cabinet (All-male - 28 (88%) Pashtun; 2 (8%) Tajik; 1 (4%) Uzbek; 0 Hazara; 0 Turkmen).</p> <p>(ii) Of 34 provincial governors: 0 women, 28 (82%) Pashtun, 5 (15%) Tajik, 1 (3%) Turkmen, 0 Uzbek, and 0 Hazara (2023)</p>	Improvement in representation of marginalized groups, particularly women.	Document analysis / UNAMA reporting. <i>Baseline from Report of the Special Rapporteur on Afghanistan to the Human Rights Council 51st Session.</i>
<p>3.1.b: Percentage of people surveyed who report that they and others in the household feel more or less safe compared to 12 months ago.</p> <p>(Proxy for SDG indicator 16.1.4)</p>	45% much safer; 22% somewhat; 9% neither more or less; 8% less safe; 16% much	Improvement across regions.	World Bank's Afghanistan Welfare Monitoring Survey.

	less safe. (Nov 2022)		
<i>Reporting focal point(s): UNAMA</i>			
3.1.c: Open Government Score. <i>(Proxy for SDG indicators 16.7.1 and 16.7.2)</i>	0.34 (117 out of 140 countries) (2022)	Improvement	World Justice Project Rule of Law Index.
<i>Reporting focal point(s): UNAMA</i>			
3.1.d: Global Freedom score. <i>(Non-SDG indicator)</i>	10 (not free) (Political Rights score: 1/40; and Civil Liberties Score: 9/60) (2022)	Improvement	Freedom House.
<i>Reporting focal point(s): UNAMA, UNDP</i>			
3.1.e: Number of reported cases of journalists, associated media personnel, media defender and human rights advocates (i) killed; (ii) injured (iii) detained; and (iv) threatened. <i>(Proxy for SDG Indicator 16.10.1)</i>	(i) 6 killed. (ii) 20 injured. (iii) 48 detained. (iv) 164 threatened. (2022)	Improvement	Media supporting organization, UNESCO and UNAMA surveys and reports.
<i>Reporting focal point(s): UNESCO</i>			
3.1.f: Number of cultural institutions (museums, public exhibition spaces, World Heritage properties, cultural centres, galleries, etc.) promoting / reflecting cultural diversity and inclusivity. <i>(Non-SDG indicator)</i>	2 (2021) <i>(National Museum in Kabul and Herat Museum)</i>	Improvement	Document analysis / UNESCO reporting. Baseline from Report
<i>Reporting focal point(s): UNESCO</i>			
Strategic Thematic Area: Rule of Law			
Indicator	Baseline (year)	Target (end 2025)	Means of Verification
3.2.a: Criminal Justice Score <i>(Non-SDG indicator)</i>	0.26 (2022)	0.28	World Justice Project Rule of Law Index.
<i>Reporting focal point(s): UNAMA, UNDP</i>			
3.2.b: Proportion of people detained in prisons without fair trial within reasonably short period of time. <i>(Proxy for SDG indicator 16.3.2)</i>	30% (of 30,748 people) (Nov 2022)	Reduction in proportion	UNODC reporting.
<i>Reporting focal point(s): UNODC</i>			
3.2.c: Civil Justice Score. <i>Proxy for SDG indicator 16.3.3)</i>	0.34 (136 out of 140 countries) (2022)	Improvement	World Justice Project Rule of Law Index.

<i>Reporting focal point(s): UNAMA, UNDP</i>			
3.2.d: Corruption Perception Index score <i>(Proxy for SDG indicator 16.5.1)</i> <i>Reporting focal point(s): UNAMA, UNDP</i>	16/100 (Rank 174 out of 180 countries) <i>(2021)</i>	Improvement	Transparency International Corruption Perception Index.
Strategic Thematic Area: Human Rights and Women's Rights / Gender Equality			
Indicator	Baseline (year)	Target (end 2025)	Means of Verification
3.3.a: Score in (i) Gender Inequality Index and (ii) Global Gender Gap Index scores <i>(Proxy for SDG indicator 5.1.1)</i> <i>Reporting focal point(s): UN Women, UNFPA, UNDP</i>	(i) 0.678 (167 out of 191 countries) <i>(2021)</i> (ii) 0.435 (146 out of 146 countries) <i>(2022)</i>	Improvement in both	(i) UNDP Human Development Index Report; (ii) World Economic Forum.
3.3.b: Fundamental Rights score. <i>(Non-SDG indicator)</i> <i>Reporting focal point(s): UNAMA</i>	0.32 (131 out of 140 countries) <i>(2022)</i>	Improvement	World Justice Project Rule of Law Index.
3.3.c: Number of UN recorded human rights violations by type of violation. <i>(Proxy for SDG indicators 16.1.2 and 16.1.3)</i> <i>Reporting focal point(s): UNAMA</i>	160 extrajudicial killings; 56 instances of torture and ill-treatment of former ANDSF and government officials; 178 arbitrary arrests and detentions; and 23 instances of incommunicado detention. <i>(15 Aug 2021 – Jun 2022)</i>	Reduction in violations	UNAMA Human Rights Reports (biennial).
3.3.d: Percentage of men and women surveyed who report believing that women in Afghanistan are treated with respect and dignity. <i>(Non-SDG indicator)</i> <i>Reporting focal point(s): UNDP</i>	31% Yes <i>(Aug 2021)</i> 44% Yes <i>(2019)</i>	Improvement	Gallup Poll (annual).

<p>3.3.e: World Press Freedom Index score. <i>(Proxy for SDG indicator 16.10.1)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): UNAMA, UNESCO</i></p>	<p>38.27/100 (122 out of 180 countries) (2022)</p>	<p>Improvement</p>	<p>Reporters Without Borders.</p>
<p>3.3.f: Annual growth rate of direct, flexible, core and long-term funding from all sectors committed to civil society organizations working on gender equality and women’s empowerment, including women’s organizations.</p> <p><i>(Non-SDG indicator)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): UN Women</i></p>	<p>26% (Jan 2023)</p>	<p>10% increase by end of UNSF cycle.</p>	<p>GIHA-HAG Working Group Monitoring Survey</p>

Collective Outcomes			
Collective Outcome 1: By the end of 2025, the estimated proportion of people in Afghanistan experiencing acute food insecurity (IPC Phases 3 and 4) declines by 20%.			
<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Baseline (year)</i>	<i>Target (end 2025)</i>	<i>Means of Verification</i>
<p>CO.1.1.a: Number of people/households experiencing (i) crisis; and (ii) emergency levels of food insecurity.</p> <p><i>(SDG indicator 2.1.2)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): WFP</i></p>	<p>(i) 12,500,000 (ii) 2,800,000 Total: 15,300,000</p> <p>(May 2023)</p>	<p>(i) 10,000,000 (ii) 2,240,000 Total: 12,240,000</p>	<p>Integrated Food Security Phase Classification.</p>
<p>CO.1.1.b: National wheat production (MTs)</p> <p><i>(Non-SDG indicator)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): FAO (To be reported on under indicator 2.3.a)</i></p>	<p>Total:4,448,000 <i>Irrigated: 3,845,000</i> <i>Rain-fed: 602,000</i> <i>(Average of 16 years from 2006-2021)</i></p>	<p>Total: 5,100,000 <i>Irrigated:</i> <i>3,900,000</i> <i>Rainfed: 1,200,000</i></p>	<p>Agriculture Prospective Report (APR)</p>
<p>CO.1.1.c: Proportion of households with insufficient food consumption.</p> <p><i>(Proxy for SDG indicator 2.1.1)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): WFP</i></p>	<p>84% (90% of female headed households and 85% for households with persons living with disabilities). <i>(Feb-Mar 2023)</i></p>	<p>75% <i>(80% for female headed households and 75% for households with persons with disabilities).</i></p>	<p>Agriculture-Food Security Monitoring System</p>
<p>CO1.1.d: Proportion of households classified under “high” levels of food-based coping strategies.</p> <p><i>(Non-SDG indicator)</i></p> <p><i>WFP (To be reported on under indicator 1.4.a).</i></p>	<p>16% (29% for female headed households and 22% for households with persons living with disabilities). <i>(Feb-March 2023)</i></p>	<p>10% <i>(25% for female headed households and 15% for households with persons living with disabilities).</i></p>	<p>Agriculture-Food Security Monitoring System</p>
<p>CO.1.1.e: Proportion of households finding it difficult to meet basic food and non-food needs.</p> <p><i>(Non-SDG indicator)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): WFP (To be reported on under indicator 1.4.b).</i></p>	<p>64% <i>(Nov 2022)</i></p>	<p>35%</p>	<p>World Bank Afghanistan Welfare Monitoring Survey.</p>
<p>CO.1.1.f: Proportion households spending less than 65% of their income on food and not receiving humanitarian food aid.</p> <p><i>(Non-SDG indicator)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): WFP</i></p>	<p>57% <i>(Feb-Mar 2023)</i></p>	<p>70%</p>	<p>Agriculture-Food Security Monitoring System</p>

Collective Outcome 2: By the end of 2025, child mortality rate declines by 4% and maternal mortality rate by 3%.			
<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Baseline (year)</i>	<i>Target (end 2025)</i>	<i>Means of Verification</i>
<p>CO.2.1.a: Maternal Mortality Ratio.</p> <p><i>(SDG indicator 3.1.1)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): WHO, UNFPA (To be reported on under indicator 1.1.a).</i></p>	620 deaths per 100,000 live births. (2020)	600 deaths per 100,00 live births.	WHO
<p>CO.2.1.b: Mortality rate for children under-five years of age.</p> <p><i>(SDG indicator 3.2.1)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): UNICEF (To be reported on under indicator 1.1.c).</i></p>	56 deaths per 1,000 live births. (2021)	54 deaths per 1,000 live births.	UN-IGME-UNICEF
<p>CO.2.1.c: Proportion of children (12-23 months) who received (i) Penta-3 and (ii) measles vaccinations.</p> <p><i>(Proxy for SDG indicator 3.b.1)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): WHO (To be reported on under indicator 1.1.g).</i></p>	(i) 61% (2018) (ii) 74% (2022)	(i) 80% (ii) 90%	(i) Afghanistan Health Survey. (ii) Ministry of Public Health EPI-MYP.
<p>CO.2.1.d: Proportion of (i) children and (ii) pregnant and lactating women who are acutely malnourished.</p> <p><i>(Proxy for SDG indicators 2.2.1, 2.2.2, and 2.2.3)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): WHO, UNICEF, WFP</i></p>	(i) 10.3% <i>(To be reported on under indicator 1.1.e).</i> (ii) 20.7% (2022)	(i) 8% (ii) 11%	National Nutrition SMART surveys, MICS or AHS.
<p>CO.2.1.e: Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel.</p> <p><i>(SDG indicator 3.1.2)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): WHO, UNFPA (To be reported on under indicator 1.1.b).</i></p>	58.8% (2018)	65%	Afghanistan Health Survey
<p>CO.2.1.f: Proportion of pregnant women who had (i) at least one ante-natal visit, and (ii) at least four ante-natal visits.</p> <p><i>(Non-SDG indicator)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): UNICEF, WHO, UNFPA</i></p>	(i) 58.8% (ii) 20.9% (2018)	(i) 70% (ii) 28%	Afghanistan Health Survey

<p>CO2.1.g: Proportion of women (aged 15–49 years) married before age 18.</p> <p><i>(SDG indicator 5.3.1)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): UN Women, UNFPA</i></p>	<p>28.3% (2016-2017)</p>	<p>26%</p>	<p>Afghanistan Living Conditions Survey (National Statistics and Information Authority)</p>
<p>CO.2.1.h: Adolescent birth rate per 1,000 women aged 15-19 years.</p> <p><i>(Non-SDG indicator)</i></p> <p><i>Reporting focal point(s): WHO, UNFPA</i></p>	<p>62 (2018)</p>	<p>58</p>	<p>Afghanistan Health Survey</p>

ANNEX II: Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan

Description of Activities	Objective	Frequency	Lead	Contributors/Support	2023	2024	2025
Data Collection and research							
Baseline data collection per UN Strategic Framework outcome and output indicators	Ensure baseline data and target values are fully provided at the beginning of the UN Strategic Framework including all relevant disaggregation.	Beginning of Strategic Framework cycle	M&E Working Group	PMT, Results Groups, GTG Chairs/Co-chairs, RCO, UN entities			
Update of the Common Country Analysis	Track situation development and inform the UNCT system work on continuous basis. Ensure continued alignment of the UN Strategic Framework and UN programming with national needs. Inform the formulation for the next cycle of the UN Strategic Framework.	Annually	RCO	PMT, Results Groups			
Support implementing partners in conducting data collection processes (surveys, assessments, joint research, diagnostics) in different thematic sectors.	To support the strengthening of national partners' capacities in data collection, management, analysis, etc.	Ad hoc basis	Relevant UN agencies	PMT, Results Groups, M&E Working Group, RCO			
Conduct joint (UN and national and international NGOs) operational research, assessments, special studies, and diagnostics.	To document lessons learnt and strengthen evidence generation to inform UN Strategic Framework implementation (e.g., MCIS, Gender equality and violence against women)	Ad hoc basis	Relevant UN agencies	PMT, Results Groups, M&E Working Group, RCO			

	assessments/diagnostics . etc).						
Regularly consolidate, update existing assessments and data with relevant counterparts.	Establish a holistic data repository to inform future development and peace-building planning and policy making across concerned UN-entities and government.	Quarterly or biannually as necessary	RCO / M&E Working Group	PMT, Youth, Gender Working Groups,			
Planning and Monitoring							
Develop and monitor joint workplans	To operationalize the UN Strategic Framework, identify opportunities to enhancing multi-agency collaboration, e.g., through joint programmes.	Annually and updated on a rolling basis	PMT	Results Groups, M&E Working Group, RCO			
Convene Results Groups meetings	Discuss progress, challenges, opportunities, and new learning, as well as how to adapt implementation of joint workplans.	Every two months	Results Groups Chairs/Co-chairs	Results Groups Members, PMT, RCO, Humanitarian Cluster Coordinators			
Collect, update, and reflect quality assured, agency-specific and/or joint agency progress Joint Work Plan data on UN-INFO.	Provide concrete data to monitor and report on the progress towards achieving the joint workplans sub-outputs, outputs, and outcomes. Improve UNCT coherence, transparency, and accountability.	Semi-annually	M&E focal point(s) per Result Group, UN entities	Result Groups Chairs/Co-chairs, Result Groups Members, PMT, RCO			
Conduct joint output monitoring and variance analysis of output indicators achievement with reference to M&E and implementation plan.	To track achievement status of the cooperation framework output indicators and to analyse variances if any so that actions can be prepared and implemented for achievement of outputs in a timely manner.	Semi-annually	RCO, M&E focal point(s) per Result Group, UN entities	Result Groups Chairs/Co-chairs, Result Groups Members, PMT, M&E Focal points, RCO			
Coordinated implementation of gender	To support joint approach to cross-cutting issues (e.g.,	On a rolling basis	Thematic Working	Thematic Working			

mainstreaming work recommended by thematic working groups	gender, youth, disability, etc.).		Group Chairs.	Groups, PMT, RCO			
Review and Reporting							
Develop a UN Annual Results Report	Report on the annual system-wide results achieved under the UN Strategic Framework. Results Groups Chairs/Co-chairs to conduct an Annual Performance Review of the UN Strategic Framework to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor progress, identify challenges, opportunities and lessons learnt in the year. - Revisit UNCT configuration to ensure regular update of capacities based on situation. 	Annually	PMT, Results Groups, RCO	Result Groups Chairs/Co-chairs and members, PMT, RCO			
Review, adjust and update joint workplans	Review the progress achieved under agency-specific and agency joint sub-outputs per outcome area. <p>Identify the need for increased joint delivery through one or more joint programmes</p>	Annually / as needed	Result Groups, PMT	M&E Working Group, RCO			
Conduct a joint ACG performance review of the ACG Framework and UN Strategic Framework	Propose amendments to the UN Strategic Framework and joint workplans to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness of support to Afghanistan	Annually	UNCT, PMT, Results Groups, ACG, STWGs	M&E Working Group, RCO, UN thematic working groups.			
Review and update MEL plan during implementation	Ensure relevance and efficiency of selected indicators, and provide direction, overview, and diagnostics.	Annually	M&E Working Group Chair	M&E Working Group, PMT, RCO			

Independent evaluation of UN Joint Programmes	Track progress, assess effectiveness of intervention, generate lessons learnt and raise accountability to inform next joint programmes.	End term	Independent evaluation team	Implementing UN entities			
Evaluation of agencies Country Programming instruments	Ensure the accountability of each agency's contribution to Afghanistan's development and peacebuilding, as well as their contributions to UN Strategic Framework outcomes, and reflect lessons learned.	Penultimate year of agencies' programme cycles	Independent evaluation team	Respective UN entities, M&E Working Group, RCO			
Commission an independent evaluation of the UN Strategic Framework.	Ensure accountability of the UN development system in Afghanistan for its collective contribution to Afghanistan's SDGs' achievement, as well as consolidate lessons learned for a next Framework.	Penultimate year of the Cooperation Framework cycle	Independent evaluation team	RCO, PMT, Results Groups, M&E WG			
Learning							
Post UN Strategic Framework Evaluation Management Response and Action Plan	To ensure implementation of evaluation's recommendations. Improve UNCT's efficiency and effectiveness	Penultimate year of the Cooperation Framework cycle	PMT	RC/HC, UNCT, UNSMIL, RCO, M&E Group			
Technical training for the M&E Working Group and Result Group chairs on UN-INFO	To ensure accurate understanding of reporting requirements and methodologies using UN-INFO	First year of implementation	M&E Working Group Chair, RCO	M&E Working Group members, Result Group Chairs, RCO			
Establish a learning mechanism to document, analyse and share emerging lessons learnt	To improve performance by ensuring that lessons learnt and best practices are shared among agencies and key stakeholders and are	First year of implementation	M&E Working Group	PMT, Result Groups, UN Communications Group, RCO			

throughout the implementation cycle of the UN Strategic Framework.	incorporated into the programmes cycle							
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ANNEX III: Summary of Consultations

Between 11 October and 8 November, the UN in Afghanistan carried out stakeholder consultations for its new strategic framework in **11 provinces** which were selected to ensure a representation of all Afghan communities and sectors. These engaged with **519 participants**, including 189 women and 83 representatives of the de facto authorities. The consultations validated the outcomes of the UN CCA by asking for problems and underlying causes and identified key solutions for UN interventions.

The main **concerns** of stakeholders were the ban on girls' education, lack of health facilities, mental health problems, poverty and economic insecurity, and discrimination of ethnic minorities. The **key ask** from women was to provide skills training and job opportunities to give them agency and a voice in their communities. **General feedback** was the request for long-term UN programming and cash-for-work (rather than short-term, unconditional handouts), completion of UN/World Bank infrastructure projects, concern about climate change impacts, lack of protection of cultural assets, participatory aid approach, and concerns on selection criteria for individual/household level assistance. Participants had diverging opinions about whether the UN should increase focus on a collaborative approach favouring long-term development needs or advocate stronger for human rights. **Other issues of concern** frequently mentioned were increasing youth drug addiction and substance abuse, women's rights, increased human trafficking, child marriage or sale, child labour, household debts, isolation of rural communities during winter, poor development, infrastructure, and aid dependency.

Recommendations for the UN related to consistency and coherence in de facto authority engagement at sub-national level: revival of UN Regional Teams to coordinate a coherent basic human needs response; joint approach to move away from basic cash-for-work towards more lasting critical assets to create opportunities; basic human needs programming to increase local employment and business opportunities; feedback mechanisms for beneficiaries; strengthen Community Development Councils and other inclusive community mechanisms for inclusive decision-making processes; responding to climate change through targeted environmental and climate action and mainstreaming of environmental impact considerations across all UN programmes and activities; support urbanization and development of rural areas. **Potential joint UN interventions** to be considered based on the consultations would be a special focus on women and marginalized groups (especially IDPs and people with disability); provision of relevant assets, education, and capacity building for income-generating activities for women at home and where feasible outside; environmental protection activities including resource management; construction/resumption of small infrastructure projects; economic opportunities and livelihoods; innovative education and skills training in health; agricultural opportunities through livestock and seeds; policy planning for the economy and key sectors and capacity building for delivery of basic essential services; strengthen anti-corruption systems, community dialogues, access to justice, and accountability mechanisms.

Suggested solutions for UN Priority 1 included support to education, mental and physical health care, WASH, and infrastructure sector; for **Priority 2** solutions were private sector support, strengthening of agriculture and livestock sector; and for **Priority 3** support to marginalized groups including people with disabilities, IDPs, returnees, street children, women, elderly, civil society actors, media and journalists; advocacy for strengthening of the justice system and the Community Development

Councils; facilitate interactions between the current regime and people; and local consultations with communities in designing aid projects.

Priorities by the de facto authorities included sustainable development plans with long-term impact, resource management and environmental protection, development of education infrastructure, completion of essential infrastructure projects including dams, roads and bridges, creation of livelihoods and job opportunities, micro-finance for MSMEs, involvement of local communities and provincial development councils for identification of beneficiaries and implementation of projects, better coordination and more equitable assistance to the displaced people and development of settlement for flood and conflict victims, people with disabilities, and impacted families.

In June 2023, the findings of these consultations were further validated through meetings with the Afghan private sector and with Afghan non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations. Despite the subsequent imposition of the ban on female Afghan staff at non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, and the UN, the priorities and approaches articulated in the consultations in October and November 2022 remained broadly the same; participants encouraged the UN and the international community to continue the principled delivery of assistance to the Afghan people, particularly to women and girls.



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