

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION FRAMEWORK BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN 2026-2030



**GOVERNMENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF
AZERBAIJAN**



**UNITED NATIONS
AZERBAIJAN**



Joint Statement

The Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan (hereinafter referred to as “Government of Azerbaijan” or “the Government”) and the United Nations reaffirm their shared commitment to advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through this United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (hereafter, Cooperation Framework) for 2026–2030.

This Cooperation Framework marks a new phase in the Azerbaijan–UN partnership. It builds on Azerbaijan’s transition to upper-middle-income status and recognizes the country’s significant strides and achievements in institutional development, capacity enhancement, and domestic resource mobilisation for sustainable development. Following the restoration of Azerbaijan’s sovereignty and territorial integrity, large-scale post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation works launched in the liberated territories continue to create new opportunities for sustainable and resilient development, while fostering a more equitable society and ensuring no one is left behind. Reflecting these new realities, the Cooperation Framework introduces a renewed model of collaboration - more agile, catalytic, and responsive to Azerbaijan’s evolving needs and priorities.

Fully aligned with national development goals, the Cooperation Framework focuses on two strategic priorities:

1. Advancing inclusive socio-economic growth and human development; and
2. Promoting ecosystems, and climate resilience, green growth, and just transition.

In this new phase of cooperation, the United Nations will leverage its regional and global networks to deliver targeted expertise, innovative solutions, and customized support, while maintaining a streamlined in-country presence.

As Azerbaijan and the world accelerate efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, we reaffirm our commitment to the core promise of the 2030 Agenda to Leave No One Behind: so that the benefits of development reach all people, including women, children, and youth, persons with disabilities, older persons, former internally displaced persons and other vulnerable groups.

The implementation of all United Nations programmes, projects, and activities in all districts and areas of the Republic of Azerbaijan under the Cooperation Framework will be fully coordinated and agreed with the respective counterparts within the Government of Azerbaijan. They will be implemented in full respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Through the Joint Steering Committee and Results Groups, the Government and the United Nations Country Team will ensure effective implementation, and continuous adaptation of the Cooperation Framework.

Together, we pledge to make the Cooperation Framework 2026–2030 a catalyst for translating the vision of the 2030 Agenda into tangible results, advancing a resilient, and sustainable future for all people in Azerbaijan.



SIGNATURE PAGE

The Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework Between the United Nations and the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2026-2030 has been prepared based on the extensive and inclusive consultations.

By signing hereunder, the participating parties endorse the Cooperation Framework.

Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Mikayil Jabbarov

Minister of Economy
Republic of Azerbaijan

United Nations Country Team

Vladanka Andreeva

United Nations Resident Coordinator
Republic of Azerbaijan

Signed in Baku, Azerbaijan, on 24 October 2025.



The UN Resident Coordinator and the Minister of Economy signed the new Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework between 2026–2030 on 24 October 2025.

Photo credit: UNRCO/Mammad Aliyev/2025

UN System Organization Signature Page

The undersigned UN System Organizations express their joint commitment to the priorities and cooperation results of this Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework Between the United Nations and the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2026-2030.

FAO Food and Agriculture Organization	Nasar Hayat Representative	
ILO International Labour Organization	Mikhail Pouchkin Director, Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia	
IOM International Organization for Migration	Lars Johan Lönnback Chief of Mission a.i.	
ITU International Telecommunication Union	Natalia Mochu Regional Director, Regional Office for CIS	
OHCHR Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights	Francesco Motta Regional Director for Europe, Central Asia and MENA	
UNECE United Nations Economic Commission for Europe	Dmitry Mariyasin Deputy Executive Secretary	
UNEP United Nations Environment Programme	Arnold Kreilhuber Regional Director and Representative for Europe	
UN Habitat United Nations Human Settlements Programme	Erfan Ali Regional Programme Director a.i.	
UNIDO United Nations Industrial Development Organization	Solomiya Omelyan Chief of the Regional Bureau for Europe and Central Asia	
UNOPS United Nations Office for Project Services	Simonetta Siligato Director, Multi-Country Office, Europe and Central Asia Region	
UN Women United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women	Kaori Ishikawa Representative to Georgia and Liaison for South Caucasus	
WHO World Health Organization	Hande Harmanci Representative	

Table of Contents

JOINT STATEMENT	2
ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS	8
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	10

CHAPTER 1: COUNTRY PROGRESS TOWARDS THE 2030 AGENDA	12
--	-----------

1.1 Overview of the SDG progress in Azerbaijan	12
1.2. Advancing inclusive Socio-Economic Growth and Human Development	14
1.3. Promoting Ecosystems and Climate Resilience, Green Growth, and Just Transition	20
1.4. Post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation of the liberated territories	22

CHAPTER 2: UN DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM SUPPORT TO THE 2030 AGENDA	23
--	-----------

2.1. Rationale behind adopted priorities and Theory of Change	23
2.1.1. United Nations support in the upper middle-income country context	23
2.1.2. From Context Analysis to Cooperation Framework Priorities	24
2.1.3. SDG interlinkages and accelerators – systems approach to informing Cooperation Framework priorities	26
2.2. Theory of Change for the Cooperation Framework Priorities	27
2.3. Cooperation Framework Outcomes and Partnerships	32
2.3.1. Strategic Priority 1: Advancing inclusive Socio-Economic growth and Human Development	32
2.3.2. Strategic Priority 2: Promoting ecosystems and climate resilience, green growth, and just transition	40

CHAPTER 3: COOPERATION FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION PLAN	48
---	-----------

3.1. Cooperation Framework Governance	48
---------------------------------------	----

3.2. Cooperation Framework Management Structure	48
---	----

3.3. Resourcing the Cooperation Framework	50
---	----

3.4 Derivation of UN System Organization country programming instruments from the Cooperation Framework	51
---	----

3.5. Joint Workplans	51
----------------------	----

3.6. Business Operations Strategy in support of the Cooperation Framework	52
---	----

CHAPTER 4: MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING	53
---	-----------

4.1. Monitoring in joint work plans	53
-------------------------------------	----

4.2. Annual review and Country Results Reporting	54
--	----

4.3. Evaluation plan	55
----------------------	----

ANNEXES	56
----------------	-----------

Annex 1: Results Framework	57
----------------------------	----

Annex 2: Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan	73
---	----

Annex 3: Legal Annex	78
----------------------	----

Acronyms, Abbreviations and Definitions

CCA	Common Country Analysis
CF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
COP29	29th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
DCO	Development Coordination Office
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
HDI	Human Development Index
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ILO	International Labor Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
JSC	Joint Steering Committee
JWP	Joint Workplan
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
MDB	Multilateral Development Banks
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEG	Monitoring and Evaluation Group
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NCCSD	National Coordination Council for Sustainable Development
NDC	Nationally Determined Contributions
OHCHR	United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

OMT	Operations Management Team
RBM	Results-Based Management
RC	United Nations Resident Coordinator
RG	Results Group
RCO	United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SOE	State-Owned Enterprise
SSC	State Statistical Committee
ToC	Theory of Change
UN System Organizations	Funds, Programmes and other subsidiary organs, and other organizations of the United Nations system
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlement Programme
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UN SPECA	United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
VNR	Voluntary National Review
WHO	World Health Organization

Executive Summary

The United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2026–2030 marks a new phase in the partnership between the Government of Azerbaijan and the United Nations, aimed at accelerating the progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals. The Cooperation Framework serves as a strategic platform to address Azerbaijan’s unique needs and priorities as an upper-middle-income country, offering tailored support to advance its sustainable development pathway across two strategic priority areas:

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

Advancing Inclusive Socio-Economic Growth and Human Development

This priority focuses on enabling people in Azerbaijan to benefit from equitable, quality services and inclusive socio-economic opportunities. The United Nations will contribute through two key outputs:

➔ **Evidence-informed policy and institutional capacity development:** The United Nations will support the Government in the formulation and implementation of inclusive urban and rural development policies, fostering an enabling business environment, and promoting decent work and innovation. This includes enhancing land and agricultural productivity, supporting Micro, Small and Medium

Enterprises growth, and facilitating trade and entrepreneurship—particularly for women, youth, and persons with disabilities.

➔ **Strengthening inclusive, data-driven public and social services:** The United Nations will help build national capacities to deliver high-quality, people-centered services through digital transformation. This includes improving access to health, education, legal aid, and social protection, while addressing social challenges and promoting gender equality. Emphasis will be placed on disaggregated data, digital tools, and community engagement to ensure services reach those most at risk of being left behind.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

Promoting Ecosystems and Climate Resilience, Green Growth, and Just Transition

This priority supports Azerbaijan's transition to a green economy while enhancing resilience to climate and environmental risks. The United Nations's contributions are structured around three outputs:

- ➔ **Enhancing data-driven climate and disaster preparedness:** The United Nations will strengthen national systems for environmental monitoring, early warning, and emergency response. This includes building institutional capacities, supporting contingency planning, and improving access to climate and spatial data.
- ➔ **Supporting just transition and sustainable ecosystem management:** The United Nations will promote climate-smart agriculture, renewable energy, water efficiency, and circular economy practices. It will also support biodiversity conservation and sustainable land and marine resource management, with a focus on scaling up innovative solutions and ensuring equitable access to natural resources.

- ➔ **Fostering environmental awareness and climate action:** The United Nations, in coordination and partnership with the Government, will work with communities, youth, and civil society to build knowledge and skills for environmental stewardship. This includes promoting climate education and environmentally friendly behaviours and supporting national leadership in global climate initiatives.

Implementation of the Cooperation Framework will be guided by the principles of effective partnership and overseen by a Joint Steering Committee co-chaired by the Government and the United Nations.

Regular communication and coordination will be maintained, with a strong focus on results. Annual Joint Work Plans, developed by dedicated Results Groups per Outcome, will drive implementation. A robust monitoring and evaluation system will promote UN's accountability, enable learning, and support continuous adaptation.

COUNTRY PROGRESS TOWARDS THE 2030 AGENDA

1.1 Overview of the SDG Progress in Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan has made significant progress in advancing the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) integrating them into its long-term national development vision. The country's socio-economic strategy is guided by two key national frameworks: Azerbaijan 2030: National Priorities for Socio-Economic Development¹ and the 2022–2026 Azerbaijan Socio- Economic Development Strategy ², both of which closely align national priorities with the 2030 Agenda.

Azerbaijan 2030: National Priorities for Socio-Economic Development outlines five critical national priorities: (i) a steadily growing, competitive economy; (ii) a dynamic, inclusive society based on social justice; (iii) modern innovations and competitive human capital; (iv) the great return to the territories liberated from occupation; and (v) a clean environment and a country of “green growth”.

Guided by its national development vision, Azerbaijan established a national SDG framework

in 2016, specifically tailored to address the country's development challenges and opportunities. From the global framework, 88 SDG targets and 119 indicators were initially prioritized to reflect national needs. In 2024, additional 8 SDG targets and 10 indicators were added to this list, bringing the number of priority targets and indicators to 96 and 129, respectively³. Azerbaijan was one of the first countries to start applying the MAPS (Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support), a UN system-wide approach to support SDG implementation at country level.

Considering that massive landmine contamination in the previously occupied territories of Azerbaijan present significant obstacle to post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts⁴, in May 2023, the Government has adopted a national SDG 18 on Mine Action, identifying it as one of the prerequisites to achieving sustainable development in the country. To support implementation of the 2030 Agenda, Azerbaijan has put in place strong institutional mechanisms. The National Coordination Council on Sustainable Development (NCCSD), chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister and supported by a

1. Order of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on approval of “Azerbaijan 2030: National Priorities for Socio-Economic Development”

2. Republic of Azerbaijan 2022-2026 Social and Economic Development Strategy

3. National Information Portal on Sustainable Development Goals of the Republic of Azerbaijan: <https://sdg.azstat.gov.az/en/home>

4. [hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/2024/VNR 2024 Azerbaijan Report.pdf](https://hlpf.un.org/sites/default/files/vnrs/2024/VNR%2024%20Azerbaijan%20Report.pdf)

Secretariat within the Ministry of Economy, leads SDG coordination and monitoring efforts. In collaboration with the UN Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO), the NCCSD launched a multi-stakeholder SDG Dialogue Series in November 2022, promoting a whole-of-society approach and enhancing stakeholder engagement in SDG implementation.

The first policy dialogue focused on Azerbaijan's green transformation, followed by policy dialogues on inclusive economic and social development, gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE), and climate action.

Azerbaijan's broader commitment to sustainable development is reflected in its submission of four Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) and its regular engagement with UN human rights mechanisms, including periodic reporting under the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), among others.

According to the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) data ⁵, Azerbaijan demonstrated strong performance in SDG 3 (Health), SDG 4 (Education), and SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure) while certain challenges were observed with SDG 6 (Clean Water), SDG

10 (Inequalities), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions). Azerbaijan's National SDG Progress Assessment, conducted in April 2024, presents a promising outlook⁶. Based on a then nationally prioritized set of 88 SDG targets and 119 indicators relevant to Azerbaijan's context, the assessment shows that 43% of indicators are improving, 6% are stagnant, 18% are regressing, and 33% lack sufficient data. With the expansion of the national prioritized SDG targets and indicators in 2024, the share of indicators with insufficient data declined significantly to 15.5% (20 out of 129 indicators).

Through its National Information Portal on Sustainable Development Goals, Azerbaijan reports steady progress on key indicators such as domestic revenue mobilization, remittances, internet penetration and statistical capacity. Azerbaijan places particular emphasis on revitalized global partnerships as an essential element for advancing the 2030 Agenda.

Partnerships have been instrumental in supporting the country's priorities, including post-conflict reconstruction under the Great Return Programme, the transition to renewable energy, digital transformation and SDG 18 on mine action.

Following the end of the conflict with Armenia, in parallel to large-scale post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction, inter-state normalization process with Armenia was launched on a

5. UNESCAP Statistics Division SDG Performance Trends. Last updated May 7, 2025.

6. UNESCAP Statistics Division Dashboard based on National Information Portal on SDG. Last updated: 24 April 2024.

bilateral basis. This process has registered significant progress with initialling of the bilateral agreement on establishment of peace and interstate relations and signing of Joint Statement on 8 August 2025 by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Prime Minister of Armenia in their meeting with the President of the United States of America in Washington D.C.

Within the current Cooperation Framework, Azerbaijan and the UN will ensure that the benefits of sustainable development reach all communities, in line with the ambition of the 2030 Agenda.

1.2 Advancing inclusive Socio-Economic Growth and Human Development

Economic dimension

Azerbaijan's economy has seen a notable transformation since independence in 1991. A sharp increase in oil production and exports starting in the late 1990s, as well as successful socio-economic policies, pushed growth to unprecedented double-digit levels between 2005 and 2008.

Combined with high levels of investment- particularly public investment- this resulted in a nearly fivefold increase in real per capita income from 1995 to 2022, enabling Azerbaijan's

transition from lower-middle-income to upper-middle-income status ⁷. Azerbaijan's macro-economic stance has also been strong recently, with a positive fiscal space, very low external public debt, and foreign exchange reserves almost equalling the value of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The Government of Azerbaijan is committed to accelerating economic transformation to reduce vulnerability to external shocks, including fluctuations in global oil prices.

The Government has been implementing large-scale programmes to promote economic diversification. While notable progress has been made in diversifying Azerbaijan's economy, the Government recognises remaining challenges in boosting non-oil sector productivity, attracting more investment outside of oil and gas sectors, and further integrating into global markets. Reform efforts are underway to enhance competitiveness – for example, improving the business climate and gradually transforming State Owned Enterprises (SOEs) to encourage private sector growth. Reducing regional economic imbalances is also a priority; targeted regional development programmes aim to ensure more balanced growth across the country.

To achieve its development goals, Azerbaijan will need to accelerate and sustain economic growth. The 2022–2026 Socio-Economic Development Strategy targets annual GDP growth of 3–4% over the medium term, with close to 5% growth projected for the non-oil and gas sector⁸ - critical for advancing the five strategic priorities

7. World Bank: <https://data.worldbank.org/country/azerbaijan>

8. Republic of Azerbaijan 2022-2026 Social and Economic Development Strategy

outlined in Azerbaijan Vision 2030. Investments in enhancing the economy's competitiveness, resilience to future shocks, and developing human capital, will be critical going forward. Creating a fair and competitive business environment, with a level playing field for private enterprises, will be key to driving economic diversification. Equally important is the availability of skills aligned with labour market demands—not only to absorb new investments and expand productive capacity but also to boost productivity in non-oil sectors, which is vital for enhancing Azerbaijan's overall competitiveness.

In the Fourth Industrial Revolution era, closing the digital divide and expanding financial inclusion are essential to unlock digital transformation and create income opportunities. Geopolitical uncertainties and volatile oil prices highlight the need for fiscal sustainability and balanced public investments to reduce regional disparities. Strengthening transport infrastructure, digitalization, and trade facilitation will further strengthen the position of Azerbaijan as a regional transport hub and integrate it into global value chains, supporting economic diversification.

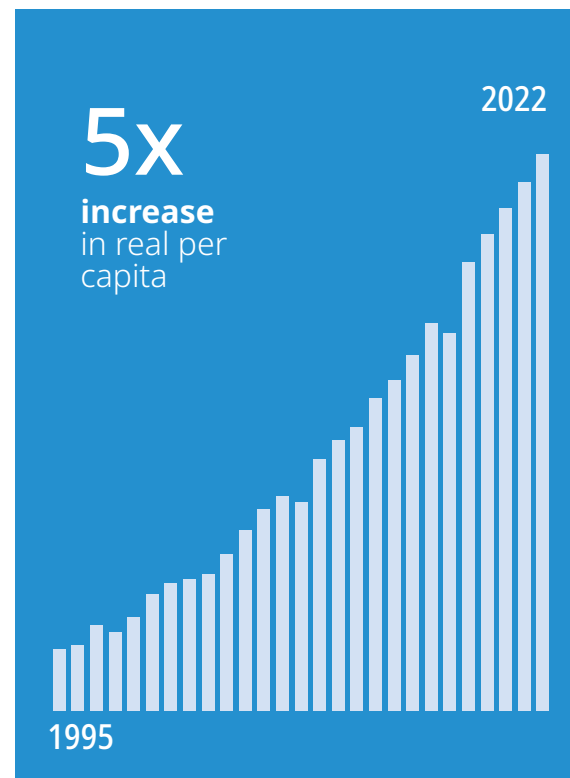
Social dimension and human development

Azerbaijan's impressive economic progress has led to a sharp decline in poverty, with the national poverty rate falling from 49% in 2001 to 5.2% in 2023⁹.

The Government has prioritized building an effective and equitable social protection system for the poor, vulnerable groups, and persons with disabilities, including war veterans, children with disabilities, elderly persons, including those living alone and in need of care. As a result, coverage by at least one social protection benefit increased from 40.3% in 2016¹⁰ to 53.6% in 2023¹¹.

Azerbaijan has made significant progress in human capital development, ranking among the top global improvers based on changes in the

Capita Income Growth



9. SSC.

10. ILOSTAT, Social Protection Data:

11. Republic of Azerbaijan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2023, Survey Findings Report

World Bank's Human Capital Index between 2010 and 2020. The Government acknowledges that certain health and education outcomes still require improvement relative to leading performers. Efforts are focused on closing these gaps and ensuring that development gains are more evenly distributed, in line with Azerbaijan's commitment to Leave No One Behind. The country's Human Development Index (HDI) rose to 0.76 in 2022¹² placing Azerbaijan in the high human development category, ranked at 89th out of 193 countries - an improvement of six positions compared to 2021. However, the HDI remains slightly below pre-pandemic levels (2019), and disparities in human development persist. The inequality-adjusted Human Development Index (IDHI) declines to 0.707¹³, indicating uneven distribution of development gains.

Azerbaijan has taken significant steps to ensure equal employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for women, including measures under the 2022-2026 Socio Economic Development Strategy to strengthen women's economic empowerment, legal reforms expanding access to professions, and amendments to family legislation. These efforts have contributed to improved international rankings, with the World Bank's Women, Business

and the Law 2024 Report¹⁴ recognizing notable progress.

Azerbaijan has continued to ensure balanced participation of girls across all levels of education, with steady progress reflected in general, secondary specialized and higher education institutions, underscoring the country's commitment to advancing gender equality in education. According to the statistics of the Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan, for the 2024/2025 academic year, the proportion of girls studying in general education institutions was approximately 47%, in secondary specialized education institutions 64%, and in higher education 52.14%.

According to the 2019 population census, Azerbaijan has a very high literacy rate of 99.8%, with strong educational attainment at primary and secondary levels. However, completion of post-secondary and higher education rate needs to improve. The gap between average years of schooling (12.4 years) and learning-adjusted years of schooling (8.3 years)¹⁵ highlights some challenges about the quality of learning outcomes¹⁶. Enhancing access to and the quality of secondary specialized and vocational education is essential to address skills mismatches in the labour market.

12. HDI.

13. HDI.

14. World Bank: Women, Business and the Law 2024

15. World Bank, 2022. Azerbaijan Human Capital Review.

16. LAYS is a metric that was designed because using years of schooling alone does not account for learning: children who complete the same number of years in school in different countries often have very different learning outcomes. LAYS adjusts the years of schooling metric to account for quality of learning. See Filmer, D. et al., 2018. Learning-Adjusted Years of Schooling (LAYS): Defining a New Macro Measure of Education. World Bank.

Azerbaijan has continued to ensure balanced participation of girls across all levels of education, with steady progress reflected in general education (47%), secondary specialized education (64%), and higher education (52.1%) in the 2024/2025 academic year. Tuition-free higher education and targeted scholarships such as the Hanifa Malikova-Zardabi (2021), Parla (2024), Graceful Engineers (2024), and Maya Hajiyeve ICT (2024–2025) programmes further expand opportunities for girls. Over the past two decades, women's participation in doctoral and postdoctoral education has risen significantly, with women now making up roughly half of all doctoral students¹⁷

In 2024/2025, inclusive education was expanded in Baku, with 30 public schools offering inclusive classrooms that enrolled 220 students- among them, 57 children with disabilities newly integrated into mainstream learning environments. This marks a promising shift toward equity and participation. However, early childhood education still requires targeted investment, as enrolment remains uneven: 47.8% in urban areas versus just 22.3% in rural communities. Sustained efforts are also needed to scale inclusive education nationwide, ensuring that children with disabilities have equal access to quality learning from the earliest years.¹⁸

While Azerbaijan's population continues to grow steadily, recent years have seen a decline in fertility

rates. The birth ratio has remained slightly skewed toward boys, although this variation began to narrow in 2024 compared to 2023¹⁹. Strengthening demographic resilience through enhanced family planning, promotion of safe motherhood, and targeted responses to underlying social challenges, will be essential to ensuring inclusive and sustainable population dynamics.

In recent years, Azerbaijan has undertaken significant reforms in the health sector, enabled by improvements in the country's macroeconomic and fiscal landscape. These reforms included the introduction of a mandatory health insurance scheme aimed at mobilizing resources in a more efficient and equitable manner. To operationalize this initiative, the Administration of the Regional Medical Divisions (TABIB) was established under the State Agency for Mandatory Health Insurance. Since 2021 all insured individuals have been entitled to a comprehensive benefit package of wide-ranging medical services.

Despite notable progress, several health outcomes remain a concern in Azerbaijan, particularly due to the rising burden of non-communicable diseases. While the Government has committed to increasing healthcare spending from 2% to 4.3% of GDP by 2026²⁰, greater investment will be critical to strengthen the health and care workforce and modernize primary healthcare infrastructure. Expanding access to quality services, both in Baku and across the regions, will be essential to improving national health outcomes.

17. State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, "Education, science and culture".

18. <https://baku.edu.gov.az/az/page/9/7768>

19. State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, "Demographic indicators of Azerbaijan".

20. [Republic of Azerbaijan 2022-2026 Social and Economic Development Strategy](#)

Leaving no one behind

Article 25 of the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan (1995) enshrines the right to equality, guaranteeing equal rights and freedoms for all individuals regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, sex, origin, property status, social position, convictions, political party, trade union organization and social unity affiliation. This constitutional guarantee is reinforced by a robust legal framework, including the Law on State Guarantees of Gender Equality (2006), the Law on the Rights of the Child (1998), the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2018), the Law on Domestic Violence (2010). Together, these laws reflect Azerbaijan's commitment to equality, inclusion, and protection of vulnerable groups. The country has also ratified key international instruments such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), reinforcing its commitment to inclusive development.

As outlined in the Socio-Economic Development Strategy 2022–2026, Azerbaijan has prioritized the creation of a dynamic, inclusive, and equitable society — a pillar that fully aligns with the Leaving No One Behind principle guiding the current Cooperation Framework. Within this priority, the Government is committed to ensuring a decent quality of life for all, including through inclusive employment creation, economic empowerment of women, provision of social safety nets for low-

income households, persons with disabilities, and older persons, as well as reducing urban–rural disparities in living standards.

The Azerbaijan MICS 2023²¹ highlights key factors influencing vulnerability, such as income level, disability, gender, education, and place of residence. Among these, lower income status combined with rural residence emerges as a frequent intersection that warrants focused attention to ensure progress on leaving no one behind. Women from lower income households face greater challenges in completing secondary education and accessing tertiary education, while older persons in similar households tend to have more limited internet access.

Azerbaijan has adopted significant legislative reforms to prevent domestic violence, early and consanguineous marriages, and strengthen gender equality. The scope of protection against domestic violence has been broadened, short-term protection orders extended and made mandatory, and free state-funded legal aid introduced alongside a national monitoring and coordination mechanism. Criminal and administrative liability for early marriage has been expanded, marriage between close relatives prohibited, and exceptions to the minimum marriage age repealed.

In 2024, women's representation in public life, decision-making, and state governance continued to grow. In the Milli Majlis, 26 of the 125 elected members (20.8%) are women. Within the judiciary,

21. <https://azstat.gov.az/MICS/en/result>

women constitute 10.8% of prosecutors, 26.1% of judges, and 53.6% of court staff. The legal profession has also seen progress, with the number of female lawyers rising by 8.5% and women's participation in bar admission examinations increasing by 65%. Across the civil service, women account for 29% of staff, and 16.8% occupy senior leadership positions.

Azerbaijan has made significant progress in advancing digital governance and inclusive public service delivery, with a strong emphasis on equity, innovation, and citizen satisfaction. The country's flagship initiatives - including the ASAN service centers and the DOST Agency's one-stop-shop model - have transformed access to public services, particularly for vulnerable groups. These platforms offer streamlined, proactive, and largely digital services, contributing to high levels of public trust and satisfaction. ASAN's emphasis on citizen participation fosters continuous innovation and aligns with SDG 16 and the UN's commitment to inclusive governance. Its model has been shared with over 30 countries, with replication already underway in Indonesia, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Uganda, and Ethiopia.

Over the past five years, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection has digitized 151 out of 159 services under its mandate, including disability assessments, allowance assignments, registries, and rehabilitation support, 60 of which are delivered proactively through E-Systems. This digital transformation has significantly improved transparency, objectivity, and accessibility,

especially for persons with disabilities.

Building on recent achievements in digital governance, Azerbaijan continues to address remaining gaps in digital and financial inclusion, particularly between urban and rural communities and across income groups. Ongoing investments in rural broadband expansion, digital literacy, and financial inclusion initiatives including mobile banking and targeted financial education programmes for women and low-income populations, reflect the Government's commitment to ensuring that all segments of society benefit from the country's digital transformation and inclusive development agenda.

Climate-resilient agriculture and other sustainability measures can support rural economies and help narrow regional inequalities. Strengthening social protection systems and ensuring equitable access to services, especially in rural areas, can help cushion the impacts of environmental and economic shocks. Stronger legal protection services, better enforcement, and addressing social challenges are also key to safeguarding the rights of vulnerable groups and building trust in institutions. Addressing overlapping vulnerabilities in Azerbaijan requires a multidisciplinary approach that integrates economic, social, and human development strategies.

Expanding income-generating opportunities, improving access to healthcare, and ensuring equitable access to lifelong learning are critical to strengthening human capital, reducing disparities, and fostering upward social mobility.

1.3 Promoting Ecosystems and Climate Resilience, Green Growth, and Just Transition

Environmental pressures in Azerbaijan are driven by industrial activity, unsustainable agricultural practices, and urbanization. Growing competition for natural resources—especially water and land—is being intensified by population growth, economic development, and the impacts of climate change.

Emissions of major pollutants have increased due to rising industrial production and a growing number of vehicles. In response, Azerbaijan has promoted the use of electric vehicles as part of its efforts to reduce air pollution and transition to cleaner transport options. Surface water pollution is largely caused by inadequately treated or untreated wastewater and runoff from irrigated lands.

Soil erosion affects 42% of the country's territory, with 7% rendered unsuitable for agriculture owing to salinization²². Water resources are scarce, unevenly distributed, and further stressed by the rapid decline of the Caspian Sea level. Over 70% of Azerbaijan's water originate outside the country²³, and with continued

economic growth, water stress reached 57.5% in 2022, a level considered high²⁴. These issues are compounded by transboundary water challenges, affecting water quality and availability. This is further aggravated due to climate hazards such as droughts, floods, extreme heat, and other severe conditions.

Azerbaijan has committed to reducing its GHG emissions by 35% by 2030²⁵ and 40% by 2050²⁶ compared to 1990 levels. However, the country's energy mix remains heavily reliant on fossil fuels, which supply 98% of primary energy and over 90% of electricity.²⁷ Fossil fuel subsidies continue, while tax incentives for electric vehicles, chargers, and public transport equipment have been in place since 2019.

Favourable taxation for investment in the non-oil sectors has also been put in place, and a target has been set to boost the installed capacity of renewable energy to almost 35% by 2030²⁸. Achieving this transition will require significant scaling up of green financing, drawing on public and private, domestic and international sources.

Azerbaijan's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) 3.0 is expected to further raise the country's climate ambition.

22. Azerbaijan, 2019. Sixth National Report

23. <https://report.az/en/infrastructure/zaur-mikayilov-70-of-surface-water-resources-come-from-neighboring-countries/>
National Information Portal on Sustainable Development Goals of the Republic of Azerbaijan: <https://sdg.azstat.gov.az/en/home>

24. Azerbaijan: National SDG Platform.

25. <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/NDC/2022-06/INDC%20Azerbaijan.pdf>

26. UNFCCC: chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/NDC/2023-10/Second%20NDC_Azerbaijan_ENG_Final%20%281%29.pdf

27. SSC, 2023: https://www.stat.gov.az/source/balance_fuel/?lang=en

28. Republic of Azerbaijan 2022-2026 Social and Economic Development Strategy

Azerbaijan faces multiple natural hazards, including earthquakes, floods, landslides, wildfires, extreme heat, and droughts²⁹. Climate change is increasing rainfall variability, drought risk, and temperatures, which are expected to worsen regional and sectoral inequalities, especially impacting rain-fed agriculture. Heat stress is likely to become more frequent, particularly in densely populated areas like Baku. Climate change-induced disasters will also affect women and men in different ways. The government is committed to developing disaster preparedness and risk reduction capacities, including the adoption of Early Warning Systems. Notably, Azerbaijan finalized its National Adaptation Plan (NAP)³⁰, which aims to advance climate change adaptation actions in Azerbaijan in three priority sectors: water, agriculture and coastal areas.

Azerbaijan's successful hosting of the 29th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP29) highlighted the country's readiness to take a leadership role in climate diplomacy and to prioritize climate action at national, regional, and global levels.

Many of the COP29 Presidency's Action Agenda's Global and Regional Initiatives³¹ have gained momentum, with 12 global Initiatives being taken forward also in partnership with the UN system. COP29 also sparked growing interest from Azerbaijan's private sector in sustainability and

Environmental, Social, and Governance standards. Azerbaijan's transition to a green economy will require targeted policies, sustainable financing, and new skills to support economic growth while minimizing pollution, emissions, and waste. Improving energy efficiency, expanding the use of renewable energy as showcased in the strategic vision to turn the Liberated Territories into a "Green Energy Zone", advancing the green energy transition, developing ecotourism, and decarbonizing the economy will be key to meeting the country's NDC targets. At the same time, implementing the NAP will be essential for building climate resilience. Developing comprehensive disaster risk reduction policies will further support a broader, risk-informed development agenda.

Ensuring a just transition will be essential as Azerbaijan moves towards a greener economy. Phasing out fossil fuel subsidies—an important step for the green transition—should be carefully timed and accompanied by safeguards to protect vulnerable economic sectors and populations from potential negative impacts while fostering employment in green sectors.

The success of this shift will depend on stronger institutional frameworks, reliable data, enhanced technical capacities, sustained political commitment, and an inclusive, integrated vision for sustainable development.

29. Azerbaijan RiX Spotlight for Common Country Analysis, 2024: UNDRR; ThinkHazard Azerbaijan, 2020: GFDRR.

30. [National Adaptation Plan - Azerbaijan](#)

31. [COP29 Presidential Action Agenda Initiatives](#).

1.4 Post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation of the liberated territories

The restoration of Azerbaijan's sovereignty and territorial integrity has enabled large-scale post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation in the liberated territories. Under the First State Programme on the Great Return (2022–2026)³², the Government is facilitating the safe and dignified return of former internally displaced persons (IDPs) to their places of origin. To date, approximately USD 15 billion has been allocated for implementation, including USD 248 million for demining between 2021 and 2023.³³

Efforts have focused on landmine clearance and infrastructure development, with a resettlement target of 34,500 families by 2026. As of 29 July 2025, over 50,000 former IDPs have returned, with resettlement completed in 18 settlements and reconstruction underway in more than 30 others.

The implementation of targeted and large-scale projects serves the rapid revival of the Garabagh and East Zangazur economic regions, ensures the resettlement of the population and sustainable economic activity, and creates a sound basis for transforming these territories into highly developed regions.

Achieving sustainable return and reintegration will require substantial investments not only in infrastructure, but also in education, healthcare, and livelihoods. Expanding opportunities to ensure that women, youth, and persons with disabilities can fully participate in the economic recovery will be important. Finally, durable solutions must integrate environmental sustainability and climate resilience, aligning with Azerbaijan's net zero targets and plans for green energy zones.

32. <https://president.az/en/articles/view/57883>

33. Azerbaijan has invested \$15 bn in liberated territories ABC.AZ.

UN DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM SUPPORT TO THE 2030 AGENDA

2.1 Rationale Behind Adopted Priorities and Theory of Change

2.1.1 United Nations support in the upper middle-income country context

Azerbaijan has achieved significant development progress over the past three decades since regaining independence in 1991. Now an upper-middle-income country, Azerbaijan is evolving from an aid recipient to a donor and convenor, actively engaging in addressing regional and global challenges.

Since 1992, the United Nations has supported Azerbaijan through various stages of its development, providing humanitarian and development assistance in close collaboration with the Government and other partners. Today, after 33 years of partnership, UN–Government cooperation is entering a new phase, one that reflects Azerbaijan's status as an upper-middle-income country with considerable domestic resources and limited reliance on external financial assistance. This evolving partnership will also focus on emerging opportunities and challenges, including regional and global cooperation.

The new phase of Government-UN partnership and cooperation for 2026-2030 coincides with the period when Azerbaijan and the world will be turbo-charging the implementation of the SDGs, taking forward the agreement and commitment of the Pact for the Future³⁴ adopted by the world leaders in September 2024.

The new Cooperation Framework (2026-2030) will be guided by the following principles of effective cooperation:

- ➔ National ownership and leadership;
- ➔ Respect for the principles of the UN Charter;
- ➔ Transparency and mutual accountability, supported by close coordination and focus on results; and
- ➔ Inclusive partnerships with all stakeholders, including civil society, young people, academia, think tanks, private sector, and development partners.

The Framework serves as a strategic platform for the UN to deliver tailored support aligned with Azerbaijan's specific needs and national development priorities. It enables UN System Organizations - both in-country and across regional and global levels - to contribute effectively and cohesively.

34. https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/sotf-pact_for_the_future_adopted.pdf

In response to Azerbaijan's evolving context, the UN Country Team (UNCT)'s presence has been streamlined and will be reinforced by targeted expertise from regional and headquarters-based UN System Organizations.

Through the Cooperation Framework, the UN will:

- ➔ Support systemic policy development, aligned with international standards and UN normative frameworks, through policy advisory services, and help further strengthen national capacities for inclusive and effective policy implementation;
- ➔ Provide specialized technical expertise and facilitate knowledge-sharing (including through South-South Cooperation/Triangular Cooperation); and
- ➔ Promote multi-stakeholder dialogues, build partnerships and advance Leave No One Behind (LNOB) approaches.

2.1.2 From Context Analysis to Cooperation Framework Priorities

In preparation of this new Cooperation Framework, the UNCT Azerbaijan undertook a comprehensive assessment and analysis of the country's progress towards the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, through the lenses of the LNOB

principle, and with a forward-looking approach. The Common Country Analysis (CCA) recognized Azerbaijan's significant progress in many SDG indicators while highlighting key challenges to sustainable development, as detailed in the previous chapter. These challenges were assessed based on their strategic importance to Azerbaijan's development pathway, their potential impact on LNOB groups, the scale of the population affected, the urgency of addressing them, and the UN's added value in supporting national responses.

A key component of the CCA was the LNOB analysis, which identified the groups furthest ahead and furthest behind by applying the UNESCAP LNOB methodology³⁵ to 20 SDG indicators and drawing data from the 2023 Azerbaijan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS)³⁶. This analysis provided critical insights into the population groups most at risk of being left behind. The horizon scanning exercise further supported the assessment, identifying potential development risks and opportunities in the years ahead. Drawing from these insights, two strategic priority areas were defined for the Cooperation Framework, fully aligned with Azerbaijan's national plans and strategies:

1. Advancing Inclusive Socio-Economic Growth and Human Development
2. Promoting Ecosystems and Climate Resilience, Green Growth, and Just Transition

35. UNESCAP has developed an empirical methodology on LNOB consisting of the Classification and Regression Tree (CART) analysis and the Dissimilarity Index (D-index). For more information on the methodology and regional results, please visit the UNESCAP LNOB Platform at <https://lnob.unescap.org/>

36. The final sample used for this analysis contains information on up to 10,817 households, and 8,924 women and 2,370 children under 5 years of age. All results are weighted using household weights.

These two priority areas align closely with Azerbaijan's national vision as outlined in Azerbaijan 2030: National Priorities for Socio-Economic Development and the current 2022-2026 Socio-Economic Development Strategy.

The development of the Cooperation Framework priorities was also informed by a series of policy dialogues and consultations jointly organized by the Government and the UN for continuous multi-stakeholder engagement on issues related to sustainable development. These multi-stakeholder consultations were launched in late 2022 with the first SDG Dialogue on green transformation in Azerbaijan, followed by SDG Dialogues on the social and economic inclusiveness of growth, GEWE and climate action in 2023 and 2024.

Each SDG Dialogue brought together on average up to 150 representatives from key stakeholders – the government, the UN, private sector, civil society, young people, academia, the international financial institutions and development partners – to discuss innovative solutions towards SDG acceleration in Azerbaijan. The design of the Cooperation Framework also benefited from national consultations on Azerbaijan's Fourth VNR held in May 2024. The Strategic Prioritization Workshop organized with the Government of Azerbaijan on 31 January 2025 was pivotal in distilling inputs from preceding consultations and common country analysis, to identify priorities of the current Cooperation Framework. Around 150 stakeholders participated in the multi-stakeholder

workshop, including representatives of line ministries and public institutions, academia, civil society organizations (including women's organizations, organizations of persons with disabilities, young persons, and older persons), private sector and development partners. Participants worked in groups to discuss and agree on the main changes needed in each of these broad priority areas, identify key challenges slowing progress towards those changes, and share views on potential UN role.

The strategic priorities, as well as outcome and output statements were elaborated in consultation with the Government. The prioritization of results for UN contribution was thus naturally derived from the list of challenges distilled from the CCA, government priorities (as embedded in Azerbaijan 2030, the National Social and Economic Development Strategy 2022-26, and the COP29 Presidency's Action Agenda Initiatives), and the discussions during the multi-stakeholder Strategic Prioritization Workshop.

The perspectives on change pathways collected during the Strategic Prioritization Workshop served as inputs to the Theory of Change (ToC) workshops which led to the definition of the preconditions for the realization of aspirational changes in each of the priority areas. Potential UN contributions were also identified at that stage and further refined in consultation with the Government of Azerbaijan and agreed upon, in a broad UN-Government meeting on 5 June 2025.

2.1.3 SDG interlinkages and accelerators – systems approach to informing Cooperation Framework priorities

In defining the priorities of the Cooperation Framework, the UNCT also analyzed SDG interlinkages to better understand how Azerbaijan's development pathways can accelerate progress through integrated policy choices that address both synergies and trade-offs across goals. As actions targeting one SDG often impact others, an integrated approach to policymaking is essential. Indeed, Azerbaijan's Socio-Economic Development Strategy recognizes the importance of leveraging these interlinkages to advance SDG achievement³⁷.

Accordingly, key integrated policy pathways with the greatest potential to accelerate SDG achievement in Azerbaijan were identified³⁸. These include: Target 4.3: Equal access to affordable technical and vocational education and training (TVET); Target 6.1: Safe and affordable drinking water; Target 7.2: Universal access to modern energy; Target 9.2: Inclusive and sustainable industrialization; and Target 10.4: Fiscal and social policies promoting equality.

An integrated policy approach provides Azerbaijan with a pathway to accelerate progress toward the 2030 Agenda, balancing economic growth, social inclusion and environmental sustainability. Understanding the synergies and trade-offs among the SDGs in the national context was instrumental in informing the interlinkages

between the Outcomes and Outputs of the Cooperation Framework. In Azerbaijan's context, several key SDG interlinkages highlight the need for integrated policies to accelerate progress:

- ➔ Sustainable industrialization (Target 9.2) can drive economic growth (SDG 8), support diversification (Target 8.3), and advance the green transition. Expanding manufacturing into technology-based and labour-intensive sectors can create jobs, support skills development, and promote women's employment in ICT and food processing (SDG 5), across regions (SDGs 10, 11).
- ➔ Fiscal and social policies (Target 10.4) are critical to ensuring that economic growth benefits all. Strong social protection systems, combined with inclusive economic policies, can reduce inequality (Target 10.1), promote decent work (SDG 8), and support gender equality (SDG 5). Azerbaijan's development strategy emphasizes maintaining safety nets like cash transfers and targeted subsidies to protect vulnerable groups during economic shocks.
- ➔ Food security and nutrition (Target 2.2) support better health (SDG 3), improve education outcomes (SDG 4), and create rural jobs (SDG 8). Reducing malnutrition helps tackle inequalities and promotes inclusive growth.

37. UNDESA. Accelerated Pathways to SDG Progress: Azerbaijan's National Commitments for Sustainable Development and SDG Advancement

38. SDG Push Diagnostic for Azerbaijan

- ➔ Access to quality vocational education (Target 4.3) reduces skills mismatches, boosts employment (SDG 8), and empowers women and girls (SDG 5) through improved workforce participation.
- ➔ Safe drinking water (Target 6.1) is vital for health (SDG 3) and supports sustainable agriculture (Target 2.4), urbanization (Target 11.3), and women's empowerment (SDG 5). With high water stress, sustainable water management remains a critical issue.
- ➔ Climate action (SDG 13) is affected by high cost of the decarbonization. Addressing the close links between energy (SDG 7) and climate requires integrated policies that balance expanding energy access with the shift to renewables.

2.2 Theory of Change for the Cooperation Framework Priorities

The ultimate change that the Cooperation Framework aims to contribute to is captured in the following promise: “We work in partnership with the Government and the people of Azerbaijan to support to foster green, knowledge-based growth, and contribute to build a prosperous, equitable and inclusive society”.

What drives the UN contributions is the aspiration to bridge the development gap across regions; promote social inclusion; gender equality, and support diversification of the economy, following the green growth path. To achieve this vision,

two main preconditions were identified in the joint strategic prioritization process:

- ➔ Inclusive socio-economic growth and equitable, quality services that are innovative, and accessible; and
- ➔ Green growth, just transition, and strengthened ecosystems and climate resilience.

While economic growth is essential to improving people's well-being, it must be guided towards inclusivity and sustainability to support Azerbaijan's long-term development goals. This requires policy reforms that encourage inclusivity, foster private sector expansion, promote economic diversification, and create more balanced economic opportunities across regions.

Economic sustainability must go hand in hand with environmental stewardship. This Cooperation Framework prioritizes green growth, a just transition, and climate resilience as core pillars of sustainable development. Advancing energy efficiency, expanding renewable energy use, adopting circular economy practices, and leveraging nature-based solutions will redefine how economic growth is pursued — ensuring it safeguards the ecosystems while fulfilling national and global climate commitments.

Ultimately, sustainable and inclusive growth hinges on robust investment in human capital. Improving outcomes in health, education, and social protection—particularly through digital innovation and targeted support for the most vulnerable—will be critical to ensuring that no one is left behind.

The overall Theory of Change (ToC) for this Cooperation Framework (see Figure 1) is grounded in the integrated nature of sustainable development. It seeks to maximize co-benefits and minimize trade-offs across the SDGs, as outlined in Section 2.1.3. Through analysis and broad-based consultations, several systematic challenges, including challenges relating to the previous occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan were identified that Azerbaijan must address to accelerate progress towards the Agenda 2030:

- ➔ Uneven social-economic development, infrastructure and access to opportunities and services among the regions, including the liberated territories;
- ➔ An economy that remains vulnerable to external shocks and price fluctuations
- ➔ Gender inequalities across multiple sectors;
- ➔ Factors influencing progress in human capital development, particularly in health and education outcomes; and
- ➔ Ongoing challenges in meeting climate action commitments, including low energy efficiency, increasing water stress, and issues in managing natural resources.

Addressing these interconnected challenges is at the core of this Cooperation Framework. Addressing these challenges require interconnected pathways, supported by a set of common enablers that must be reinforced and applied across all areas of intervention:

- ➔ Digital transformation and quality data: Digital solutions can make public services more agile, efficient, and accessible, while disaggregated data is essential for effective, evidence-based policymaking and for ensuring no one is left behind.
- ➔ Partnerships and civil society engagement: Collaboration with non-governmental organizations, the private sector, academia, think tanks and other stakeholders is critical to complement government efforts and extend service reach, reflecting the Baku Guiding Principles on Human Development for Climate Resilience (second principle), which emphasizes social dialogue and partnership on human development policies for climate response.
- ➔ Multi-sectoral coordination: Effective coordination among ministries, departments, and institutions is fundamental for coherent policy implementation and SDG acceleration.
- ➔ Good governance and strong institutions: Robust governance structures are essential to deliver quality public services nationwide and ensure effective management of public resources and development financing.

In line with UN guidelines, the work of the UN development system in Azerbaijan will be guided by the following core programming principles³⁹:

39. https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/UN-Cooperation-Framework-Internal-Guidance-Final-June-2019_1.pdf

- ➔ Leaving No One Behind: As the central promise of the 2030 Agenda, all UN interventions will be designed to prioritize those at greatest risk of exclusion and to address underlying patterns of inequality.
- ➔ Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Gender equality will be placed at the heart of all programming. The UN will promote equal opportunities for women and men, actively support women's empowerment, and help to ensure the meaningful participation of women and girls in the country's socio-economic development.
- ➔ Human Rights-Based Approach: All UN cooperation will be guided by human rights principles—including equality, non-discrimination, participation, and accountability—while strengthening the capacities of both duty-bearers (to meet their obligations) and rights-holders (to claim their rights).
- ➔ Accountability: The Cooperation Framework reinforces the UN's accountability for its collective contributions to Azerbaijan's achievement of the 2030 Agenda.
- ➔ Resilience: This principle will guide the design of integrated and cost-effective approaches to reduce risks and prevent disasters.

- ➔ Sustainability: Focus will remain on sustaining and building upon development gains, particularly through strengthening institutional capacities for long-term impact.

The ToC underpinning this Cooperation Framework is built on several key assumptions about the operating context and enabling conditions. A central assumption is that adequate financing will be mobilised over the next five years—from government co-financing, and with prior agreement and consent of the Government from bilateral donors, the private sector, and global funding mechanisms—to support effective implementation.

Achieving the expected results also depends on sustained national commitment to multilateralism, climate action, and human capital development, as well as continued progress in multi-sectoral coordination and decentralization of public services. These enabling conditions are expected to remain in place, allowing the UN to operate in synergy with national efforts under this Cooperation Framework.

Several risks could challenge these assumptions, including global and regional instability, climate-related and other natural hazards, volatile oil prices, and other external economic shocks. Additionally, limited local partners at community level may constrain the implementation of UN-supported programmes. A

achieving balanced human development between women and men will also require sustained, long-term efforts beyond the five-year timeframe of this framework. Within this broad ToC, the UN's comparative advantage lies in its ability to:

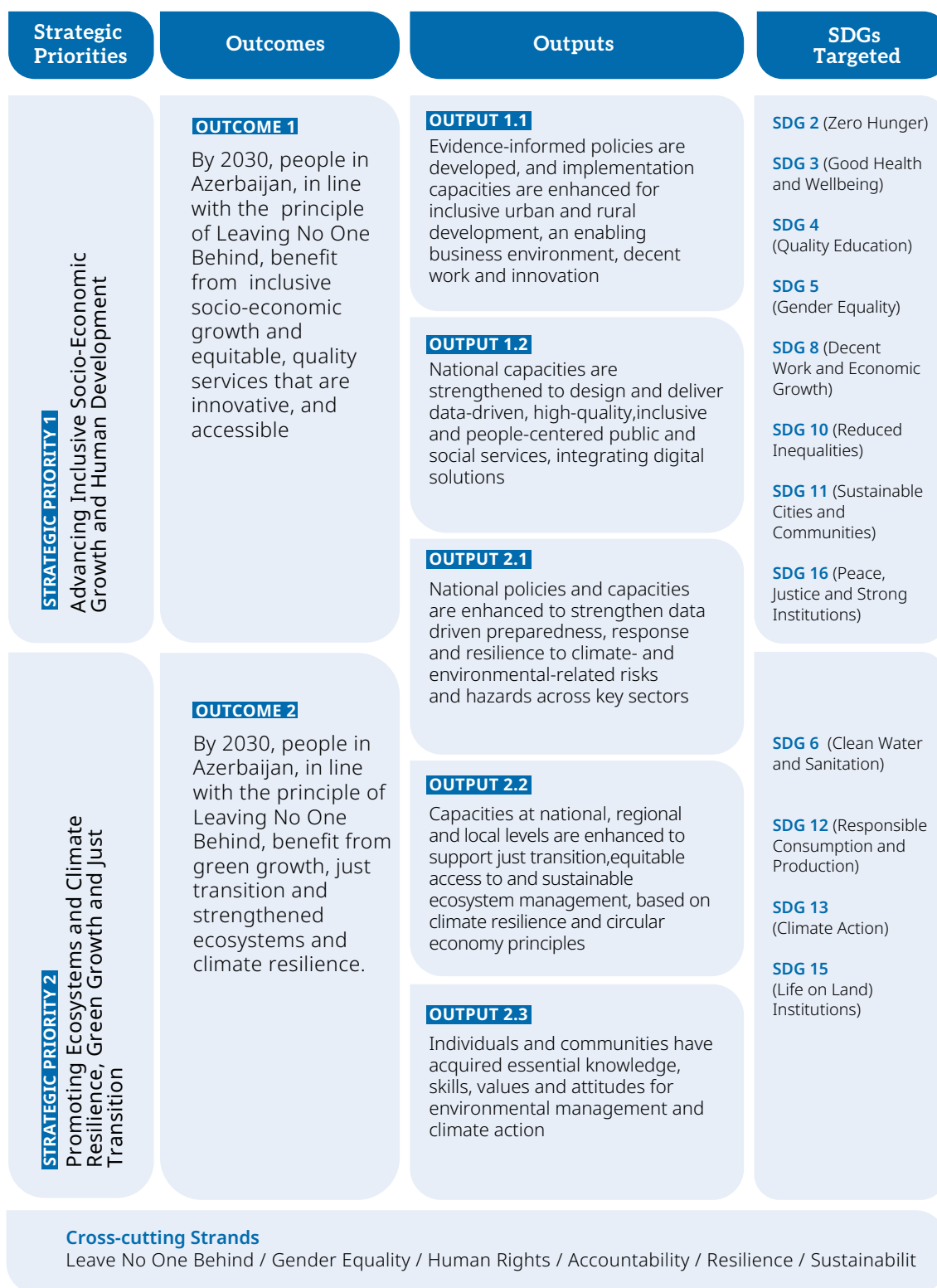
- ➔ Engage in policy analysis and advocacy, drawing on global expertise and best practices;
- ➔ Provide assessments and technical advice to support evidence-based policymaking;
- ➔ Support the Government in implementing its normative commitments, maintaining a strong focus on Leave No One Behind (LNOB) groups—including migrants, persons with disabilities, women, youth, and children.
- ➔ Introduce innovative tools and approaches; and,

- ➔ Facilitate access to sustainable development financing, such as building government capacity to access climate and green funds.

With Azerbaijan's growing national capacities and financial resources, the UN's role and presence will continue to evolve in response to the country's shifting needs and priorities, including the Socio-Economic Development Strategy of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2027–2030 that is currently being prepared. The areas of cooperation and expected results outlined in the next chapter reflect this recalibrated partnership model.

While the overarching ToC will continue to guide the UN's strategic support for Azerbaijan's sustainable development, the results framework will focus on concrete interventions and outcomes that the UN is committed to deliver over the next five years, in line with government priorities and guidance.

Figure 1. Cooperation Framework ToC Overview



2.3 Cooperation Framework Outcomes and Partnerships

Cooperation areas within this Framework have been strategically selected to ensure that the UN delivers the greatest collective impact in support of Azerbaijan's sustainable development. The ToC has been translated into two overarching outcomes and a set of targeted outputs to be achieved by 2030.

Building on the successful COP29 partnership, the UN will continue to support Azerbaijan as it champions multilateralism and advances its climate diplomacy. At the regional level, as an active member of the UN Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (UNSPECA), Azerbaijan will continue to benefit from the expertise of UNECE and UNESCAP in areas such as water, energy, environment, sustainable transport, trade, connectivity, statistics, knowledge-based development, and gender—contributing to the outcomes of this Cooperation Framework.

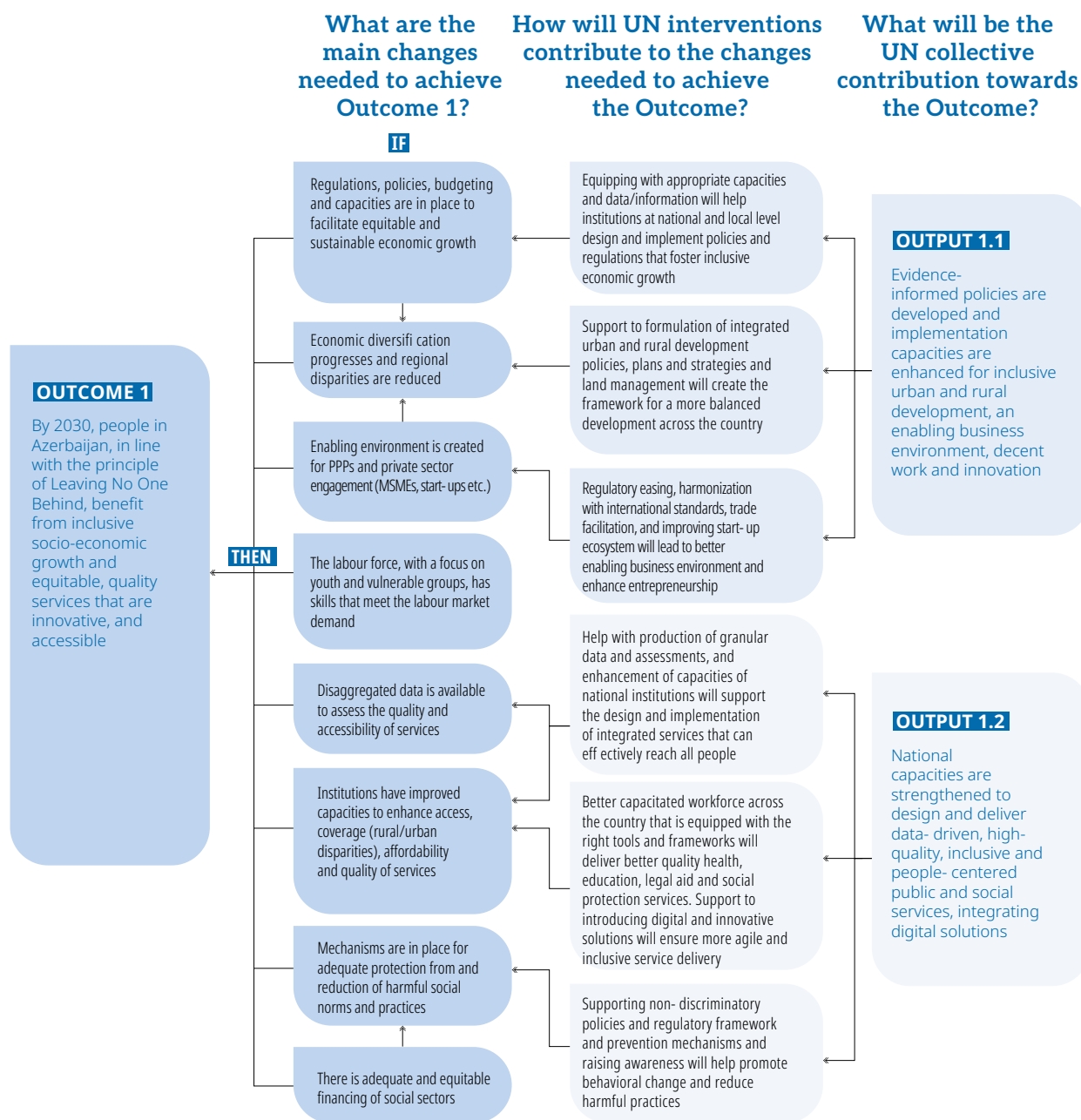
Finally, the design of this Framework draws on key lessons and recommendations from the independent evaluation of the Cooperation Framework Azerbaijan 2021–2025. It places strong emphasis on mainstreaming gender equality, accelerating digital transformation, and leveraging data and evidence to inform interventions and drive results.

2.3.1 Strategic Priority 1: Advancing inclusive Socio-Economic growth and Human Development

Under Priority Area 1, the Government of Azerbaijan and the UN agreed on the following Outcome1: “By 2030, people in Azerbaijan, in line with the principle of Leaving No One Behind, benefit from inclusive socio-economic growth and equitable, quality services that are innovative, and accessible.”

As illustrated in the TOC diagram (see Figure 2) a set of key preconditions have been identified to enable Azerbaijan's progress towards inclusive socio-economic growth. These necessary changes are largely structural and include: Building a diversified, integrated, and regionally balanced economy; Creating an enabling business environment and a level playing field for MSMEs; Expanding public-private partnerships; Unlocking the economic potential of all population groups; and Developing skills that meet both current and future labour market needs.

Figure 2. Strategic Priority 1- TOC Diagram



External Assumptions

1. Regional political stability
2. Interest and commitment from donor community/Gov co-financing
3. Increased FDIs to non-oil sectors
4. New Socio-Economic Strategy to give continuity
5. Investments in social sector, digital transformation and innovation, and focus on human capital development will continue
6. Public sector reform will continue to improve effectiveness at local/subnational level
7. Azerbaijan's continued commitment to multilateralism

Risks

1. Oil price fluctuations and other economic shocks, impact of regional and global geopolitical trends
2. Prolonged droughts
3. Backlash in Gender equality narrative
4. Potential economic and geopolitical shocks affecting HD, social cohesion and influx of refugees and migrants
5. Climate change impacts and natural disasters

These changes are interconnected and mutually reinforcing. For example, building skills for Industry 4.0 depends on economic diversification and the development of an innovation ecosystem that also covers regions, supported by investment and a conducive policy environment.

In parallel, advancing human development will require continuous improvements in the quality and inclusivity of public and social services. While access has improved, service delivery remains uneven across the country. Achieving nationwide coverage of integrated, high-quality services will depend on strengthened institutional capacities, effective planning, and sustainable financing.

Data and knowledge are essential enablers of effective policymaking. Reliable, disaggregated data, combined with an understanding of demographic trends and the needs of vulnerable groups, will guide evidence-based policies, budgeting decisions, and resource allocation.

Stakeholder consultations underscored the need to actively engage communities and civil society in designing and delivering services, especially in protection and legal aid, to ensure they are inclusive, accessible, and tailored to those most at risk of being left behind.

The UN's contributions to achieving Outcome 1 are organised around two specific Outputs, each aligned with the mandates, capacities, and comparative advantages of participating UN System Organizations.



The Green Garden project allows children in kindergarten to be sensitized on environmental health from early childhood.

Photo credit: UNICEF/2024

Output 1.1:

Evidence-informed policies are developed, and implementation capacities are enhanced for inclusive urban and rural development, an enabling business environment, decent work and innovation

To support this output, the UN will focus on the following areas:

- 1 Policy development and capacity-building for effective land reform and sustainable land management;
- 2 Improving agricultural productivity through the introduction of new techniques and better access to market information;
- 3 Promoting inclusive urban development policies that support balanced rural-urban growth;
- 4 Strengthening MSME development, trade facilitation, and innovation ecosystems to diversify the economy and create jobs;
- 5 Fostering an enabling business environment by building the capacities of both public and private sector stakeholders;
- 6 Supporting the development of transport corridors to improve trade and transport connectivity, strengthening Azerbaijan's role as a regional trade hub.

Together, these efforts aim to foster integrated and inclusive rural and urban development. The underlying assumption is that, with the adequate capacities, data, and technical support, national and local institutions will be better equipped to design and implement policies that drive inclusive socio-economic growth—including non-

discrimination, equal pay for equal value, and family-friendly policies. To this end, UN support will focus on strengthening data systems, building institutional capacity, and providing policy advisory services to government counterparts and key partners.

Output 1.2:

National capacities are strengthened to design and deliver data-driven, high-quality, inclusive and people-centered public and social services, integrating digital solutions

To achieve this output, the UN will focus on:

- 1 Supporting digital transformation of public services to improve access, outreach, and efficiency. Digitalization is expected to reduce service delivery gaps, particularly in rural and underserved areas, and enhance the overall quality of services.
- 2 Building institutional and workforce capacities to design and deliver integrated services in health, education, legal aid, and social protection. The focus will be on equipping national and local institutions with the right tools, skills, and frameworks to deliver people-centered, inclusive services nationwide.
- 3 Providing technical advice and tools to strengthen financing and budgeting in the social sector, particularly health. Through evidence-based investment cases and expenditure tracking tools, the UN will support more efficient allocation of resources for sustainable service delivery.
- 4 Improving access to protection services and helping to address the social challenges that limit human development, such as by taking further action in promoting gender equality and combatting violence against women and girls.

To this end, the UN will take a two-pronged approach:

- ➔ Support services that prevent and respond to domestic violence, trafficking in persons, and early marriage.
- ➔ Help to address root causes of harmful practices by promoting social and behavioural change, raising awareness, and supporting non-discriminatory policies and regulatory frameworks.

The ToC underpinning Output 1.2 assumes that if institutions and service providers have the necessary capacities, digital tools, and resources—distributed equitably across the country—they will be better able to deliver high-quality, inclusive, and people-centered services. The UN's focus on innovation and digitalization aims to make service delivery more agile, accessible, and responsive to all population groups.

This Outcome 1 contributes to multiple SDGs:

- ➔ SDG 2 (Zero Hunger): Through promoting sustainable land management and agricultural practices.
- ➔ SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities): By enhancing capacities for inclusive urban and rural development.
- ➔ SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure): By fostering an enabling business environment, supporting MSME growth, decent work, and innovation.
- ➔ SDG 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing) and SDG 4 (Quality Education): By strengthening national capacities to deliver quality, inclusive, and people-centered public and social services.
- ➔ SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions): By expanding access to protection services and prioritizing the needs of vulnerable groups in line with the LNOB principle.

The LNOB principle is integrated in this outcome through its focus on: underperforming rural areas, introducing techniques and tools for improved agricultural productivity, integrated and balanced rural and urban development, and access to quality services; youth and women in relation to employment, entrepreneurship and start-ups; former IDPs to create conditions for their sustainable return, livelihoods opportunities and protection services; as well as migrants and victims of human trafficking in terms of creating the policy environment and the skills for their employability and protection mechanisms. Special attention will also be given to persons with disabilities in promoting employment schemes, accessibility of services, and inclusive policy environment. This outcome will indirectly benefit all groups at risk of being left behind, as the UN will support and promote disaggregation of data. Knowing how different groups are performing, where they are and their vulnerabilities, should inform adequate policy interventions.

Sustainability is embedded in the design of interventions under both Outcome 1 and Outcome 2. Most of the UN efforts are focused on enhancing national capacities, at individual, institutional and policy level. Activities will be implemented in close collaboration and coordination with national and local institutions, with a view to embedding approaches that can be sustained and scaled over time. In parallel, the UN will promote awareness and knowledge to address challenges impacting human capital development, contributing to more resilient and inclusive outcomes for people in Azerbaijan.

To achieve Outcome 1, and Outputs 1.1 and 1.2, the UN will strengthen partnerships with relevant line ministries and government institutions. In alignment with the COP 29 Baku Initiative on Human Development for Climate Resilience,⁴⁰ the UN will support efforts to enhance social dialogue, partnerships, and collaboration on human development policies.

This initiative emphasizes that climate resilience can only be achieved with investing in education, health, decent jobs, skills development, and social protection—particularly for vulnerable groups such as women, youth, migrants, and displaced people. It also highlights the importance of integrating green transition strategies and climate change adaptation and mitigation considerations into human development efforts. It calls for coordinated, inclusive action across sectors and stakeholders to ensure climate policies remain people-centered, equitable and sustainable.

The Government of Azerbaijan remains the UN's principal partner in delivering results under this outcome. In parallel, strategic partnerships will be pursued with the private sector and social partners to support MSMEs, promote start-up innovation, strengthen value chains, and facilitate trade. The UN will also deepen collaboration with civil society, including women's organizations, as well as academia and other key stakeholders, to ensure inclusive and evidence-informed approaches.

Regional partnerships are instrumental in advancing inclusive economic growth, trade facilitation, and human capital development, under this outcome. Platforms such as United Nations

Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) and Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Programme (CAREC) of Asian Development Bank support regional cooperation on infrastructure and economic connectivity, MSME development, trade, and human development. Trans-Caspian International Transport Route (Middle Corridor) — a multilateral transit, transport and trade partnership aiming to enhance logistics, infrastructure, and sustainable connectivity, offers immense economic potential and investment opportunities, promising substantial benefits not only for the countries involved, but for the wider region. The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), The Organization of Turkic States and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) offer additional avenues for advancing regional economic cooperation, trade, and socio-economic development.

Azerbaijan has strong potential to achieve this outcome, contingent on several key assumptions. Continued and expanded private sector investment in non-oil sectors is essential, alongside stable regional and global economic conditions and uninterrupted supply chains. Sustained government prioritization of economic diversification and private sector development remains critical. Progress also depends on ongoing investments in social sectors and digital transformation—particularly efforts to narrow the digital divide. Advancing public sector reform and decentralizing public services will be vital to improving service quality and accessibility nationwide. However, external shocks, natural hazards, and regional instability, could pose significant risks to sustained progress.

40. <https://cop29.az/storage/2105/JOINT-STATEMENT.pdf>

2.3.2. Strategic Priority 2: Promoting ecosystems and climate resilience, green growth, and just transition

Under Priority Area 2, the Government of Azerbaijan and the UN agreed on the following Outcome 2: “By 2030, people in Azerbaijan, in line with the principle of Leaving No One Behind, benefit from green growth, just transition, and strengthened ecosystems and climate resilience.”

As described in the ToC diagram (see Figure 3), a set of key preconditions have been identified to enable Azerbaijan’s progress towards green growth, just transition, strengthened ecosystems and climate resilience. These necessary changes include:

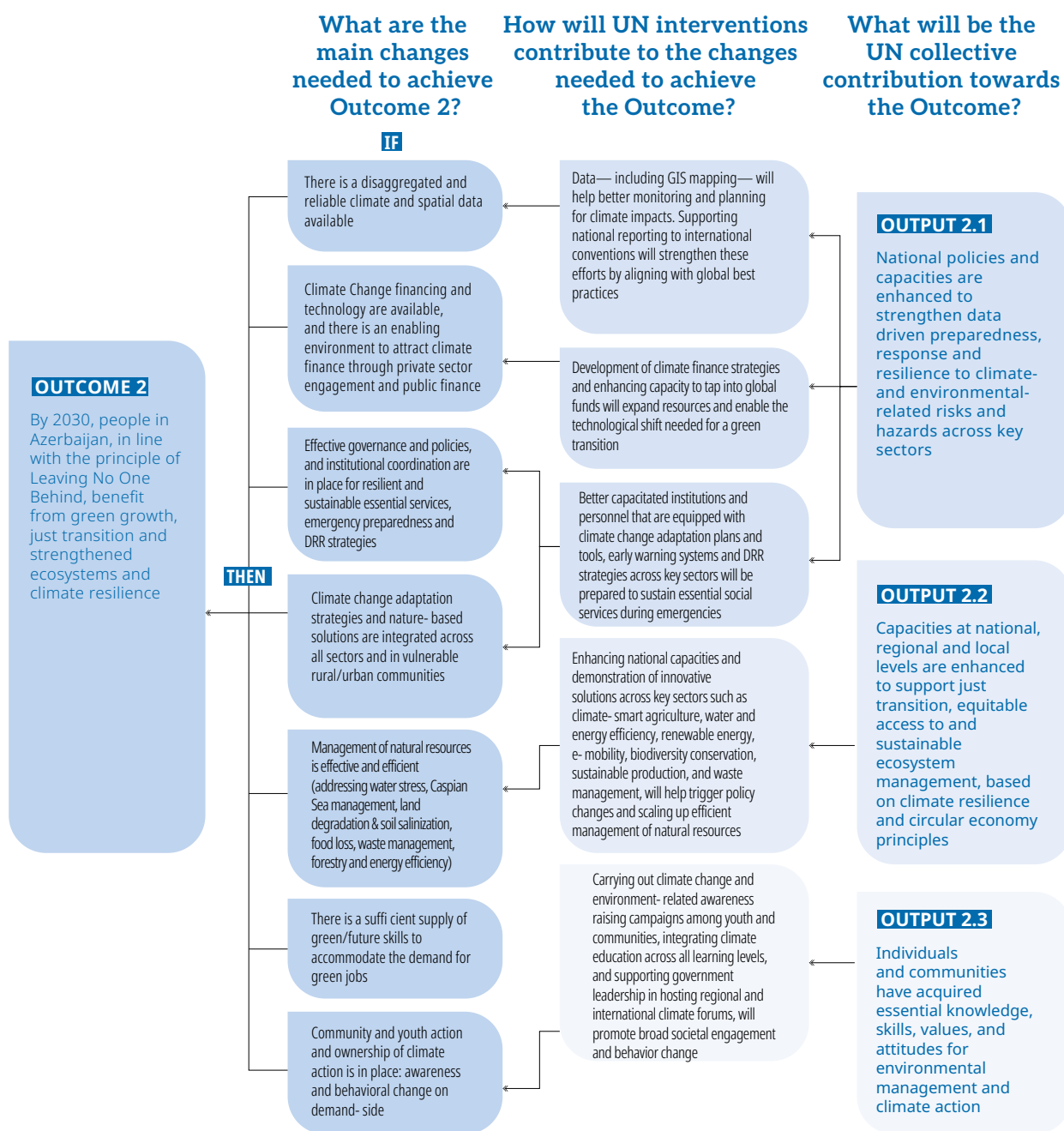
- ➔ Availability of disaggregated climate and spatial data;
- ➔ Access to climate finance and technology, supported by an enabling environment to attract investment;
- ➔ Effective governance and policy coordination to enhance the climate and environmental resilience of essential services;
- ➔ Efficient management of natural resources, with particular attention to the country’s water stress, degradation and salinisation of land, Caspian Sea ecosystems, and food loss and waste;

- ➔ Mainstreaming of climate adaptation and nature-based solutions across all sectors;
- ➔ Raising public awareness on climate and environmental issues, especially among youth, to drive community-level action and promote sustainable consumption.

The Concepts of green growth and just transition are closely linked to the goals of on inclusive economic growth and human development outlined under Outcome 1. A just transition goes beyond shifting to a sustainable economy - it ensures that the transition also advances human development by promoting social justice, protecting human rights, fostering gender equality, and supporting both economic and environmental sustainability. Realizing green growth requires a skilled workforce for emerging green industries, which is an essential part of the broader shift toward a sustainable and inclusive economy.

The UN’s contributions to achieving Outcome 2 are organised around three specific Outputs, each aligned with the mandates, capacities, and comparative advantages of participating UN System Organizations.

Figure 3. Strategic Priority 3 - ToC Diagram



External Assumptions

1. Continued prioritization and commitment to climate agenda
2. Increase in both public and private climate financing from all sources
3. Multi-sectoral coordination and cross-border cooperation
4. Continuity of development cooperation

Risks

1. Geopolitical risks
2. Water-stress and cross-border competition over transboundary water
3. Impact of extreme weather events (flood, droughts, heatwaves, wildfires) and capacity to respond to large-scale crises
4. Oil price fluctuations and economic instability
5. Limited partners at local level to be engaged in programme implementation



Output 2.1:

National policies and capacities are enhanced to strengthen data driven preparedness, response and resilience to climate- and environmental-related risks and hazards across key sectors

To achieve this output, the UN will focus on:

- 1** Improving the national capacities and tools to collect, analyse, and monitor climate/environmental/disaster-risk data, upholding international standards, good practices and digital solutions; and,
- 2** Enhancing the preparedness, response and resilience to climate- and environmental-related risks and hazards across key sectors. In this context, the UN also stands ready to support emergency response in case of large-scale disasters.

UN interventions under Output 2.1 are based on the premise that innovative tools, such as GIS mapping and advanced data analytics, can significantly strengthen national capacities to monitor climate impacts, guide evidence-based planning and decision-making, and improve Azerbaijan's reporting to international environmental conventions.

Strengthened early warning systems with embedded digital solutions, coupled with effective cross-sectoral coordination mechanisms,

necessary financing and skilled workforce will enhance preparedness for effective response, as well as enhance climate change adaptation and resilience of communities.

Supporting resilient systems and institutions that can continue to provide essential services in times of disasters will ensure the protection of the most vulnerable segments of society in line with the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs).

Output 2.2:

Capacities at national, regional and local levels are enhanced to support just transition, equitable access to and sustainable ecosystem management, based on climate resilience and circular economy principles

To achieve this output, the UN will focus on:

- 1 Building capacities of relevant actors at national, regional and local levels to support just energy transition, equitable access to and sustainable use and management of natural resources, climate resilient ecosystems, and circular economy initiatives;
- 2 Supporting the alignment of climate action with sustainable development through the enhancement of the country's export capacity for green transition, which is also envisioned by COP29 Baku Initiative for Climate Finance and Investment for Trade (BICFIT).
- 3 Introducing innovative solutions in various sectors, including climate smart agriculture, water efficiency, renewable energy, clean hydrogen, energy efficiency, grid integration, synchronization of power systems, energy systems and connectivity, sustainable forest management, e-mobility, sustainable production and waste management; and
- 4 Supporting biodiversity conservation and pollution management in the Caspian Sea, recognizing its ecological significance and the importance of coordinated cross-border action.

The ToC for this output assumes that UN-supported innovative solutions will serve as models of good practice, paving the way for potential scale-up by the Government. Through policy advice aligned with Azerbaijan's NDCs, NAP, and other national strategies, and by strengthening institutional capacities, the UN aims to catalyze policy shifts in climate change mitigation, just transition, and sustainable ecosystem management, thereby contributing to the achievement of Outcome 2.

Output 2.3:

Individuals and communities have acquired essential knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes for environmental management and climate action

Under this output, the UN's activities will focus on:

- 1 Supporting the Government's climate diplomacy priorities and the country's leadership in convening regional and international platforms that will place climate change on the forefront of the national, regional and global agendas;
- 2 Carrying out climate change and environment-related awareness raising campaigns among youth and communities; and vulnerable groups, including women, elderly and rural populations; and
- 3 Promoting the integration of climate change agenda at all levels of learning and education.

These interventions are based on the understanding that effective climate change mitigation and adaptation require not only government policies, but also active societal engagement and behavioural change—commonly referred to as “greening the demand side.”

Building on the COP29 legacy and the UN system-wide support provided to the COP29 Presidency, continued collaboration on implementation of the COP29 Presidency's Action Agenda Initiatives is expected to catalyse and accelerate climate action in all levels - national, regional and international This in turn will contribute to achieving the Outcome set under this Priority area.

The achievement of this Outcome 2 will directly contribute to implementation of the following national SDGs:

- ➔ SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) and SDG 13 (Climate Action) through strengthened policies and collaborative actions for climate change mitigation, adaptation, and a just transition to a sustainable economy;
- ➔ SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) by advancing circular economy initiatives that promote sustainable production and resource efficiency;

- ➔ SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), SDG 14 (Life Below Water), and SDG 15 (Life on Land): through efforts to ensure equitable access to natural resources and the sustainable management and protection of water, land, and marine ecosystems; and
- ➔ SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities): by enhancing early warning systems and disaster preparedness to build more resilient and safer human settlements.

The Outcome's focus on environmental education and public awareness reinforces the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) principle of participation—ensuring individuals and communities are informed, engaged, and empowered to take climate action. Integration of MEAs and COP29 Presidency Initiatives further reinforce Azerbaijan's commitments under international environmental and human rights frameworks.

In line with the Leave No One Behind (LNOB) principle, this outcome recognizes that vulnerable groups—such as children, women, the elderly, and persons with disabilities—are disproportionately affected by climate change and often have limited adaptive capacity. The UN will ensure its policy advice and technical support reflect the specific needs of these groups and promote inclusive, participatory decision-making

processes that are responsive to their challenges and contributions.

As with Outcome 1, the sustainability of UN contributions under Outcome 2 depends on strengthening institutions, building national capacities, and raising public awareness to support environmental protection and climate change mitigation. To achieve this, the UN will work not only with the Government but also partner with international development institutions, global climate funds, multilateral development banks, the private sector, academia, think tanks, youth and women's organizations, and broader civil society—ensuring inclusive, community-level engagement in programme implementation.

Regional partnerships are vital to achieving this outcome, particularly in addressing transboundary environmental challenges, building climate resilience, and ensuring sustainable natural resource management.

The UN will support Azerbaijan's active engagement in key regional mechanisms such as the Tehran Convention, which promotes protection of the Caspian Sea; SPECA, which advances climate resilience and green connectivity across Central Asia; the Organization of Turkic States, which fosters cooperation on sustainable development and environmental protection; and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), in partnership with which the Clean Energy Centre for the ECO region (CECECO)⁴¹ has been established in Baku. Through the Central Asia Regional Economic

41. CECECO will be one of the centers of UNIDO's Global Network of Regional Sustainable Energy Centers (GN-SEC), and it will promote regional cooperation, accelerate the transition to renewable energy sources, strengthen energy security and combat climate change (<https://www.gn-sec.net/content/clean-energy-centre-eco-region-cececo>).

Cooperation (CAREC) Programme, Azerbaijan contributes to regional efforts on climate-smart infrastructure, energy, and environmental sustainability. During its recent chairmanship of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Azerbaijan has also championed climate equity and inclusive access to resources, positioning NAM as a strategic partner in promoting a just transition and strengthened regional cooperation.

Risks and assumptions impacting this outcome's ToC include regional and cross-border challenges. Growing competition over shared water resources poses a significant risk to environmental sustainability if not addressed through effective coordination and cooperation. Additionally, the potential for large-scale natural disasters remains a critical risk. The outcome assumes that adequate national and regional response capacities will be in place to address such issues and mitigate their impact.

In terms of UNCT configuration, multiple UN System Organizations - signatories to this Cooperation Framework - will contribute to the realization of Outcomes 1 and 2, drawing on their distinct mandates, and expertise. Their strategic contributions are detailed in Figure 3, which illustrates the alignment between thematic areas, expected results, and participating UN System Organizations.

COOPERATION FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

3.1 Cooperation Framework Governance

The Joint Government-UN Steering Committee (JSC) serves as the primary governance mechanism for the strategic oversight and implementation of the Cooperation Framework in Azerbaijan. The JSC will be co-chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator, representing the UN Country Team (UNCT), and the Minister of Economy of the Government of Azerbaijan of the Government of Azerbaijan. The membership of the JSC will include all UNCT members as well as senior representatives of relevant Government ministries.

The JSC ensures alignment with the national priorities and the 2030 Agenda and fosters joint contributions to national development goals. Its core responsibilities encompass:

- ➔ Strategic Oversight: Ensuring the Cooperation Framework's alignment with national, regional, and international development processes, including national SDG targets in close coordination with the National Coordination Council for Sustainable Development (NCCSD);
- ➔ Progress Monitoring: Tracking progress, identifying challenges and opportunities, and steering implementation;

- ➔ Annual Review: Reviewing the UN Annual Results Report and providing guidance for implementation;
- ➔ Evaluation Oversight: Overseeing the independent evaluation of the Cooperation Framework, contributing to system-wide oversight, transparency, and accountability;
- ➔ Learning and Adaptation: Ensuring evaluation findings and recommendations are integrated into subsequent Cooperation Frameworks and UN System Organization decision-making

3.2 Cooperation Framework Management Structure

Under the auspices of the JSC, Results Groups (RG) will be established for each outcome area to oversee the implementation of the Cooperation Framework. Each RG will be co-chaired by a senior government official (at the level of Deputy Minister) and the Head of the relevant UN System Organization.

The RGs will comprise of all UN System Organizations contributing to each outcome area, along with their designated government counterparts. Each RG will convene regularly

to conduct joint planning, monitoring, and reporting under the Cooperation Framework. In preparation for the JSC meeting, the RGs will meet to assess implementation progress, identify and address challenges, and explore opportunities for joint programming and resource mobilization.

Any high-level policy or coordination issues will be elevated to the JSC for guidance. In addition, the RGs will meet as needed throughout the year to enhance coordination, respond to emerging challenges, and consider new joint initiatives.

The UNCT, under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator, will be responsible for the overall effectiveness of the United Nations development contributions and results, and will ensure that individual United Nations System Organization programming documents are derived from the Outcomes and Outputs of the Cooperation Framework.

The UNCT will also be organized in coordination groups to ensure coherent action on mandated cross-cutting issues, more specifically:

➔ UNCT Monitoring and Evaluation Group (MEG) – will be responsible for providing quality assurance of the monitoring of the Cooperation Framework Outcome and Output indicators, ensure correctness of the information in the UNINFO and support the evaluation of the Cooperation Framework.

➔ UNCT Operations Management Team (OMT) – will support and advise the UNCT in its efforts to harmonise business operations, annually review and report on the implementation of Business Operations Strategy, to ensure more focused, strategic, coherent, and cost-effective business operations.

➔ UNCT Communication Group (UNCG) – will support the UNCT to communicate the UN's results and contributions in a more coordinated way and will support joint advocacy efforts.

➔ UNCT Gender Thematic Group (GTG) – will support the UNCT in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in a consistent and synergetic manner⁴².

➔ UNCT Human Rights Thematic Group (HRTG) – will support the UNCT in mainstreaming human rights across UN programmes and provide joint UN support to the Government and other stakeholders to participate in Human Rights Mechanisms.

➔ UNCT Disability Inclusion Group (DIG) – will coordinate and advance the implementation of the UN Disability Inclusion Strategy in Azerbaijan, promote inclusive programming, and strengthen engagement with organizations of persons with disabilities.

42. This function will be carried out in line with the UNSDG Standards and Procedures for GTGs. <https://unsdg.un.org/resources/gender-theme-groups-standards-and-procedures>

The UNCT will regularly assess its contributions to advancing gender equality across all outcome areas of the Cooperation Framework, in alignment with national commitments and UN normative standards. This will include the use of key accountability tools such as the UNCT System Wide Action Plan (SWAP) Gender Equality Scorecard and the Gender Equality Marker, as well as strengthened internal coordination to ensure a coherent and results-oriented approach to gender equality.

Building on the UN Youth Advisory Council (UNYAC) and existing youth coordination platforms, the UNCT will strengthen its engagement with young people to ensure more meaningful, inclusive, and structured participation in policy dialogue, and SDG implementation. UNCT members that are not physically present in Azerbaijan will participate in the coordination structures through virtual engagement in RGs and Thematic Working Groups, ensuring that their contributions are fully integrated into Cooperation Framework implementation.

To maximize efficiency and reduce transaction costs for stakeholders, the UN will leverage existing coordination mechanisms, promote joint planning and implementation, and streamline reporting processes. The UN Resident Coordinator and the UNCT will actively engage with civil society networks, young people, professional associations, research institutions, academia, and the private sector to foster multi-stakeholder partnerships, strengthen policy research, and advance development advocacy. Partnerships with International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) will be strengthened to support sustainable development financing in Azerbaijan.

3.3 Resourcing the Cooperation Framework

The financial requirements for implementing the Cooperation Framework will be outlined in the Multi-Year Funding Framework (MYFF)—a strategic tool that provides an overview of resources needed for the entire Cooperation Framework cycle. The MYFF will guide the Government and the UN System Organizations in identifying funding gaps, expanding partnerships, and aligning joint resource mobilization efforts.

The Government will support the UN System Organizations' efforts to raise funds required to meet the needs of this Cooperation Framework and will cooperate with the UN System Organizations including: encouraging potential donor Governments to make available to the UN System Organizations the funds needed to implement unfunded components of the programme; endorsing the UN's effort to raise funds for the programme from other sources, including the private sector both internationally and in Azerbaijan; and by permitting contributions from individuals, corporations and foundations in Azerbaijan to support this programme which will be tax exempt for the Donor, to the maximum extent permissible under applicable law.

The UN System Organizations will provide support to the development and implementation of activities within the Cooperation 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 (M&E), training activities and staff support.

Part of the UN System Organizations' support may be extended to non-governmental and civil society organizations, in coordination with the Government and in full compliance with national regulations. Such support will be provided as agreed within the framework of individual workplans and project documents.

Additional support may include access to UN System Organization-managed global information systems, the network of the UN System Organizations' country offices and specialized information systems, including rosters of consultants and providers of development services. The UN shall appoint staff and consultants for programme development, programme support, and technical assistance. Subject to annual reviews and progress in the implementation of the programme, the UN System Organizations' funds are distributed by calendar year and in accordance with the Cooperation Framework. These budgets will be reviewed and further detailed in the workplans and project documents. By mutual consent between the Government and the UN System Organizations, funds not earmarked by donors to UN System Organizations for specific activities may be re-allocated to other programmatically equally worthwhile activities.

3.4 Derivation of UN System Organization country programming instruments from the Cooperation Framework

The Cooperation Framework serves as the overarching platform for both collective and individual UN contributions to development

results in Azerbaijan. Its design process allowed all UN System Organizations to jointly reflect on how they can contribute to the Cooperation Framework's outputs, enabling each UN System Organization to align or derive its own programming documents accordingly. Some UN System Organizations - particularly those without a physical presence in the country - may not develop a standalone country programme document. However, by signing the Cooperation Framework, they commit to supporting its implementation in close coordination with the Government and other UN System Organizations.

Each UN System Organization's country programme document (or equivalent) will outline its contributions in alignment with its specific mandate. Progress will be reported annually through joint reporting under the Cooperation Framework, demonstrating how collective efforts are advancing shared results (see next chapter on monitoring and evaluation).

3.5 Joint Workplans

Joint Workplans (JWPs) will serve as the operational mechanism for delivering the Cooperation Framework. The JWPs will be developed on annual basis, under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator and the UNCT, to translate the strategic priorities and outcomes of the Cooperation Framework into concrete, coordinated actions.

The JWPs outline expected outputs, key contributions from UN System Organizations — delivered jointly or individually—while ensuring

alignment with national priorities and maximizing synergies to prevent duplication. They also provide a transparent overview of required and available resources, highlighting funding gaps.

To ensure that the JWPs remain responsive to Azerbaijan's evolving development landscape, the Results Groups will continuously review and adjust the JWPs based on emerging needs, national priorities, and global commitments, including the 2030 Agenda. This adaptive approach allows for increased joint delivery where needed, including the development of joint programmes that bring together multiple UN System Organizations and national partners to enhance efficiency and impact. Where appropriate, these joint programmes may be supported through pooled funding or other innovative financing mechanisms, and additional stakeholders such as government institutions, civil society organizations, and private sector actors may be engaged as implementing partners.

The JWPs will be recorded and digitalized in the global UN INFO⁴³ platform for online planning, monitoring and reporting.

UN INFO will ensure enhanced transparency and financial and programmatic accountability for results to the government, development partners (including donors), civil society, and most notably, the people of Azerbaijan.

3.6 Business Operations Strategy in support of the Cooperation Framework

The UN will continue implementing the Business Operation Strategy (BOS), which is a results-based framework to deliver on the UN efficiency agenda that focuses on joint business operations with the purpose of eliminating duplication, leveraging the common bargaining power of the UN and maximizing economies of scale. For that purpose, the OMT will review the BOS by identifying opportunities for high-impact common services to further harmonize business operations and increase cost-efficiencies, including through shared Long-Term Agreements (LTAs), car-pooling, and establishment of UN national staff rosters.

43. UN INFO is part of the United Nations' efforts to improve coordination, transparency and accountability for results by tracking the UNSDG's contributions to Agenda 2030 and the SDGs (<https://uninfo.org/>)

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING

4.1 Monitoring in joint work plans

The Cooperation Framework Results Framework (see Annex 1) will serve as the primary tool for tracking progress towards the Cooperation Framework's outcomes and outputs. It defines the expected results, indicators, baseline and targets, providing a structured basis for monitoring, joint reviews, and reporting. The Results Framework will guide both periodic progress assessments and the annual review of achievements, serving as a shared accountability tool for all contributing entities.

Outcome-level indicators are drawn from Azerbaijan's national SDG indicator framework. Selection of indicators was based on their alignment with Cooperation Framework priorities, availability of disaggregated baseline data, and the existence of reliable data collection and reporting mechanisms.

Output-level indicators are aligned with the Global Output Indicator Framework to facilitate coherent reporting on the UN's contribution to SDG achievement at the global level. The UNCT will maximize the use of national statistical systems to strengthen data collection and analysis. Collaboration with the State Statistical Committee and research institutions will be deepened to address data gaps and enhance evidence-based decision-making.

The UNCT Monitoring and Evaluation Group (MEG) will provide technical support to UN System Organizations to promote the use of joint monitoring systems wherever feasible. MEG will coordinate the monitoring and measurement of progress toward the Cooperation Framework indicators, working closely with the Ministry of Economy and the State Statistical Committee. The UN Resident Coordinator's Office will serve as the chair and the secretariat of this group.

The Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan provided in Annex 2 outlines key activities related to monitoring, evaluation and learning under the Cooperation Framework. It will be regularly updated to reflect the evolving roles of UN System Organizations and national counterparts, in line with the development of the national SDG monitoring and reporting system. The plan will cover UN System Organization-specific and joint surveys, studies, evaluations, and contributions to national monitoring systems as well as capacity-building initiatives in monitoring and evaluation.

Implementing Partners agree to cooperate with the relevant UN System Organizations for monitoring all activities supported by cash transfers and will facilitate access to relevant financial records and personnel responsible for the administration of cash provided by the UN System Organizations.

To that effect, Implementing Partners agree to the following:

1. Periodic on-site reviews and spot checks of their financial records by the relevant UN System Organizations or their representatives, as appropriate, and as described in specific clauses of their engagement documents/contracts with the relevant UN System Organizations;
2. Programmatic monitoring of activities following the relevant UN System Organizations' standards and guidance for site visits and field monitoring;
3. Special or scheduled audits. Each UN System Organization, in collaboration with other UN System Organizations (where so desired and in consultation with the respective coordinating Ministry) will establish an annual audit plan, giving priority to audits of Implementing Partners with large amounts of cash assistance provided by the UN System Organizations, and those whose financial management capacity needs strengthening.

4.2 Annual review and Country Results Reporting

The JSC, co-chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator and the Minister of Economy, will lead the annual review process, to assess achievements, challenges, opportunities and lessons learned, under each RG.

Information on deliverables and data on monitoring will be collected through UNINFO and will be the basis for discussion. Based on this review and the evolving country context (informed by the CCA annual update), adjustments to the Cooperation Framework and/or to the Joint Work Plan may be proposed to the JSC, to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness of UN support to the country. In particular, such adjustments may be considered if evidence suggests a revision of the ToC and, consequently, of the intervention strategies.

The outcomes of this process will be compiled in an Annual Results Report, which will be submitted, in its draft form, to the JSC meeting, where the report will be reviewed and endorsed. The JSC will also provide, based on the annual review findings, strategic guidance on the Cooperation Framework implementation.

The Annual Results Report will be made available both in Azerbaijani and English in the UN Azerbaijan website (<https://azerbaijan.un.org/en>) and the UNSDG platforms. The reports are an important accountability tool to inform relevant stakeholders (government, non-government, media, academia and international development partners) about the results achieved, the challenges encountered and the corrected course of action, if any. As the Cooperation Framework covers the whole spectrum of sustainable development, the Annual Results Reports will also provide a snapshot of UN's contributions to Azerbaijan's progress towards the SDGs.

4.3 Evaluation plan

In 2029, penultimate year of the Cooperation Framework implementation, an independent evaluation of the Cooperation Framework will be undertaken, as per the UNSDG guidelines. Under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator, the UNCT and EG will develop an evaluation plan, which will be submitted for validation and approval by the JSC.

The independent evaluation of the Cooperation Framework is a system-wide assessment of the UN's collective contribution to Azerbaijan's SDG achievements. The independent evaluation will be guided by the United Nations Evaluation Group's (UNEG) norms and standards, as well as the Development Coordination Office (DCO) Guidelines for the Evaluation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.

The findings and recommendations from the independent evaluation will provide evidence that will inform the future cooperation and partnership between the UN and the Government of Azerbaijan.

Annexes

Annex 1: Results Framework

National development priorities: Azerbaijan 2030: National Priorities for Socio-Economic Development, Socio-Economic Development Strategy 2022–2026, Employment Strategy of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2019–2030, Digital Development Concept in the Republic of Azerbaijan 2025–2027, Artificial Intelligence Strategy of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2025–2028

SDG targets: 2.a, 3.4, 3.c, 4.4, 5.5, 8.5, 8.6, 10.4, 11.a, 16.6

Strategic Priority 1: Advancing inclusive socio-economic growth and human development

Results	National SDG indicators/Performance Indicators	Baseline (year)	Target	Source/ MoV/ Custodian	Assumption Statement
Outcome 1 By 2030, people in Azerbaijan, in line with the principle of Leaving No One Behind, benefit from inclusive socio-economic growth and equitable, quality services that are innovative, and accessible	SDG 2.a.1 The agriculture orientation index for government expenditure	0.49% (2023)	0.65% (AZE's highest across 2010–2023)	SDG AZ STAT	Azerbaijan will continue its efforts to diversify its economy, thus increasing FDIs to non-oil sectors.
	SDG 3.4.1 Mortality rate attributed to cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory diseases, per 100,000 population (Disaggregate by age, disability, urban/rural, and others where possible)	Total: 449.2/100,000 Women: 426.6/100,000 Men: 471.9/100,000 (2023)	Total: 433.6/100,000 ⁴⁴ Women: 419.9/100,000 Men: 447.3/100,000	SDG AZ STAT	Investments in social sector, digital transformation and innovation, and focus on human capital development will continue, alongside with a public sector reform to improve effectiveness at local/ subnational level.
	SDG 3.1.1 Maternal mortality ratio, by location, per 100,000 live births (Disaggregate by age, disability, and others where possible)	Total: 29.3 Urban: 23.9 Rural: 34.4 (2023)	Total: ≤15 p Urban: ≤10 Rural: ≤20	SDG AZ STAT	

44. The global SDG 3.4 target aims to reduce premature mortality from non-communicable diseases by one-third by 2030 compared to 2015 levels; for Azerbaijan, this would mean lowering the rate from 452 to around 302 deaths per 100,000. However, between 2015 and 2023, country achieved only a 0.6% reduction overall, with progress differing by sex: while the rate for women declined by 3.5%, the rate for men increased by 2.3%. Based on these diverging trends, a more realistic 2030 target would be 447.3 for men (a 3% reduction from the 2015 baseline) and 419.9 for women (a 5% reduction), resulting in a population-wide average of approximately 433.6 deaths per 100,000—reflecting modest yet achievable progress given current patterns. To move closer to the global reduction target, the country will need to significantly scale up prevention, early detection, treatment, and health system strengthening efforts focused on non-communicable diseases.

Results	National SDG indicators/Performance Indicators	Baseline (year)	Target	Source/ MoV/ Custodian	Assumption Statement
Outcome 1 By 2030, people in Azerbaijan, in line with the principle of Leaving No One Behind, benefit from inclusive socio-economic growth and equitable, quality services that are innovative, and accessible	SDG 3.c.1 Health workers density and distribution per 10,000 population	Total: 87.7/10,000	Total: 110/10,000	SDG AZ STAT	Azerbaijan will continue its efforts to diversify its economy, thus increasing FDIs to non-oil sectors. Investments in social sector, digital transformation and innovation, and focus on human capital development will continue, alongside with a public sector reform to improve effectiveness at local/ subnational level.
	(Disaggregate by urban/rural, and others where possible)	Doctors: 33/10,000 Paramedical personnel: 54.6/10,000 (2023)	Doctors: 45/10,000 Paramedical personnel: 80/10,000 (regional average and annual trends)		
	SDG 4.4.1. Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill (%) Age 15+; Youth 15-24	Age 15+: 76.2% Youth 15-24: 93.8% (2023)	Age 15+: 85% Youth 15-24: 97% (annual trends)	SDG AZ STAT	
	(Disaggregate by sex, disability, urban/rural, and others where possible)				
	Sex ratio at birth	113 male births for every 100 female births	105 male births for every 100 female births	State Statistics Committee	
	SDG 5.5.2 Proportion of women in managerial positions	36.4% (2023)	45% (regional average of top performers)	SDG AZ STAT	
	(Disaggregate by age, disability, urban/rural, and others where possible)				
	SDG 10.4.1 Labour share of GDP	25.% (2023)	30% (regional average and annual trends)	SDG AZ STAT	

Results	National SDG indicators/Performance Indicators	Baseline (year)	Target	Source/ MoV/ Custodian	Assumption Statement
Outcome 1 By 2030, people in Azerbaijan, in line with the principle of Leaving No One Behind, benefit from inclusive socio-economic growth and equitable, quality services that are innovative, and accessible	SDG 8.5.1. Average hourly earnings of employees, by sex, age, occupation and persons with disabilities (AZN)	Total: 6.2AZN Women: 5.1 AZN Men: 7 AZN (2023)	Total: 8.5 AZN Women: 8 AZN Men: 9 AZN (annual trends) (aims to close the gender pay gap)	SDG AZ STAT	Azerbaijan will continue its efforts to diversify its economy, thus increasing FDIs to non-oil sectors. Investments in social sector, digital transformation and innovation, and focus on human capital development will continue, alongside with a public sector reform to improve effectiveness at local/ subnational level.
	(Disaggregate by urban/rural, and others where possible)				
	SDG 8.6.1 Proportion of youth (aged 15–24 years) not in education, employment or training, by sex	Total 19.5% Women: 20.6% Men: 18.6% (2023)	Total 15% Women: 15% Men: 15% (National Employment Strategy)	SDG AZ STAT	
	(Disaggregate by disability, urban/rural, and others where possible)				
	SDG 1.a.2 Proportion of total government spending on essential services (education, health, social protection and social security), in percentage	Total: 40.9% Education: 11.1% Healthcare: 4.3% Social protection and social security: 25.5% (2023)	Total: ≥55% ⁴⁵ Education: ≥15 % Healthcare: ≥10 % Social protection and social security: 30 %	SDG AZ STAT	

45. The 2030 targets are aligned with international benchmarks: the UNESCO/Incheon Declaration recommends that governments allocate 15–20 percent of total public expenditure to education; the WHO suggests that 10–15 percent be directed to health; and the ILO's Global Social Protection Report 2024–2026 indicates that upper-middle-income countries typically allocate 25–30 percent to social protection. The proposed targets for Azerbaijan under SDG indicator 1.a.2 are based on these standards.

Results	National SDG indicators/Performance Indicators	Baseline (year)	Target	Source/ MoV/ Custodian	Assumption Statement
Outcome 1 By 2030, people in Azerbaijan, in line with the principle of Leaving No One Behind, benefit from inclusive socio-economic growth and equitable, quality services that are innovative, and accessible	SDG 16.6.2 Proportion of population satisfied with their last experience of public services (services provided by ASAN service ⁴⁶)	99.9% (2025)	100%	ASAN	Azerbaijan will continue its efforts to diversify its economy, thus increasing FDIs to non-oil sectors.
	(Disaggregate by sex, age, disability, urban/ rural, and others where possible)				Investments in social sector, digital transformation and innovation, and focus on human capital development will continue, alongside with a public sector reform to improve effectiveness at local/ subnational level.
	SDG 11.a.1 Azerbaijan has national urban policies or regional development plans that (a) respond to population dynamics; (b) ensure balanced territorial development; and (c) increase local fiscal space	No (work started) (2025)	Yes	State Committee on Urban Planning and Architecture (SCUPA)	

46. While satisfaction with ASAN services is currently used as a proxy for SDG 16.6.2, it should be noted that ASAN does not cover all public services, and the methodology used does not align with official SDG metadata, which requires disaggregated data by service type (e.g. education, health, police) and representative population coverage; therefore, efforts should be made to calculate this indicator in line with global standards.

Results	National SDG indicators/Performance Indicators	Baseline (year)	Target	Source/ MoV/ Custodian	Assumption Statement
Output 1.1 Evidence-informed policies are developed, and implementation capacities are enhanced for inclusive urban and rural development, an enabling business environment, decent work and innovation	GOIF ⁴⁷ 1.5 Number of people benefiting from income generating activities with UN's support (Disaggregate by sex, age, disability, urban/rural, and others)	0 (FAO) 0 (UN Women) (2025)	300 (at least 30% women) (FAO) 60 women (UN Women)	FAO UN Women MoV: Project beneficiary lists, project reports	Institutions at national and local level with appropriate capacities and data/information, will design and implement policies and regulations that foster inclusive economic growth. The development of policies, plans and strategies for urban and rural development (including aquaculture) and land management will create the framework for a more balanced development across the country's regions and an enabling environment for entrepreneurship, including value chain assessments, trade facilitation and support to innovative start-ups, will foster sustainable economic growth

47. The Global Output Indicator Framework provides inter-agency agreed, methodologically unified, harmonized list of quality-assured, SDG-focused corporate-level output indicators (A/RES/72/279 and A/Res/74/4). UNCTs are required to select a minimum of 15 indicators from the Menu of a total of 64 output indicators, for integration into the Cooperation Framework Results Framework/Joint Work Plans. More info here

Results	National SDG indicators/Performance Indicators	Baseline (year)	Target	Source/ MoV/ Custodian	Assumption Statement
Output 1.1 Evidence-informed policies are developed, and implementation capacities are enhanced for inclusive urban and rural development, an enabling business environment, decent work and innovation	GOIF 2.2 Number of rural organizations, government institutions and other relevant stakeholders with enhanced capacities for designing and implementing policies, strategies and programmes that improve productivity, net income and working conditions within the agrifood system, with UN's support	0 (FAO) (2025)	10 (FAO)	FAO MoV: Capacity-building workshop reports, participant lists, post-training evaluations	Institutions at national and local level with appropriate capacities and data/information, will design and implement policies and regulations that foster inclusive economic growth. The development of policies, plans and strategies for urban and rural development (including aquaculture) and land management will create the framework for a more balanced development across the country's regions and an enabling environment for entrepreneurship, including value chain assessments, trade facilitation and support to innovative start-ups, will foster sustainable economic growth
	GOIF 4.3 Number of people directly benefiting from improved access to skills and lifelong learning programmes, developed and implemented with UN's support	0 (FAO)	2,000 (at least 30% women) (FAO)	FAO	
		0 (UN Women)	90 (UN Women)	UN Women	
	(Disaggregate by sex, age, disability, urban/ rural, and others)	0 (OHCHR) (2025)	2,500 (OHCHR)	OHCHR ITU MoV: Training records, participant lists, certification records, post-training assessments	

Results	National SDG indicators/Performance Indicators	Baseline (year)	Target	Source/ MoV/ Custodian	Assumption Statement
Output 1.1 Evidence-informed policies are developed, and implementation capacities are enhanced for inclusive urban and rural development, an enabling business environment, decent work and innovation	GOIF 5.2 Number of measures implemented with UN's support to: a) Eliminate gender-based discrimination and segregation in the labour market b) Increase women's access to and use of digital technologies, digital finance, ecommerce and digital value chains c) Ensure women's economic security and empowerment d) Address discriminatory gender and social norms, stereotypes and practices; and e) Promote the recognition, reduction, and redistribution of unpaid care and domestic work	a) 0 (UN Women) b) 0 (UN Women) c) 0 (UN Women) d) 0 (UN Women) e) 0 (UN Women) (2025)	a) 2 (UN Women) b) 1 (UN Women) c) 1 (UN Women) d) 2 (UN Women) e) 1 (UN Women)	UN Women MoV: Adopted policy documents, project/ programme reports, records of implemented measures	Institutions at national and local level with appropriate capacities and data/information, will design and implement policies and regulations that foster inclusive economic growth. The development of policies, plans and strategies for urban and rural development (including aquaculture) and land management will create the framework for a more balanced development across the country's regions and an enabling environment for entrepreneurship, including value chain assessments, trade facilitation and support to innovative start-ups, will foster sustainable economic growth
	GOIF 8.3 Number of cases in which business support organizations, workers' organizations and employers and business membership organizations have increased capacity to provide services to their members/clients to promote economic development, productive employment and decent work, as a result of UN's support	0 (2025)	5	ILO MoV: Training reports, capacity assessment reports, stakeholder feedback, service improvement documentation	

Results	National SDG indicators/Performance Indicators	Baseline (year)	Target	Source/ MoV/ Custodian	Assumption Statement
	<p>GOIF 11.1 National urban policies (NUP) to support sustainable cities and communities and in accordance with international standards formulated, resourced, and implemented by the Government, with UN's support</p> <p>- 0. No, not existing, - 1. Yes, Diagnosis, Feasibility or Formulation Phase, - 2. Yes, Implementation Phase, - 3. Yes, Monitoring and Evaluation Phase</p>	1 (2025)	2	<p>UN-Habitat</p> <p>MoV: Draft policy documents, approved urban development policies, national action plans</p>	
Output 1.2 National capacities are strengthened to design and deliver data-driven, high-quality, inclusive and people-centered public and social services, integrating digital solutions	GOIF 3.1 Number of national policies on health including overall health or specific health areas such as nutrition policies, physical activity, sexual and reproductive health, non-communicable and communicable diseases, in accordance with human rights standards are developed and adopted, supported by the UN	0 (2025)	2	<p>WHO</p> <p>MoV: Health policy documents, government publications</p>	Workforce will be in a better position to deliver quality services, having adequate capacities and tools, in particular digitalisation of services and innovative solutions, with the assumption that these will be more agile and be able to more easily reach all people. The availability of granular data and information, together with stronger capacities of national institutions will lead to an overall regulatory framework conducive to design and implement integrated services that can effectively reach all people.

Results	National SDG indicators/Performance Indicators	Baseline (year)	Target	Source/ MoV/ Custodian	Assumption Statement
	GOIF 3.2 Level of strength of the primary health care (PHC) system, achieved with UN's support ⁴⁸	Score: 14	Score: 16	WHO	
		1) 1	1) 1	MoV: PHC	
		2) 1	2) 2	system	
	1) Political commitment and leadership	3) 1	3) 1	assessment	
	2) Governance and policy frameworks	4) 2	4)2	reports,	
	3) Funding and allocation of resources	5) 2	5) 2	programme	
	4) Engagement of community and other Stakeholders	6) 1	6) 1	reports,	
	5) Models of care	7) 1	7)1	monitoring	
	6) Primary health care workforce	8) 1	8) 1	mission	
	7) Physical infrastructure	9) 0	9) 0	reports	
	8) Medicines and other health products	10) 1	10) 1		
	9) Engagement with private sector providers	11) 1	11) 1		
	10) Purchasing and payment system	12) 1	12) 1		
	11) Digital technologies for health	13) 0	13) 1		
	12) Systems for improving the quality of care	14) 1	14)1		
	13) Primary health care-oriented research	(2025)			
	14) Monitoring and evaluation				
	Response options for levers:				
	0 (not engaged)				
	1 (advocating)				
	2 (contributing)				
	3 (leading)				

48. The indicator measures engagement of the UN in any of the 14 levers of the 4)WHO/UNICEF operational framework for primary health care (PHC) with grades from 0 (not engaged) to 3 (leading)

Results	National SDG indicators/Performance Indicators	Baseline (year)	Target	Source/ MoV/ Custodian	Assumption Statement
Output 1.2 National capacities are strengthened to design and deliver data-driven, high-quality, inclusive and people-centered public and social services, integrating digital solutions	GOIF 3.3 Number of people benefiting from UN-supported health services: Mental Health (Disaggregated by sex, age, disability, urban/ rural, and others)	0 (2025)	100,000	WHO MoV: service delivery records from health facilities, programme reports and monitoring data on mental health services utilization, anonymised beneficiary registers	
	GOIF 16.6 Number of people, who have access to justice, with UN's support (Disaggregated by sex, age, disability, urban/ rural, and others)	0 (OHCHR) (2025)	6,000 (OHCHR)	OHCHR MoV: legal aid service records, case management reports, disaggregated beneficiary tracking	
	GOIF 17.3 Data collection and analysis mechanisms/initiatives providing disaggregated data to monitor progress towards the SDGs and enhancing policy coherence for sustainable development, established/implemented with UN's support Scale (Low, moderate, high)	Moderate Number: 0 (FAO) (2025)	High 1(FAO)	FAO MoV: Established data systems documentation, data platform reports, SDG monitoring reports	

National development priorities: Azerbaijan 2030: National Priorities for Socio-Economic Development, Socio-Economic Development Strategy 2022–2026, NDC 3.0, COP presidency Initiatives, National Strategy for the Efficient Use of Water Resources 2024–2040, NAP

SDG targets: 6.5, 12.4, 13.1, 13.2, 15.1, 15.3

Strategic Priority 2: Promoting Ecosystems and Climate Resilience, Green Growth and Just Transition

Results	Performance Indicators	Baseline (year)	Target	Source/ MoV	Assumption Statement
Outcome 2: By 2030, people in Azerbaijan, in line with the principle of Leaving No One Behind, benefit from green growth, just transition and strengthened ecosystems and climate resilience	SDG 13.1.1 Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population (Disaggregate by sex, age, disability, urban/rural, and others where possible)	12.7/100,000 (2023)	Below 10/100,000 (annual trends) ⁴⁹	SDG AZ Stat	It is expected that prioritization of and commitment to climate agenda will continue, with increased in both public and private climate financing. Likewise, multi-sectoral coordination and cross-border cooperation, as well as development cooperation will be fostered.
	SDG 13.2.2 Total greenhouse gas emissions per year, by million tons (CO2 equivalent)	59.1 million tons (CO2 equivalent) (2022)	48.8 million tons (CO2 equivalent) (35% reduction from 1990 levels)	SDG AZ Stat	
	SDG 15.1.2 Proportion of specially protected nature areas in the total territory of the country	10.3% (2023)	15% ⁵⁰	SDG AZ Stat	
	15.3.1 Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area	12.9% (2022)	Below 8% ⁵¹	SDG AZ Stat	

49. Since 2015, values have fluctuated between 9 and 18.5, averaging ~13.8.

50. [The Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#) sets a global ambition to conserve at least 30 % of land and water areas by 2030. Many peer countries aim for around 17–30 % coverage by 2030.

51. Brings the country below the 2015 baseline of 9.6%.

Results	Performance Indicators	Baseline (year)	Target	Source/ MoV	Assumption Statement
	SDG 6.5.1 Level of application of integrated water resources management, in percentage	55.0% (2023)	65% (Azerbaijan Water Strategy)	SDG AZ Stat	
Output 2.1 National policies and capacities are enhanced to strengthen data driven preparedness, response and resilience to climate- and environmental-related risks and hazards across key sectors	GOIF 15.3 Number of hectares (ha) of degraded forest under a) Rehabilitation; b) Restoration, supported by the UN	0 (FAO) (2025)	50 ha (FAO)	FAO MoV: Project implementation reports, field monitoring, photographic evidence, satellite imagery	Availability of innovative tools and methodologies to collect and analyse data, including GIS mapping, will allow national institutions to better monitor climate impact and plan accordingly. Supporting the national reporting to relevant international conventions will also facilitate such processes and provide reference to international good practices. Financing strategies, as well as capacities to access global funds, fund raising activities as well as advocacy for broader investments, will lead to expanding funding and ability to access the needed technology for a green transition. Equipping systems and workforce to maintain essential social services during emergencies, preparing proper contingency plans and adopting effective early warning system will reduce the impact of natural/climate hazards.

Results	Performance Indicators	Baseline (year)	Target	Source/ MoV	Assumption Statement
	GOIF Inventory Indicator 1.5.4_3. Number of people that are covered by new early warning information through local governments or through national dissemination mechanisms, supported by the UN, in line with Sendai Framework ⁵² (Disaggregate by sex, age, disability, urban/rural, and others)	0 (2025)	4,5 ml	UN-Habitat, UNEP MoV: early warning system coverage reports, community survey data, disaggregated beneficiary lists	
	GOIF Inventory Indicator 1.5.3_1 National and subnational authorities (bilateral, multilateral, and local) that have developed sound environmental data, statistics, scientific assessments and early warning systems (EWS), with UN support	0 (FAO) (2025)	2 (FAO)	FAO MoV: Environmental data systems documentation, reports,	
Output 2.2 Capacities at national, regional and local levels are enhanced to support just transition, equitable access to and sustainable ecosystem management, based on climate resilience and circular economy principles	GOIF 13.1 Extent that policy measures are in place to enable the enhancement and/or implementation of NDCs under the Paris Agreement with UN's support Scale 0 = Not in place, 1 = Work started, 2 = Work in progress, 3 = Work almost complete, 4 = In place	2 (work in progress) (2025)	4 (in place)	FAO UNEP, IOM, UN-Habitat, MoV: Policy documents, implementation reports	Capacities will be strengthened and also innovative solutions piloted (with the assumption that they will be scaled up at the national level to have a meaningful contribution to this outcome) in various sectors, including climate smart agriculture, water efficiency, renewable energy, energy efficiency, e-mobility, biodiversity conservation, sustainable production, and waste management

52. The GCF project that UNEP will implement in Azerbaijan will set up a whole new system of early warning. The project is about building physical capacity in terms of monitoring equipment which would help improve the wellbeing and disaster risk preparedness of the population at large.

Results	Performance Indicators	Baseline (year)	Target	Source/ MoV	Assumption Statement
	GOIF 15.1 Number of entities at the national level that have developed integrated approaches and tools for enhanced coordination, cooperation, and synergies for the coherent implementation of MEAs, supported by the UN	0 (FAO) (2025)	2 (FAO)	FAO UNECE MoV: Project reports, coordination meeting minutes	
	GOIF 15.2 Area of terrestrial and marine protected areas created or under improved management practices (hectares), supported by the UN	0 (FAO) 783 ha (UNOPS) (2025)	137,530 ha (FAO) (of terrestrial protected areas, covering Shirvan, Hirkan, and Zangazur National Parks) 50,783 ha (UNOPS) (of marine protected area Absheron National Park)	FAO UNOPS MoV: Protected area records, site-specific assessments, project reports	

Results	Performance Indicators	Baseline (year)	Target	Source/ MoV	Assumption Statement
	GOIF Inventory Indicator 3.9.2_3 Degree of integrated water resource management implementation, with UN support ⁵³ (Scale 1-100)	47/100 (2025)	70/100	UNECE, UN-Habitat, UNEP, FAO MoV: programme monitoring reports, assessment reports, progress reviews, stakeholder consultations and feedback	
	GOIF Inventory Indicator 6.1.1_3 Number of people reached with at least basic drinking water services that are safe and available when needed with UN support (Disaggregate by sex, age, disability, urban/rural, and others)	0 (IOM) (2025)	9,632 (IOM)	IOM MoV: Service delivery records, community beneficiary lists, project monitoring reports	

53. This corresponds to Azerbaijan's IWRM implementation score as measured under the global SDG indicator 6.5.1 framework. UNEP will support the improvements in water governance, coordination and data availability to help achieve this target.

Results	Performance Indicators	Baseline (year)	Target	Source/ MoV	Assumption Statement
	GOIF Inventory Indicator 2.4.1_3 Areas of land (ha) brought under climate-resilient management, with UN support	0 (2025)	2,900 ha (FAO)	FAO MoV: Project implementation reports, field verification reports	
Output 2.3 Individuals and communities have acquired essential knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes for environmental management and climate action	GOIF 12.3 Number of people directly benefitting from initiatives, with UN's support, to protect nature and promote sustainable use of resources (Disaggregated by sex, age, disability, urban/rural, and others)	0 (FAO) 0 (UN Women) (2025)	250 (at least 30% women) (FAO) 50 (at least 80% women) (UN Women)	FAO UN Women MoV: Project reports, activity documentation, participant lists, beneficiary feedback	Mainstreaming climate at all levels of formal, informal, and non-formal education and learning, curricula, carrying out awareness raising campaigns, but also by supporting the government's leadership in hosting regional and international events that will continue to place climate change on the forefront of the national agenda, will foster behavioural change towards CC adaptation and mitigation.
	GOIF Inventory Indicator 12.a.1_1 Number of sector-specific training programmes offered by state institutions on natural resources management (including climate change adaptation, biodiversity conservation, chemicals management, renewables, Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and emergency response preparedness), with UN support	0 (IOM) 0 (FAO) (2025)	1 (IOM) 3 (FAO)	IOM FAO MoV: Training programme reports, participant lists, evaluation forms, institutional training records	

Annex 2: Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan

Description of Activities	Objective	Frequency	Lead	Contributors/ Support	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Data and Research									
CCA update: update data and analysis (including SDG-related data) and assess changes in the national context	To ensure the UN Cooperation Framework and related programming remain relevant and responsive to evolving national priorities and development needs	Annual	RCO	CCA Taskforce	•	•	•	•	•
VNRs: support Azerbaijan's assessment of its progress towards the SDGs	To contribute to an evidence-based review of national SDG implementation and support informed reporting to global platforms.	When/if planned	RCO	MEG	◦	◦	◦	◦	◦
Data Collection: support government and national counterparts in strengthening data collection and analysis processes across thematic sectors	To enhance the availability of accurate, timely, and relevant data for evidence-based policymaking, planning, and sustainable development.	As needed	Relevant UN System Organizations	RCO	•	•	•	•	•
Research and Assessments: conduct studies, and diagnostics to generate evidence for informed decision-making and strategic planning (including the SDG Dialogue Policy Briefs)	To generate robust evidence and data to guide strategic planning, inform policy dialogue, and support effective implementation of the CF	As needed	Relevant UN System Organizations	RCO	•	•	•	•	•

Planning and Monitoring					
Development, Update, and Quality Assurance of JWPs: prepare, update, and review JWPs to translate the CF into actions, ensure quality monitoring, and foster collaboration	To operationalize the CF, promote joint planning, and maintain quality standards for results monitoring	Annual	RGs	MEG, RCO, Thematic groups	• • • • •
Monitoring and Reporting in the JWP on UNINFO: collect, update, and report UN System Organization-specific and joint results on UNINFO	To ensure consistent tracking, coherent monitoring, and transparent reporting of JWP progress through indicators, sub-outputs, outputs, and financial data. To improve UNCT coherence, transparency, and accountability.	Annual and continuous	MEG	Result Groups, RCO	• • • • •
Review and Reporting					
Annual Review: review achievements per outcome area to inform UN annual results reporting and identify areas for improvement	To ensure systematic tracking of progress and strengthen evidence-based reporting	Annual	RGs	MEG, Thematic Groups, RCO	• • • • •
Development of UN Annual Results Report: report annually on system-wide results achieved under the CF, reflecting progress, challenges, and lessons learned and propose amendments if any	To ensure transparent reporting on UNCT's collective contributions to CF results	Annual	UNCT	RGs, MEG, Thematic Groups, RCO	• • • • •

Joint UN-Government Steering Committee meeting: review and endorse the CF results and new JWPs, and any amendments to the CF and/or workplans	To ensure shared accountability, strengthen partnerships, and adapt the Cooperation Framework based on performance evidence	Annual	JSC	UNCT, RGs, MEG, Thematic Groups, RCO	•	•	•	•	•
Independent evaluation of UN System Organization projects and programmes (including Joint Programmes): assess effectiveness of interventions, generate lessons learned and recommendations, raise accountability to inform next generation of projects/programmes	To track progress, improve effectiveness, and foster accountability	Programme/Project cycles	Independent evaluation teams	UN entities, MEG, RCO	○	○	○	○	○
Independent evaluation of the CF: commission an independent evaluation of the CF to assess collective UN impact, ensure accountability, and gather insights for the next cycle	To enhance system-wide accountability and inform the design of the next CF with evidence and lessons learned	Penultimate year of the CF	Independent evaluation team	RCO, RGs, MEG, Evaluation Steering Committee, Evaluation Technical Group, Evaluation Manager, DCO Evaluation Team				•	

Independent Evaluation of UN System Organizations' country programming instruments: evaluate agencies' country programmes to assess their individual and collective contributions to national development and CF outcomes	To ensure UN System Organization-level accountability and capture lessons to enhance contributions to Cooperation Framework results	Penultimate year of the country programming instruments	Independent evaluation teams	UN System Organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o o o o o
Learning					
Management Response and Action Plan to CF Evaluation: Develop and implement a management response and action plan to address the recommendations from the CF evaluation	To ensure follow-up and implementation of CF evaluation's recommendations	Post CF Evaluation	Evaluation Steering Committee, Evaluation Technical Group, Evaluation Manager	RCO, RGs, MEG, DCO Evaluation Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Training/refresher on UNINFO: conduct technical training/refresher sessions to build capacity on UNINFO planning and reporting requirements and methodologies, including on Gender Equality Marker (and other markers)	To ensure accurate, timely, and standardized reporting on UNINFO	Annual and/or as needed	RCO	MEG, GTG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • •

Annex 3: Legal Annex

Whereas the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan (the “Government”) has entered into the agreements listed below with the United Nations, including its Funds, Programmes and other subsidiary organs, and other organizations of the United Nations system (“UN System Organizations”), which are applicable to their programme activities in the Republic of Azerbaijan (the “UN Agreements”) under the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (the “Cooperation Framework”);

Whereas the UN Agreements, together with the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations of 13 February 1946 (the “General Convention”) and/or the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies of 21 November 1947 (the “Specialized Agencies Convention”) as applicable, form the primary existing legal basis for the relationship between the Government and each UN System Organization for supporting the country to deliver on the Cooperation Framework, and are non-exhaustive and without prejudice to any other legal instruments the Government may enter into, including additional agreements with UN System Organizations for the purpose of their activities in the country:

- a. With the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), an Agreement for the establishment of an FAO Partnership and Liaison Office and Provision of Technical Assistance concluded between the Government and FAO on 25 May 2015.
- b. With the World Health Organization (WHO), a Basic Agreement concluded between the Government and WHO on 2 September 2003.
- c. With the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) that operates as a part of the OHCHR Regional Presence in the South Caucasus supporting the work of the OHCHR Regional Human Rights Advisor, deployed based on exchange of letters with the Member States in 2007, to provide technical assistance and advisory expertise in strengthening national capacities to promote and protect human rights, as well as to support and assist the UN Resident Coordinators and members of the UN Country Teams in the South Caucasus.
- d. With the International Organization for Migration (IOM), a Cooperation Agreement signed between the Government and IOM on 8 December 1999.
- e. With the International Labour Organization (ILO), a Cooperation Agreement signed between the Government and ILO on 3 July 1993.
- f. For all other UN System Organizations, including but not limited to the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and other non-resident UN System Organizations, assistance to the Government shall be made available subject to the availability of funds and shall be furnished and received in

accordance with the relevant and applicable resolutions and decision of the competent UN System Organization's governance structures.

With respect to all UN System Organizations: Assistance to the Government shall be made available and shall be furnished and received in accordance with the relevant and applicable resolutions, decisions, rules and procedures of each UN System Organization.

Without prejudice to the above, the Government shall: (i) apply to each UN System Organization and its property, funds, assets, officials and experts on mission the provisions of the General Convention and/or the Specialized Agencies Convention; and (ii) accord to each UN System Organization, its officials and other persons performing services on behalf of that UN System Organization, the privileges, immunities and facilities set out in the UN Agreement applicable to such UN System Organization.

United Nations Volunteers performing services on behalf of a UN System Organization shall be entitled to the privileges and immunities accorded to officials of such UN System Organization.

Any privileges, immunities and facilities granted to a UN System Organization under the Cooperation Framework shall be no less favourable than those granted by the Government to any other UN System Organization signatory of the Cooperation Framework.

Without prejudice to the UN Agreements, the Government shall be responsible for dealing with any claims which may be brought by third parties against any of the UN System Organizations and their officials, experts on mission or other persons performing services on their behalf, and shall hold them harmless in respect of any claims and liabilities resulting from operations under the Cooperation Framework, except where it is mutually agreed by the Government and the relevant UN System Organization(s) that such claims and liabilities arise from gross negligence or misconduct of that UN System Organization, or its officials, or persons performing services.

Nothing in or relating to this Cooperation Framework shall be deemed: (i) a waiver, express or implied, of the privileges and immunities of any UN System Organization; or (ii) the acceptance by any UN System Organization of the jurisdiction of the courts of any country over disputes arising from this Cooperation Framework, whether under the General Convention or the Specialized Agencies Convention, the UN Agreements, or otherwise, and no provisions of this Cooperation Framework shall be interpreted or applied in a manner, or to an extent, that is inconsistent with such privileges and immunities.

