

## UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) Roadmap<sup>1</sup>

Country	South Sudan
Date	Revised on 2nd June 2021

### Introduction

The 2019-2021 UN Cooperation Framework (UNCF) for South Sudan has been extended by one year and will expire on 31 December 2022. The extended framework corresponds to the transitional period of the peace agreement (R-ARCSS) and is aligned to the National Development Strategy (NDS), which was launched in 2018 for the period FY 2018/2019 to FY 2020/2021.

The extension was necessitated by a) delays in undertaking the NDS review to inform national emerging priorities; b) delays in the implementation of the transitional Government arrangements; c) missing sector reviews as the sector working groups had just been revived in 2020; d) lack of reliable and accurate evidence based data to accurately reflect development needs and priorities; and e) the extension would give the UNCT ample time to conduct extensive consultations with all stakeholders including revitalized transitional Government, civil society and other stakeholders at both the national and state level to inform preparation of the new UNSDCF.

South Sudan faces multiple challenges including a political crisis, persistent subnational violence, consecutive years of mass flooding, conflict-related displacement and COVID-19 restrictions that continue to heighten vulnerabilities. Humanitarian needs have skyrocketed, with more than 7 million people in need of food assistance and 8 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. Food security has deteriorated; there remains limited access to health, nutrition, protection and water, sanitation and hygiene.

Given the challenging context, the UNCT is proposing that new UNSDCF to run from 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2025 with an option for one- year extension. The UNSDCF roadmap is based on the assumption that the emerging national priorities from the on-going NDS review will still be valid until June 2023. On the NEXUS operationalisation, the UNCT will build on the progress in the following areas:

a) **Collective Outcomes and joint analysis:** The 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) and the 2019-2021/2 UN Cooperation Framework (UNCF) have two collective outcomes: (i) reducing food insecurity by building assets for resilience and (ii) improving access to Gender-based Violence (GBV) protection and prevention services. These outcomes, which are included in both the development and humanitarian frameworks are reviewed annually as part of the UNCF and HRP annual reports. This approach has improved coordination and provides an environment for development and humanitarian actors to jointly plan immediate humanitarian assistance and medium-term livelihood programs on food security and GBV issues.

b. **The South Sudan Reconciliation, Stabilization, and Resilience Trust Fund:** The RSRTF was developed by UNMISS and the UNCT. The Fund's objective is to provide strategic financing to integrated programs that together lessen the destructive drivers of conflict and develop more peaceful and self-reliant communities. Drawing on the comparative advantages across UNMISS, UN agencies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the RSRTF aims to promote integrated programming across the 'Triple Nexus' of the humanitarian, development, and peace fields. The Fund's programs are built around three essential elements: Reconciliation, Stabilization and Resilience. The Trust Fund steering committee chaired by the DSRSG/HC/RC consists of members from the donor community, UN agencies, UNMISS and NGOs.

c. **The Partnership for Recovery and Resilience (PfRR):** This platform brings together government, UN Agencies, UNMISS, NGOs and donors to advocate and implement programs with the view to reduce vulnerability, build resilience and support new ways of working in Yambio, Torit, Aweil and Wau. The Partnership currently

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<sup>1</sup> The Roadmap summarizes the key milestones, timelines, and roles in the preparation of the new UNSDCF in line with the 2019 Cooperation Framework Guidance. The roadmap covers the full period from evaluation of the ongoing Cooperation Framework through the preparation of the Joint Work Plans of the new Cooperation Framework.

operates across four distinct yet interlinked work streams: 1) Advocacy, 2) Area Based Programming, 3) Knowledge Management, Learning and Sharing, and 4) Data Gathering and Monitoring & Evaluation. Humanitarian, Peacebuilding and Development partners choose to engage on work streams based on their own added value, unique resources and expertise.

d. Peacebuilding Fund (PBF): Access to the UN Secretary General's Peacebuilding Fund provides an opportunity for the UN humanitarian and development agencies, UNMISS sections and NGOs to propose joint peacebuilding initiatives. The Peacebuilding Fund initiatives in South Sudan are coordinated by the Office of DSRSG/RC/HC and have provided catalytic funding towards peace and social cohesion programs.

Going forward on the NEXUS, the CCA will reflect HNO, and the Peace Analysis in South Sudan to inform a refinement of collective outcomes, coordination arrangements, joint funding and reporting.

Regarding Gender, the UNSDCF calls for accountability for GEWE and greater effectiveness. The process of developing the UNSDCF calls for accountability for GEWE and greater effectiveness. The process of developing the UNSDCF will emphasize on normative commitments requiring the UN development work to be guided by the principles of GEWE, people-centered, respect human rights and focus on the poorest, most vulnerable and those furthest behind.

The UNCT in South Sudan is currently finalizing the UN SWAP Gender scorecard. Therefore, the UNCT has the opportunity to mainstream gender taking full advantage of the new UNSDCF program cycle - through the full implementation of the System-Wide Action Plan (SWAP) on GEWE including through the UNCT-SWAP Scorecard performance indicators for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women - the "Gender Scorecard". The UNCT in South Sudan will place the need for adequate understanding of staff on the new UNSDCF and the UNCT-SWAP Scorecard to strengthen strategic planning and UN system-wide coordination capacities in support of preparations of new Cooperation Framework in South Sudan.

For each of the key steps of the UNSDCF Process, including Design and Stakeholder Participation the UNCT will ensure that there is integration of GEWE which will include the integration of a gender analysis including underlying causes of gender inequality and discrimination, which will inform the CCA. The UNCF review / evaluation will assess progress against gender-specific results. Within the CCA the GTG will advocate for the use of methodologies that collect Sex and Age Disaggregated Data, that informs us of the gendered dynamics, the use of methodologies that are non-discriminatory and those that do not only prioritize the opinions of those that are able to speak up or those that data collectors have access to. The UNCT will continue to work closely with the UN Gender Thematic Group in ensuring that all suggested activities within the roadmap prioritizes gender equality in the development of the UNSDCF. The development of UNSDCF outcomes will be visibly mainstreamed gender equality and the empowerment of women in all areas and in line with SDG 5. Therefore, the M&E Group will receive technical training on gender sensitive M&E prior to the UNDAF cycle. The National Women's Machinery including Women led Organizations will participate in UNCF consultations – country analysis, strategic prioritization, implementation, and M&E.

This timing will enable alignment of the UN and Government development priorities plus the use of the fragility assessment and national/ state level consultations done during the NDS review to inform the UNSDCF evidence base and analysis, namely the Common Country Analysis (CCA) which underpin the UNSDCF. Prior to the drafting of the Roadmap, the Regional Development Coordination Office (DCO) was informed to help facilitate participation of UN entities not currently working or resident in South Sudan to participate in the process

### **Meaningful Engagement of Stakeholders for Agenda 2030**

The consultations process outlined in this section will be undertaken subject to COVID-19 restrictions for meetings. To the extent possible virtual meetings will be adopted.

Recognizing the efforts by the Revitalized Government of National Unity (R-TGoNU) towards the peace process, and acknowledging the crucial role of the UN systems for the delivery of both humanitarian and development support in the country, while being mindful that the UN is just one player in a broader collective effort to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the UNCT in South Sudan will strive for meaningful engagement and participation of all development actors in the preparation and design process of its next UNSDCF.

It will use and expand on existing networks across government, development partners, private sector, key population groups, civil society, organizations or people representing disability, women, children and young people

for meaningful consultations and engagement for each component of the design and implementation of the UNSDCF to reflect our commitment to the principles of Human Rights Based Approach and Leave No One Behind.

Different modalities will be explored including opportunities to combine consultations to reduce time depending on the prevailing situation while ensuring effective engagement including of those from marginalised groups and hard to reach places/populations through virtual consultations (based on the Covid-19 situation), Sector Working Groups meetings, Heads of Cooperation (HoCs) meetings, community/beneficiary meetings, etc Using new or already existing networks/structures and mechanisms we shall engage state and county level actors in the consultations process. Relatedly, community preferences and perceptions will also be drawn from the on-going national/state level consultations on the NDS review done by government through Ebony Center.

Importantly, the consultative process will also be used as an opportunity to re-ignite discussions on the localization, implementation, monitoring and reporting of SDGs including setting up institutional mechanisms. Thus, the 2030 Agenda will be placed at the forefront both as an overall goal but also as a framework to inform and guide peacebuilding, development, recovery and resilience in the country for sustainable and transformative change.

The UNMISS does not have Integrated Strategic Framework, the UNCF provides an effective framework for programmatic collaboration between Agencies and UNMISS on; Rule of law, Governance and Peace Building, Gender Equality and Women Empowerment. UNMISS will be consulted during the CCA process and their priorities discussed during the prioritisation workshop.

### **2019-2022 UNCF Evaluation**

An independent evaluation of the 2019-2022 UNSDCF is planned for Q2/Q3 2021 to inform the CCA and new UNSDCF. This will be led by the UN M&E working group. The evaluation will draw from Agency-specific evaluations/studies/research and joint analysis. It will also draw from the 2019 & 2020 mid-year and annual reviews and progress reports and lessons learnt. It will focus on successful interventions which have the potential for scale-up/replication; lessons learnt and key constraints/challenges for mitigation in next cycle (including internal reasons for sub-optimal delivery); options for improvements in UNCT governance/coordination mechanisms. Where possible, human interest stories from the field showing transformation will be captured. We will explore the possibilities of doing the evaluation and CCA concurrently. Stakeholders to be engaged: 1) State and Member State Government representatives; 2) Resident and non-resident UN entities; 3) International and national NGOs and civil society groups (including those representing the most marginalized and 'furthest behind'); 4) International donor partners; and 5) International Financial Institutions (World Bank, ADB and IMF).

### **Common Country Analysis (CCA)**

The process will be UNCT led through the Joint Policy and Analysis Group with support from the M&E working Group and Coordination and guidance from the RCO, PMT and the Regional DCO. Based on the DCO template for CCA the JPAD will solicit data, review reports from AFPs and from external sources to inform the commencement of the drafting process.

As part of the strategy to ensure meaningful engagement and participation of all development actors in the process of the new UNSDCF, we anticipate two opportunities for broader (ie non-UN) engagement in the development of the CCA. Firstly, during the collation of the sectoral issues for the first level analysis, relevant UN entities will consult with their constituencies (both state and non-state plus beneficiaries) to inform their contributions. Secondly, a validation workshop will be organized during the finalization of the CCA for stakeholders to participate in a deeper interrogation of development challenges, the root and underlying causes, principal bottlenecks and possible entry points for the UN to support acceleration of delivery. Particular attention will be accorded to those interventions which have the most potential to achieve development results at scale with minimum trade-offs. Opportunities for combining the stakeholder workshops for CCA and UNSDCF evaluation will be explored.

All stakeholders will be invited to the validation workshop, including very prominently those representing youth, women and other vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities. we will use the UNCT's Contractors' Management Database (CIMS), which also has information on development partners who have had practices in the past – this database will allow us to weed them out so they are not invited. All the donors with whom the UNCT collaborates regularly (including through the Heads of Cooperation meetings) will also be invited, be they bilateral donors (e.g. Netherlands, USAID) or international financial institutions such as the African Development Bank or

the World Bank.<sup>2</sup> It is unclear if a part of the meeting will be in person (this depends on the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic in South Sudan). An online connection will be set up, though, an innovation that will ensure the participation of the highest number of stakeholders possible – both from inside and outside of South Sudan. For instance, non-resident agencies of the UN with an interest in South Sudan will also be invited.

The final report will be informed by the UN programming principles training with emphasis on the promise to leave no-one behind<sup>3</sup> Accountabilities; Climate Change and Environment; Human Rights, and Gender Equality and Advocacy. The CCA will also draw on the findings from the fragility assessment and stakeholder consultations by government during the NDS review, as well as data from the National Bureau of Statistics led Population Estimation Survey and SDG data landscape diagnostics. This will ensure that conclusions are aligned with government's understanding of the development challenges of South Sudan, thereby creating a common evidence-base for the new UNSDCF and revised NDS. Depending on the country context especially in regards to the peace and conflict dynamics, the CCA may be updated prior to the finalisation of the new UNSDCF results matrix. This will allow for critical adjustments in light of emerging issues and changes in context. The CCA will be dynamic and updated each year as per the guidelines. Stakeholders to be engaged: 1) State and Member State Government representatives; 2) Resident and non-resident UN entities; 3) International and national NGOs and civil society groups (including those representing the most marginalized and 'furthest behind'); 4) International donor partners; and 5) International Financial Institutions; 6) UN Economic Commission for Africa; 7) Regional Peer Support Group (quality assurance)

### **Key Steps of the Cooperation Framework Process, including Design & Stakeholder Participation**

1. Final evaluation of UNCF 2019-2022 – An independent consultant will be hired to undertake a comprehensive final evaluation of the UNCF, the outcome of which will inform the development of the new UNCF.
2. Development of CCA – RCO, through the relevant internal UN coordination mechanisms, will coordinate the development and compilation of the CCA in accordance with DCO guidance materials and based on contributions from UN entities (per SDG based on respective agency mandates, NDS, conflict analysis, humanitarian analysis and consultations with relevant internal and external stakeholders).
3. Development of Strategic Priorities and Outcomes – RCO to coordinate process with engagement from across the UN system in South Sudan and with partners and heavily informed by the CCA and priorities of the NDS.
4. Elaboration of Results Framework – RCO to coordinate through PMT and M&E Working Group. The results framework will draw heavily from that of the NDS and ensure integration of SDG indicators where data is available.
5. Finalization of UNCF – Following UNCT endorsement of the UNCF, the RCO will facilitate final consultations with Government and other partners prior to finalization and signing by UN and the Ministry of Finance in South Sudan.

Stakeholders to be engaged are State and Government representatives; Resident and non-resident UN entities; International and national NGOs and civil society groups (including those representing the most marginalized and 'furthest behind'); International donor partners; International Financial Institutions; UN Economic Commission for Africa; Regional Peer Support Group (quality assurance); Development Coordination Office (regional and headquarters)

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<sup>2</sup> Some, such as the African Development Bank, the World Bank and USAID have very recently started the process of revising their UNSDCF-equivalent country engagement strategies, which will be very useful to compare analytical approaches (a similar exercise is currently being concluded by the UNCT: to have a complete landscape of data relating to the SDGs.

<sup>3</sup> These are: an integrated and multidimensional programming approach; the transformative promise to Leave No One Behind; the Human Rights-Based Approach to Development; Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment; Resilience; Sustainability; Accountability.

## **Alignment with CPDs and other agency programmes**

### **Preparation of Funding Framework**

Following the completion of the UNCF and the formulation of its associated priorities, outcomes, outputs, as well as the determination of the composition of the UNCT in South Sudan, the UN will undertake a comprehensive analysis of the financial landscape in the country. The most up-to-date national financial data analysis will provide the foundation of the financing framework and will be complimented by other relevant sources, including from IFIs and regional UN and non-UN institutions. The UN will undertake an assessment of projected available funds from all sources (core and non-core) as well as identifying financial needs against the priorities and outcomes of the UNCF. This analysis will form the basis of the UN's collective and coordinated resource mobilization strategy.

### **Alignment of UN entity-specific Country Development Programming Instruments with the UNSDCF**

In line with the latest phase of the UN reform and guidance, the UNCT in South Sudan including Non-Resident Agencies acknowledge the primacy of the UNSDCF as the document which articulates the Government's expectations of the UNDS and in turn drives the major UN contributions to the development agenda at country level. The timing of the UNSDCF process has therefore been designed to enable UN entities (Funds and Programmes and Specialised Agencies) to derive their country programmes from the Cooperation Framework and not vice versa. The UNSDCF Outcomes and outputs are to be agreed by UNCT and government by December 2021 following the Strategic Prioritisation Workshop. This allows the Funds and Programmes to elaborate their agency specific Country Programme Documents for submission to their Regional/Headquarters by May 2022. The new cooperation will be signed and launched by UNCT and government in September 2022 to allow agencies submit their programming instruments to their regional/Headquarters before December 2022.

### **Key Planning Assumptions and Risks including Timeframe**

The entire planning process goes beyond the nine months mentioned in the guidelines/annex and there are good reasons for that. The UNCT is anticipating a comprehensive CCA process as the last UNSDCF was informed by a strategic prioritization note prepared in 2017. There are still uncertainty on the exact time the NDS review conclusions will be ready and lastly as the capacity rotation within the UNCT is frequent, the UNCT have allowed a bit more time for the process.

First and foremost, it is assumed that the implementation of the R-ARCSS will continue and the peace in South Sudan will continue to hold; and that the security situation will continue to remain relatively calm and stable to enable stakeholder engagement especially at the state level to inform the formulation of the new UNSDCF. Further, it is anticipated that data and analysis generated during the on-going NDS review, Fragility Assessment, PES and SDG data landscape diagnosis as well as Agency-specific evaluations/studies/researches, joint analysis and the planned evaluation of the current UNSDCF can inform the new UNSDCF process, including the CCA without necessarily undertaking a primary field survey and data collection. Also, it is anticipated that the emerging national priorities from the on-going NDS review will still be valid post 2023 (after the transitional period) and continue to inform the development priorities of the country. Relatedly, it is also anticipated that Government partners at both the technical level and political leadership will continue to be supportive and participate in the UNSDCF formulation process. The UN co-chairs of the SWGs will regularly engage government counterparts in the sectors, whilst the DSRSG/HC/RC and UNCT will engage the political leadership. Also, that there will not be a deterioration of the COVID pandemic that will impeded the consultation process envisaged in this process.

Notwithstanding the above, challenges remain in accessing robust data for *all* elements of SDG delivery as South Sudan has never done any SDG Voluntary National Review and data veracity generally remains a challenge in the country. The conflict has led to infrastructure breakdown and coordination weaknesses for data collection and reporting in the country. The last comprehensive population and housing census was undertaken in 2008 before South Sudan got its independence. Since then, the country context and dynamics has changed and yet the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) has not been able to collect and update the country SDG and development data due to insecurity and institutional challenges. The UNCT is now supporting the Government through NBS to undertake SDG data landscape diagnosis to understand the data landscape in the country in reference to the SDGs and underlying reasons for data gaps. In addition, with support from UNFPA and other contributing agencies, the National Bureau of Statistics is conducting a Population Estimation Survey (PES)- which could provide updated population estimates to inform planning, prioritization and decision-making.

### **Budget for the Cooperation Framework Process**

The total budget for the development of the UNSDCF amounts to USD 130,000. This encompasses costs for the independent evaluation plus the various consultative processes around the UNSDCF processes and steps. The costs will be met from 2021 DCO budget for coordination support and 2021 UNCT cost-shared budget contribution for planned activities of the sub-teams. All other costs, mostly related to staff time, will be directly absorbed by RCO and AFPs



Annex I

UNSDCF Key Processes and Timeline<sup>4</sup>

Key milestone	What is to be done	Timeline (by month)																								Who is responsible	Budget (USD)	Support (HQ, regional, etc.)	
		2021												2022															
		M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D						
A. Initiation Phase																													
Launch the new UNSDCF roadmap process	RC informs regional DCO about the start of the process																										DSRSG/RC/H C	-	
	DCO informs all non-resident entities																										Regional DCO	-	
Draft Roadmap including Budget	Develop roadmap and secure PMT, UNCT, government and DCO endorsement																										RCO, PMT	-	
National Development Strategy Review process supported, including SDG prioritization and localization and costed plan	Participate in sector analysis (sector issues papers) and national consultations on draft NDS review																										PMT, UNCT, Results Groups	-	
Evaluation of 2019-2022 UNSDCF	Launch and conduct the independent evaluation of the current UNSDCF including consultant contracting process																										UN M&E WG	50,000	Quality review by DCO
System-wide training for the UNCT sub-teams on the Cooperation Framework conducted	Train the core UNCT sub-teams (PMT, M&E, UNCGs, OMT) in: HRBA, Gender Mainstreaming, UN Programming Principles, including the revised Cooperation Framework Guidance, and RBM. -																										Regional DCO	5,000	Facilitator from DCO
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>																											<b>55,000</b>		

<sup>4</sup> The Office of the Resident Coordinator coordinates development of the UNCF with support from the broader UNDS

Developing South Sudan’s new UNCF to run from January 2023 – to be determined.







Key milestone	What is to be done	Timeline (by month)																								Who is responsible	Budget (USD)	Support (HQ, regional, etc.)		
		2021												2022																
		Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec							
Costed monitoring and evaluation plan for the cooperation Framework prepared and approved by the UNCT																												M&E WG		
SDG financing strategy for the country and Cooperation Framework funding frameworks prepared and approved by the UNCT																												PMT, UN/NGO PWG, UNCT		
Cooperation Framework Management Structure established/revised/updated																												PMT, UNCT		
Cooperation Framework communication strategy prepared	UNCG planning workshop to develop the communication strategy																											UNCG	1,000	
Establish new UNSDCF alignment with BOS	OMT planning workshop to align UNSDCF to BOS operations																											OMT	1,000	
Final Cooperation Framework document signed by the Government and UNCT and launched	Consultant provides quality assurance and final editing																											Consultant, RCO	10,000	
	Signature and launch of the cooperation framework																											UNCT, Govt	2,000	
UN entity country development programming instrument approved by governing mechanisms																												UNCT		
UN UNSDCF joint workplans completed																												RGs, PMT		
UNSDCF results framework and JWP uploaded in UN INFO																												RCO, M&E WG		
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>																											<b>61,000</b>			
<b>GRAND TOTAL (A+B+C)</b>																											<b>130,000</b>			