Annex 3. Incorporation of lessons learned under the Strategic Plan, 2014-2017, in the formulation of the new Strategic Plan, 2018-2021

The UNDP management response to the evaluation of the Strategic Plan, global programme and regional programmes, 2014-2017 (DP/2017/32) was considered by the Executive Board at its second regular session 2017. In decision 2017/21 adopted at that session, the Executive Board requested UNDP to take into account, as appropriate, the recommendations of all relevant evaluations when formulating the next strategic plan for 2018-2021 and related global and regional programmes.

The matrix below does not reiterate the follow-up actions to be taken to implement the evaluations’ recommendations, but rather serves as a **high-level summary of how UNDP consciously has incorporated those recommendations in the draft strategic plan, 2018-2021.**

**Alignment of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 with the recommendations of the evaluation**

**of the Strategic Plan, global programme and regional programmes, 2014-2017**

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| **Recommendation** | **Strategic Plan Response** |
| Recommendation 1. *Support for fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals should be a cross-cutting issue for all UNDP country offices.* ***Integrated approaches*** *to* ***development*** *are essential for fulfilment of the Goals and should be pursued where possible, taking national contexts and implementation efficiency into consideration.* | The Strategic Plan 2018-2021 is anchored in the 2030 Agenda and states that the primary role of UNDP is to help countries achieve it. The key role of UNDP as an integrator is highlighted, along with a commitment to help countries "connect the dots" on the toughest sustainable development challenges they face, and build capacities to address complex and interconnected development challenges (Strategic Plan paras. 11, 19, 22, 23). The UNDP business model will be adapted to ensure ways of working and capacities required deliver an integrated service offer to support the 2030 Agenda (para. 65). |
| Recommendation 2. *The overarching strategic objective of UNDP — supporting the poorest of the poor and the most marginalized members of society — remains valid. Future resources and programming should aim to help countries* ***accelerate the achievement of development results especially for those left behind****, based on fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals.* | The vision for the UNDP Strategic Plan includes helping countries to eradicate poverty in all its forms (para. 22). Focusing on poverty reduction is identified as the highest priority (para. 19). Signature solution 1, "Keeping people out of poverty", articulates the UNDP approach to addressing barriers and vulnerabilities that keep people in poverty or push people back into poverty as shocks and crises occur (para. 34). In its approaches, UNDP will prioritize data collection to identify those left behind and design targeted interventions to reach them (paras. 25, 32, 43, 44, 45). |
| Recommendation 3. *UNDP should retain its global reach.* ***Programming in middle-income countries should align with the Sustainable Development Goals and other global frameworks****, placing vulnerable populations at the forefront while seizing opportunities to expand assistance at subnational levels* | The approach articulated in the Strategic Plan is to help achieve the 2030 Agenda across diverse development contexts. UNDP will apply its signature development solutions depending on the specific development settings countries are facing, including where there is respectively a relatively greater country priority on poverty eradication, structural transformation or responding to crisis (paras. 40-43). |
| Recommendation 4. *UNDP should* ***strongly emphasize its climate change adaptation capabilities and services*** *in the next strategic plan. The UNDP national and subnational scope of service, capabilities for urban and rural development planning, governance and risk assessment, experience managing multi-partner trust funds and decades of environmental protection and disaster risk reduction and recovery work provide a platform from which to ably assist national and subnational governments to meet this global development challenge. Specific* ***attention should be paid to the climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction linkages****.* | Climate change adaptation capabilities and services are key aspects of the UNDP response offer to the complex and interconnected challenges that countries are facing. Signature solution 4, "Promote nature-based solutions for a sustainable planet", encompasses a broad menu of interventions that UNDP can support in different country contexts. Signature solution 3, "Enhance prevention and recovery for resilient societies", includes strengthened synergies across, amongst other areas, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation and mitigation (paras. 36-37). |
| *Recommendation 5. Recognizing that governance is key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, UNDP should be* ***proactive in supporting sectoral governance approaches*** *and more persuasive in promoting democratic governance reforms.* | The Strategic Plan recognizes that accountable and inclusive governance systems and processes are crucial to sustainable development. Signature solution 2, "Strengthen effective, accountable and inclusive governance", outlines the diverse ways in which UNDP will support countries towards building peaceful, just and inclusive societies (para. 37). |
| Recommendation 6. *Analysis of institutional capacities at the national level should guide UNDP governance programming in countries affected by conflict.* ***Governance support needs to be targeted to critical government functions that are essential to stability****. UNDP should more strategically support Sustainable Development Goal 16 and related intergovernmental agreements on peacebuilding and State-building.* | As part of signature solution 2, "Strengthen effective, accountable and inclusive governance", UNDP will provide support as requested in crisis contexts for re-establishing core governance functions, including building inclusive institutions and mechanisms for the peaceful resolution of conflict and advancing social inclusion (para. 37). |
| Recommendation 7. *UNDP should* ***retain resilience as a distinct area of work*** *under the next strategic plan so that stakeholders see this remaining a core area of the UNDP service offering. To strengthen the coherence of its crisis risk-reduction and recovery support, UNDP should* ***continue to refine the roles and scope of service of [the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support] BPPS and the Crisis Response Unit***. | The Strategic Pan retains a strong focus on reliance through signature solution 3, "Enhance prevention and recovery for resilient societies", recognizing that building resilience requires not only a focus on the impact of crises but also on the drivers of risk ingrained within development processes themselves (para. 38). The continued refinement of the roles and scope of service of BPPS and the Crisis Response Unit will be addressed as part of the business model work, including scope for innovation in the policy area (paras. 74, 83). |
| Recommendation 8. *UNDP should* ***strengthen implementation of its gender policies, taking measures to ensure adequate funding to mainstream gender across all programming areas****. Work on gender equality and women's empowerment should not be confined to a gender team alone but should ensure that all large programmes have dedicated gender expertise. Specific attention needs to be paid to such areas as environment, energy and crisis response, where gender mainstreaming remains weak.* | Recognizing its importance to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, the Strategic Plan outlines gender equality as a central consideration in the three development settings described in paras. 27-32) Gender equality will be addressed as a cross-cutting issue (paras. 34, 43, 44, 46, 47) in the development of signature solutions 1-5, and directly through signature solution 6, "Strengthen gender equality"(para. 41). |
| Recommendation 9. *UNDP should take a* ***more systematic approach to South-South cooperation****, selecting specific areas and partners for expanded cooperation.* | South-South cooperation is highlighted as an essential element of how UNDP will work in partnership to support the 2030 Agenda, including through close collaboration with the United Nations Office of South-South Cooperation and the implementation of the UNDP strategy on South- South and triangular cooperation (para. 16). The UNDP global platform will facilitate the capture, dissemination and implementation of Sustainable Development Goal solutions through South-South and triangular cooperation (paras. 30, 59). |
| Recommendation 10. *UNDP should* ***change the global programme into a service line*** *for supporting staff positions at global and regional levels, as its shared deliverables and blurred boundaries make it unsuitable as a specific programme.* | The UNDP global programme is classified under development effectiveness) activities in the UNDP financial statements and in the integrated resources plan and integrated budget estimates, 2018-2021 (DP/2017/39). As noted in para. 68 of document DP/2017/39, UNDP proposes consolidation of five development effectiveness-related lines, i.e., global programme, development support services, economists’ programme, policy advisory services and gender mainstreaming. Annex B of the same document, sections IIa (paragraph 15) and IIb (paragraph 53), elaborate on the programmatic component of the integrated budget. |
| Recommendation 11. *UNDP should* ***determine specialties within its sustainable development, governance and resilience areas of work****. This will help it* ***build world-class technical expertise*** *and focus its resources on building capacities in those areas.* | The Strategic Plan highlights that the UNDP global platform will bring together high-quality policy and technical advisory expertise to develop and apply the signature solutions across the three development contexts (paras. 57, 58, 61). |
| Recommendation 12. *UNDP should* ***reassess the roles and financial sustainability of the regional hubs****, striving to make them centres of excellence for innovation and learning while expanding cooperation and partnerships with regional institutions. It should reduce overlap between regional and country-level programming.* | The Strategic Plan commits UNDP to reviewing the sustainability of the regional hubs' policy advisory and country support functions (para. 84). Work on the business model is designed to ensure that UNDP expertise stationed globally, regionally and at country level is managed in a way that ensures efficient, scalable and cost-effective delivery of services for different country contexts (para. 55). |
| Recommendation 13. *Regional programming, if better defined, has the potential to be a valuable tool to prioritize and organize UNDP regional engagement and support to country offices. UNDP should* ***develop its regional programmes as frameworks, outlining the regional issues to be addressed and approaches to be followed.*** *To maximize its activities at the regional level and position UNDP to make a meaningful contribution, there should be more focus on a select number of areas at the regional level. For regional programmes to be effective, the activities that are considered should be realistic and pay sufficient attention to regionality principles.* | Regional programme frameworks will be presented to the Executive Board at its first regular session 2018, taking this recommendation into account. |
| Recommendation 14. *UNDP should* ***promote a results culture*** *that encourages critical reflection and continuous organizational learning for improved results and institutional effectiveness.* | The UNDP global platform will intensify efforts to develop accessible knowledge management systems across policy, programmatic and operational areas and facilitate an active learning approach across regions (paras. 58, 63, 65). |
| Recommendation 15. *UNDP should increase the involvement of the Office of Human Resources (OHR) in strategic decision-making, especially in future institutional restructuring. Given the increasing complexity of programme delivery, inter-agency work and collaboration with a range of partners including civil society,* ***investment in developing skills in leadership, relationship management and management across complex systems should be prioritized.*** | The Strategic Plan notes (para. 76) that UNDP staff capacity at all levels must evolve to effectively and efficiently deliver results against the Strategic Plan and develop and deliver integrated service offerings. To this end, UNDP will seek to broaden its partnerships with training providers, increase access to learning courses and enhance its emerging and future leader development programmes to focus more on partnership development and multi-stakeholder dialogue and negotiation so as to better reflect the integrated approaches required to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. |
| Recommendation 16. *UNDP should transition from political budgeting to a more risk- and results-based budgeting process, to* ***more effectively link results to resources****. This will help mobilize funds and better highlight investment gaps to donors. UNDP is being held accountable to a corporate strategic plan without predictable and adequate resources. UNDP should work with funders and influence groups to raise understanding of the unintended effects of reductions in core funding****.*** *Focus should be on* ***bringing the donor community together to work more effectively on integrated multidimensional approaches to support fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals, while contributing to partner country priorities****.* | To support fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals, UNDP will improve its service offer, skills, systems, processes and tools to shift from being solely a direct funding partner towards being an organization that leverages development by helping to create a better enabling environment for private sector funding and providing services to help mobilize private capital and other investments for country development (para. 80). |

**Recommendations of relevant independent and decentralized evaluations undertaken in the Strategic Plan period, 2014-2017**

**taken into consideration in formulating the Strategic Plan, 2018-2021**

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| **Joint assessment of the institutional effectiveness of UNDP (2017)** | |
| The joint assessment (DP/2017/21) recommended, inter alia, that the UNDP value added and comparative advantage be adequately identified, that all country programmes be based on a theory of change, that UNDP develop greater results- based management expertise with improved focus on learning and knowledge management, that UNDP assess the costs of the new quality assurance system and effectively encourages a "results culture". | The new Strategic Plan takes into account the guidance from the 2017 joint assessment. Going forward, in designing and delivering integrated solutions to complex development settings that require multisectoral action, UNDP will work to fulfil its role as integrator and convener, fostering greater collaboration amongst a wide range of actors (United Nations, government, civil society, private sector, etc.) in achieving the 2030 Agenda. This will be anchored in the improved ability of UNDP to design country programmes on the basis of its comparative and operational advantages in a given country context, utilizing theories of change to underpin its programming. UNDP notes the role of strong leadership with clear vision and purpose to create a results culture that encourages constructive risk-taking, stronger associative thinking and a greater emphasis on strengthening learning and knowledge management. |
| **Evaluation of UNDP support to disability-inclusive development (2016)** | |
| The evaluation (DP/2017/6) recommends that the UNDP strategic plan include outcomes and outputs aligned with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In consultation with persons living with disabilities, organizations and civil society groups working on disability inclusion, UNDP should contribute to the inclusion of persons with disabilities in its work at global, regional and country levels, including work on resource mobilization. UNDP should ensure that disability inclusion is appropriately addressed in key programming documentation and provide support for data collection and tracking and reporting disability-sensitive results. Internally, UNDP should ensure it understands the needs of employees with disabilities, including in recruitment and career advancement, and provide reasonable accommodation. Similarly, UNDP should ensure that their concerns are addressed in key corporate strategies and grievance mechanisms. | The new Strategic Plan’s focus on structural transformations, reducing risk premiums and increasing the catalytic effects of development investments necessitates inclusivity based on gender, minority status and disability. As mandated by the QCPR, partnerships with civil society and support to civic engagement are central to the Strategic Plan across development settings and signature solutions, as enabled by both the global and the country-level platforms and through innovative approaches. Furthermore, an evidence-based, data-informed approach to inclusive growth, governance and resilience building is a commitment in the Strategic Plan. The integrated results and resources framework (IRRF) includes disability-sensitive outputs and will track inclusion of persons living with a disability through relevant indicators and disaggregated data where available. The new business model addresses the issue of an inclusive work environment in UNDP at all levels of the organization. |
| **Evaluation of the UNDP contribution to anti-corruption and addressing drivers of corruption (2016)** | |
| The evaluation (DP/2017/5) noted the positive contribution of UNDP to national efforts to reduce corruption and recommended prioritizing efforts to address the drivers of corruption in its programme countries, addressing regional variations and underrepresentation in anti-corruption support, including support for governance risk assessments and measurements. It urged greater capacities and resources for global and regional policy debate and advocacy to increase support for local-level initiatives to strengthen demand-side accountability, particularly concerning access to information and social accountability initiatives. | The continuing efforts of UNDP to prioritize and address corruption risks falls within the scope of signature solution 2, to enable institutions and systems to address awareness, prevention and enforcement of anti-corruption measures. Also, specific tools to address drivers of corruption are integrated in the Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Programme Support ("MAPS") approach for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. |
| **Evaluation of the UNDP contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment (2015)** | |
| The evaluation (DP/2016/11, Annex2) recommended that UNDP should align its resources and programming with its corporate message on the centrality of supporting gender equality and women’s empowerment as a means to “fast forward” development results. Gender mainstreaming should also go beyond providing sex-disaggregated data for all results areas of the strategic plan. In this connection, the merits of integrating the gender equality strategy as part of the next strategic plan (2018 onwards) should receive serious consideration. | Following this recommendation, the new Strategic Plan recognizes the centrality of gender equality to sustainable development and proposes to strengthen mainstreaming of gender equality and women’s empowerment across operational programming. The Strategic Plan includes gender considerations in the definition of its approach, the development contexts in which it will operate and its signature solutions, including one focusing specifically on the structural transformations needed to achieve gender equality.  To this end, UNDP will develop a new gender equality strategy to accompany the Strategic Plan. It will also strengthen its partnership with UN-Women and other relevant partners. The IRRF includes gender-sensitive outputs and indicators as well as the use of sex-disaggregated data when available and appropriate. |
| **Evaluation of the role of UNDP in supporting national achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (2015)** | |
| The evaluation recommended that UNDP should continue to provide guidance and thought leadership on how to translate the post-2015 agenda at the national and subnational levels through clear local priorities and coherence with the global agenda. UNDP should establish and maintain a cadre of dedicated advisors at headquarters and in regional hubs to support the Sustainable Development Goal-related work of regional bureaux and country offices over the long term, bring coherence to the overall effort and maintain institutional memory. UNDP should document the varied approaches at the country level in a more systematic and objective way than has been the case so far. Resource mobilization and the management of trust funds also needs to be brought into a more coherent framework to support country-level activities. | The Strategic Plan takes into consideration the evaluation recommendations. The new plan places significant focus on building national capacities to integrate the 2030 Agenda and to analyze progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, using innovative and data-driven solutions. The Strategic Plan also aims to ensure that UNDP thought leadership, knowledge and evidence contribute to national policies, plans and partnerships for sustainable development. The global development advisory and implementation services platform proposed in the Strategic Plan is intended to provide high-quality integrated technical and policy advisory support to country platforms and UNDP country programmes, and to support UNDP global knowledge, innovation and partnership-building efforts. The business model as proposed in the Strategic Plan will explore partnerships for resource mobilization and more efficient and coherent management of funds. |
| **Evaluation of the UNDP contribution to poverty reduction (2016 progress report (DP/2016/26))** | |
| The evaluation recommended that UNDP ensure that the ideas and lessons it propagates through its flagship documents, such as national human development reports and Millennium Development Goal reports, may influence the national policy agenda. Programmes and projects undertaken by UNDP should be designed with an explicit pro-poor bias, always trying to add specific elements that would enhance the likelihood that the poor will benefit more than they would through general development interventions. | The UNDP vision as articulated in the Strategic Plan expresses the organization’s commitment to eradicating poverty in all its forms and represents one of the three outcome areas and the cross-cutting signature solution 1 which aims at ending deprivation with a focus on exiting and remaining out of poverty. Anchored in the 2030 Agenda, UNDP work will emphasize an inclusive approach to development to “leave no one behind” and reaching the “furthest behind first”. Using its flagship documents and building national capacities as a thought leader, UNDP will ensure that poverty eradication as an *irreversible process* will guide the strategies, policies and systems that UNDP will support in its engagement with national and subnational counterparts and partners. The IRRF will track progress in all output areas targeting the poorest and monitoring changes in multidimensional poverty according to the UNDP policy and methodology supporting achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 1 targets and indicators. |
| **Evaluation of the UNDP contribution to South-South and triangular cooperation, 2008-2011 (2013)** | |
| The evaluation recommended that UNDP develop a comprehensive corporate strategy to support South-South and triangular cooperation. In addition, it required UNDP to clarify operational approaches and guidance for its continued support. | Subsequent to the launch in 2015 of its corporate strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation, in the Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 UNDP proposes to mainstream South-South and triangular cooperation across operational programming and to expand and deepen its partnerships for such cooperation outside the United Nations system. |
| **Learning from IRRF and development performance analyses** | |
| In decision 2017/12, the Executive Board requested UNDP to build on lessons learned from the current Strategic Plan and IRRF, 2014-2017, and the findings, conclusions and recommendations of relevant evaluations and the joint assessment of the institutional effectiveness of UNDP when developing the strategic plan and IRRF, 2018 – 2021. | The implementation of the Strategic Plan, 2014-2017 has been closely monitored through the IRRF, which enabled thorough analyses of the comparative advantage of UNDP measured through results and demand received from Governments, donors and partners. Both the results and the demand analyses informed the new Strategic Plan. A series of shortcomings of the current framework as well as findings of the assessment of institutional effectiveness and the evaluation of the Strategic Plan, 2014-2017 have been addressed in the formulation of the new IRRF. The new framework was built employing a bottom-up approach, drawing on country programme results frameworks and better capturing UNDP country, regional and global results. Through a strong linking with the 2030 Agenda and the use of Sustainable Development Goal indicators at impact and outcome level, the new IRRF will also allow for close tracking of work in support of national progress towards the Goals. |

