



UNITED NATIONS AND GOVERNMENT OF AZERBAIJAN

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
COOPERATION FRAMEWORK
2021 - 2025

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ACRONYMS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CCA	Common Country Analysis
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CGAP	Consultative Group to Assist the Poor
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDI	Human Development Index
HRBA	Human Rights - Based Approach
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labor Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOM	International Organization for Migration
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MENR	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MIA	Ministry of the Internal Affairs
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoE	Ministry of Economy
MoEn	Ministry of Energy
MoES	Ministry of Emergency Situations
MoH	Ministry of Health
MTCHT	Ministry of Transport, Communications and High Technologies
MTR	Mid - Term Review
NCCSD	National Coordination Council for Sustainable Development
NCD	Non - Communicable Disease
NGO	Non - governmental organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR	United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PES	Payment for Ecosystem Services
PMT	Program Management Team
QCPR	Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review
RBM	Results - Based Management
SBM	School-Based Management
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNAPF	UN - Azerbaijan Partnership Framework
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlement Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Program
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

FOREWORD



On behalf of the Government of Azerbaijan and the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Azerbaijan, we are pleased to present the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). The UNSDCF is aligned with Government strategic development priorities over the period 2021-2025 and is directly linked to the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and its targets in support of the 2030 Agenda.

The UNSDCF was formulated through a well-articulated roadmap and an inclusive and participatory process led by the Minister of Economy and the United Nations Resident Coordinator. The process began with the evaluation of the previous UN-Azerbaijan Partnership Framework (UNAPF) 2016-2020 and a UN-led Common Country Analysis (CCA), which also assessed Azerbaijan's progress towards the SDGs and other international commitments. This culminated in the convening of the Government and United Nations Strategic Prioritization Workshop (SPW) in Baku in January 2020, which was attended by UN resident and non-resident entities, Government, civil society, private sector, academia, and international development partners. The consultations focused on identifying the comparative advantages of the United Nations Country

Team and selecting high priority areas and outcomes. Informed by the results of the UNAPF (2016-2020) Evaluation, the CCA, and building on several baselines, including Azerbaijan's human rights commitments and the nationalized SDG targets, this development strategy was born.

The cornerstone of this strategy is an investment in people, in durable solutions, and in institutions that are responsive to the needs of the most vulnerable in society. Leaving no one behind and deploying a rights-based approach to development are the founding tenets of the approach adopted, and this speaks to our commitment to further an agenda fundamentally grounded in developing human capital. Moreover, in addition to investing in inclusive growth and improved public sector service delivery, the UNSDCF has made what is often seen as cross-cutting issues central to this investment offering; gender equality, protecting the environment, and addressing climate change. Given Azerbaijan's need to diversify its economy, only a truly equitable process that unleashes human potential will allow the economic transition to be completed. Moreover, as climate change and environmental threats risk undermining our ecosystem and affecting the very fabric of society, climate and environmental protection remain central to the UNSDCF ethos.

Investment in gender equality, inclusive growth, quality education, public health, and justice systems, and in protecting our environment and accelerating human capital development are the primary vehicles for addressing the constraints identified by the Common Country Analysis. Underpinning this framework are robust baselines rooted in Azerbaijan's international commitments under treaties to which the country has acceded. These baselines will help measure progress in delivering outputs and outcomes, supported by a monitoring and evaluation system that includes an impact assessment.

In the coming five years, the UN system will cooperate closely with the Government and other actors to accelerate transformation, so that socio-economic and health-related shocks are managed and mitigated. In this regard, the ongoing macro-economic, health, and socio-economic assessment directly addressing the COVID-19 pandemic provides an important reference point for the UNSDCF.

As this is the fifth cooperation framework produced by the UN system in Azerbaijan, many of the key lessons learned from prior programming and execution exercises have been incorporated herein. Of note is working as One UN family around a programmatic approach, bearing down on fewer priorities, and focusing on practical solutions in areas where the UN has undisputed comparative advantages. Moreover, implementation of the Cooperation Framework will be guided by the UN development system reform premised in the UN system joined up and integrated programming and adopting full accountability and transparency in delivering development results.

The Government and the United Nations in Azerbaijan hereby act together and in partnership with all national and international stakeholders, who are committed to promoting sustainable human development in Azerbaijan, in the region and globally, and who stand ready to continue to further promote ownership, inclusiveness, accountability, and transparency. This framework provides an important opportunity to right-finance the future, and in laying the foundation for the remaining five years up until 2030.

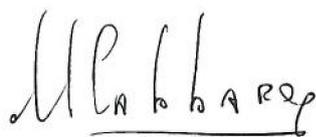
We remain committed to guaranteeing that the UNSDCF will not only contribute towards building new sustainable development partnerships, it will also harness the greater potential of human capital as a springboard of future socio-economic gains, and an engine of ingenuity. Once attained, these outcomes will promote Azerbaijan's quest for a more inclusive and equitable society that can equally contribute to national, regional, and global prosperity.

SIGNATURE PAGE

The United Nations – Azerbaijan Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for 2021-2025 has been prepared based on extensive and inclusive consultations with the Government, development partners and other counterparts of the United Nations Development System in Azerbaijan, including non-resident entities.

By signing hereunder, the participating parties endorse the UNSDCF.

Government of Azerbaijan



Mikayil Jabbarov

Minister of Economy
of the Republic of Azerbaijan

United Nations Country Team



Ghulam M. Isaczai

UN Resident Coordinator
in the Republic of Azerbaijan

The undersigned UN entities express their joint commitment to the priorities and cooperation results of this United Nations-Azerbaijan Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for the period of 2021-2025.



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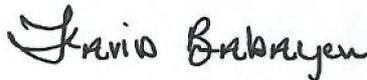
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) constitutes the most important instrument for planning and implementation of UN development activities in Azerbaijan in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda).

The UNSDCF sets the strategic vision and direction for cooperation between the Government of Azerbaijan and the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) for the period of 2021-2025. It is the result of a consultative process between the Government, the UNCT and its national and international partners. In the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the UNSDCF considers how

to leverage the comparative advantages of the United Nations System to best support national priorities and align UN activities with the country's strategic outlook. The UNSDCF also serves as an important reference point for all UNCT partners, providing a clear description of priority areas of engagement, respective theories of change, and expected outcomes as a result of the UN system engagement.

In the context of current challenges to development planning - including the emergence of COVID-19 as a major global threat and recovery needs in de-occupied territories that the Republic of Azerbaijan plans to rehabilitate - the UNSDCF is deliberately forward-looking.

Moving beyond Vision 2020, which guided the work of the UN-Azerbaijan Partnership Framework (UNAPF) (2016-2020), the UNSDCF has been formulated closely with Government and partners to align with and contribute toward the emerging 2030 national vision for the economy and the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. It defines the role of the UN system in meeting target SDGs and introduces new ways of working in line with the shift from funding to financing. Most importantly, it acts on the results of the CCA, which emphasizes the need to ensure development cooperation strengthens resilience to economic shocks by protecting the most vulnerable in society and by fulfilling their human rights. As such, the UNSDCF proposes a roadmap to ensure that Azerbaijan stays on track for the 2030 Agenda, using a human-centric rather than sector-oriented approach.

This approach represents a fundamental shift in the way the UN system – both resident agencies and those with no physical presence – engages with government and national partners. Given the ambition of the 2030 Agenda and the urgency of its timeline, the UNSDCF establishes a much-needed focus, bearing down on fewer priorities that can maximize the UN's impact. It guides the entire programme cycle as well as drives future planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation of collective UN support for achieving the 2030 Agenda. It both determines and reflects the UN system's contributions, while also shaping the configuration of UN assets required to meet four strategic priority areas, established as follows:



Across these priority areas, Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) and the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) remain a centerpiece. The aim is to empower those who are being left behind, or those at risk of being left behind, and to enact inclusive and progressive SDG policies. The framework directly targets and operationalizes LNOB and HRBA by identifying who and why individuals and groups are discriminated against, based on CCA analyses of geospatial disadvantage, socioeconomic status, governance outreach, and vulnerability to shocks. Considering the long-term fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic and the devastating consequences of the conflict in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan, further emphasis on resilience and the development of improved service delivery models are adopted, such as stronger frontline services, digitization, and a switch from curative to preventive care.

Given the importance of maintaining stable macroeconomic growth as the country recovers from these setbacks, the Government is committed to diversifying away from oil dependency to sectors including e-governance, telecommunications, and the agribusiness industry, and therefore sees the private sector as the future engine of growth. The UNCT supports the diversification agenda but is aware that delivering inclusive growth requires policy innovation and a deep understanding of why public sector policies and market forces may not fully support individuals and groups that have been marginalized.

Priority area one focuses on strengthening the inclusive growth agenda to reduce vulnerability and build more resilient markets, communities, and households. By 2025, people furthest behind will participate in

and benefit from a diverse and innovative economy encompassing future-oriented labor market transformation and access to decent work. The aim here is to advance equitable opportunities for economic participation and realization of the right to work, a process that will yield benefits for every section of society. Investment in this priority area includes linkages with the macroeconomic and microeconomic determinants of growth, implying a focus on micro, small to medium enterprises (MSMEs) across agricultural and other value chains, as well as improving conditions for equitable labor markets.

Priority area two aims to support the Government in building stronger institutions for public and social services delivery, including in the areas of education, health, and access to information and justice. By 2025, people furthest behind will benefit from enhanced national capacities and governance structures, strengthening both access and quality of services in those areas. Using Azerbaijan's international human rights commitments as a baseline, pathways are explored to enable a policy shift that improves frontline services, removes spatial (urban/rural) and gender inequalities, supports digitization, promotes decentralized service delivery, and engages civil society. To ensure that these policy changes are backed up by evidence that no one has been excluded, this priority area stresses the need to increase national capacity to identify and target the most vulnerable in society. Thus, by 2025, quality, disaggregated and timely data will be available and used to inform decision-making and policies that leave no one behind.

Priority area three promotes an environmentally conscious economic recovery, recognizing that energy transition is seen as a tool to balance energy security, economic development, and environmental protection.

As the impact of climate change on water resources becomes more pronounced, the protection of the environment, especially water resources, the improvement of drinking water supply, and the sustainability of wastewater management are key considerations in the areas of food and health. Before the onset of COVID-19 and the escalation of hostilities in 2020, environmental pollution and the impact of climate change already had a profound effect on water, energy, food, and health domains, undermining sustainability and increasing vulnerability to shocks. Using these crises as an opportunity to ensure Azerbaijan meets its climate action goals, a green route to recovery and to building back better that benefits people who are most exposed to the adverse effects of climate change is proposed. The long-term goal is to increase the share of renewable energy in installed electricity capacity to 30 percent before 2030. In the medium term, all people, particularly those left furthest behind, will have benefited by 2025 from climate strategies and environment protection policies that ensure natural resources are sustainably managed, livelihoods are protected, and resilience is strengthened.

Priority area four invests towards a gender-equitable society that empowers women and girls across political, economic and social domains. Although a gender lens applies to all priority areas, the UNSDCF suggests that concrete changes in policy and practice must be sought to address the root causes of inequality and promote the full participation of women and girls in decisions affecting their lives. Efforts must also be made to ensure that the elimination of gender-based violence is recognized as a prerequisite for achieving the full range of SDGs, as it influences the underlying attitudes, decisions and practices towards sustainable development. By 2025, women and girls will benefit from enhanced national mechanisms that ensure they are protected from discrimination and violence

and empowered to participate in all spheres of life.

In achieving these priority outcomes, and in line with the United Nations primary mandate of capacity development, all priority areas require prerequisites including (i) investment in evidence-based government decision-making (ii) more accountable public policy dialogue (iii) accelerated investment in frontline services (iv) improved outreach to the private sector (v) integrated national financing frameworks to support national development strategies (vi) digitization and automation to improve access and efficiency and (vii) efforts to secure social inclusion, including through intercultural dialogue, with a focus on women, youth, persons with disabilities, and those who have been internally displaced by conflict.

The 'Delivering as One UN' commitment remains the cornerstone of this framework, from which an empowered RC and UNCT will leverage new ways of working, fully in line with national innovation and adaptation strategies. The people-centric approach ensures that results and performance indicators are neither agency- nor mandate-specific, but instead collective achievements that increase human welfare and create economies of scale. Results are also formulated with a view to empowering these groups with social and economic tools that help them better cope with times when conflict may grow in severity. UNCT members will therefore collaborate programmatically to provide efficient support through joint programming and enhanced inter-agency cooperation. In anticipation of future economic shocks induced by pandemics or other extraordinary events, the strategy also aims to deliver value-for-money investments and best practice models, allowing Azerbaijan not just to bounce back from the 2020 fiscal crisis, but rather to bounce forward by seeing new opportunities for reform emerging from the crisis.

DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT

In support of inclusive, equitable and sustainable development in the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Government and the United Nations Country Team pledge to work closely together to support the fulfillment of the Sustainable Development Goals. To attain the five outcomes in the four priority areas, the parties to this framework will collaborate with national counterparts, international development partners, civil society, the private sector, international financial institutions, academic institutions, and other stakeholders. All UN activities, programmes and projects in all districts and areas of the Republic of Azerbaijan, under this framework, will be fully coordinated, agreed and implemented by the offices of the UN system in Azerbaijan 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 within its internationally-recognized borders and in accordance with the UN Charter and all relevant UN Security Council and General Assembly resolutions.

The parties embrace a closer relationship in support of meeting national priorities, to include accelerating new ways of working, increasing the coherence and evidence around programming, and improving the tracking of results through national and independent monitoring and evaluation systems. Our commitment to leaving no one behind drives the fundamental ethos in which support is to be considered and targeted, given the need to deliver inclusive growth and equitable access. Improving the quality of life of all people, including the many vulnerable groups, refugees and IDPs, girls and boys, women and men as well as the underlying ecosystem that promotes life, are central to this framework. As the SDGs are both ambitious and cross-

cutting with a much broader scope, and given the Addis Ababa Action Agenda calling for a comprehensive approach to financing the 2030 Agenda, the transition from funding to financing is made central to the new way of working. UNCT commits to operating around a coherent, integrated, efficient, effective, accountable, transparent, and results-oriented approach, to play its role in fulfilling the 2030 global agenda in Azerbaijan.

The parties to this agreement agree to put in place adequate and predictable financing to realize the 2025 outcome targets, implying a focus on traditional and innovative approaches to diversify the resource mobilization base. As a result, the costing for the priority areas will include public and private funding streams and involve a large range of potential anchor investors; such as the Government, international financial institutions, institutional investors, philanthropic organizations, and private capital. We will be guided by international partnership agreements and laws, including the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation and the UN Global Compact. We will also respect and adhere to the principles and ideals of the United Nations, including those embodied in the global United Nations Reform Agenda, supporting the strengthening of the organization's ability to effectively and efficiently deliver results to those most in need, do deliver more with less and to increase its flexibility and accountability.



CHAPTER 1:
COUNTRY PROGRESS
TOWARDS THE 2030 AGENDA

This document constitutes the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) between the United Nations and the Government of Azerbaijan for the period 2021-2025. It provides the foundation for deeper collaboration and increased effectiveness of the United Nations specialized agencies, with a direct focus on meeting the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, protecting human rights, and leaving no one behind. It also takes explicit action to accompany the Government's efforts to curb inequalities, as well as confront discrimination and fast-track progress for the furthest behind.

The framework comes at a pivotal time when the Government is about to embark on a new national development cycle - envisioned towards 2030 - while also addressing the socioeconomic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic and the devastating consequences of the conflict in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The framework thus focuses on key national priorities and challenges to achieving the SDGs in this turbulent context. It does so by using a synthesis of the guidance and insights of various UN development, human rights, humanitarian, peace, and security actors. The prioritization of actions and theory of change were shaped by evidence generated through the Common Country Analysis (CCA), with strategic priorities being established at the national Strategic Prioritization Workshop (SPW) held in Baku on January 16th and 17th 2020. This process helped define priorities, challenges and gaps in the achievement of the SDGs. The framework addresses those gaps by bringing together the comparative advantages of all United Nations entities, the Government of Azerbaijan, development finance institutions, institutional investors, the private sector, and civil society.

Even though Azerbaijan is expected to make considerable progress towards attaining the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), development challenges remain.

These include reliance on petroleum for fiscal resource and exports; ongoing gender, socioeconomic and spatial disparities between regions and urban and rural communities; challenges to access quality services in agriculture, education, health, and justice; demographic and labor market challenges; and environmental and conservation threats. With the coming decade filled with hope and uncertainty in equal measure, the Cooperation Framework presents both evidence and assumptions, while also outlining the risk management and monitoring and evaluation routines necessary to tip the balance in favor of positive outcomes.

In this context, and to support a move away from business-as-usual, the UN Country Team is promoting more collaborative ways of working alongside new development finance modalities, including public-private partnerships. Currently, the largest contributor to SDGs financing is the Government, which ensures 56 percent of available financing for the SDGs while 38 percent come from foreign direct investment and the private sector.¹ In addition to the Government budget, the SDGs are indirectly supported by the State Oil Company of the Republic of Azerbaijan (SOCAR) through their commitment to proactively promote an environmental agenda. Over the past years, the Government has taken several steps to modernize traditional sectors, embrace green growth, and improve the resilience of public finance. Thus, country-owned financing frameworks encompassing different financing sources and non-financial means will be encouraged in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. A move away from grant-based financing towards adopting a Funding to Financing (F2F) approach is also embraced, as it will help avoid short-term thinking and lead to far stronger alliances with the private sector.

¹ <https://www.slideshare.net/undpeuropeandcis/drr-workshop-session-61-ben-slay>

1.1 Country Context

Azerbaijan is a politically stable unitary state with a citizenry of around 10 million, growing approximately 100,000 each year. It is an upper Middle-Income Country with a US\$ 4,742 per capita GDP income and an HDI that ranks it 88th globally. Despite the collapse in global oil prices in 2020, Azerbaijan's economy remains heavily dependent on oil revenues, and the Government is committed to diversifying revenues while improving the efficiency of public spending. The 2020 economic lockdown resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic undermined growth, reduced fiscal resources, increased levels of unemployment, and disrupted essential public and social services. Meanwhile, containment measures introduced by the Government and fear of contagion weakened consumer demand, particularly in tourism, hospitality, and retail sectors. In April 2020 Government expenditure increases of up to US\$ 2 billion (more than 3 percent of GDP) were announced to support wages for 304,000 hired workers, provide financial assistance for 292,000 micro-businesses and implement a range of emergency cash transfers. A second phase of the programme to support the population and entrepreneurs was launched in August 2020, covering about 234,000 employees and announcing 52 million manats in payment for 23,000 taxpayers. Besides, one-time financial support of 12.5 million manats was provided to about 50,000 individual (micro) entrepreneurs.

Despite efforts to improve social outcomes, inequalities persist, and women, youth, children, persons with disabilities, elderly persons, refugees, displaced communities, informal workers and rural populations remain the furthest left behind in access to some social services. For instance, the Gender Inequality Index was relatively high at 0.323 in 2019, and women's representation in parliament is weak

at 16.8 percent.² As the Common Country Analysis shows, these inequalities risk being exacerbated as the country addresses the long-term consequences of the COVID-19 crisis. For example, lockdown periods make refugees struggle to access food and daily necessities. Workers in the informal sector are far more exposed to the permanent loss of livelihood than those in regular jobs. Gender-based violence is a major concern, with an increased risk for women and girls to lose access to safe counseling services while in confinement. In the most recent assessment to identify the different needs, capacities, and coping strategies of women and men, almost 10 percent of respondents stated that there was an increase in the prevalence rates of domestic violence against women during the lockdown. The findings further indicate that restrictive measures also increased the burden of unpaid household work on women.³

The Government has closely cooperated with the UNCT members, led by WHO, since the onset of the crisis, including through the exchange of expertise and the assessment of COVID-19 assigned laboratories. This helped ensure quick and effective measures – such as border controls, restrictions on movement, and the designation of hospitals for the treatment of COVID-19 patients – were in place to contain further transmissions. At the same time, efforts have been deployed to ensure the continuation of essential health services, triage of health facilities, and to prevent the indirect health impact of the crisis on the management of other illnesses. Advocacy and technical support actions will ensure the continuation of essential health services and the management of the long-term public health impact of the pandemic.

² Human Development Report 2020 http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/AZE.pdf

³ <https://azerbaijan.unfpa.org/en/publications/rapid-gender-assessment-impact-covid-19-lives-women-and-men-azerbaijan> , UN Women/UNFPA Azerbaijan (2020)

The COVID-19 pandemic has severely disrupted the education system. For most of 2020, all schools, from pre-primary to higher education establishments, were closed. The Ministry of Education set up several initiatives in cooperation with UN agencies and other development partners to ensure the continuity and sustainability of education. These included TV lessons at the level of general education, the launch of Virtual School, the country's largest national online platform, provision of online vocational education, and free access to the MS Teams platform in higher education. These efforts allowed the majority of students to continue their education in different formats. However, the digital divide has reduced the effectiveness of learning for the students without access to technology. Throughout 2020, weekly monitoring of children's access to education showed that no more than 70 percent of the households surveyed had regular access to distance education.

In the field of environmental protection, Azerbaijan has done significant work over the past few years. Nevertheless, integrated action is required to maintain the ecological balance. While there was a temporary reduction in air pollution in major cities during the quarantine periods, mitigation measures enabled industrial pollution to continue. As a result of reduced water flow in the Volga River, the level of the Caspian Sea has decreased, whereas pressure on fishing has increased. Most of Azerbaijan's water resources are formed outside the country, and climate change has led to water resources further declining in the past few years. The Government has initiated prompt actions for the effective management of water resources.

The Republic of Azerbaijan has also had to address the impact of the decades-long conflict in and around its Nagorno-Karabakh region, which has resulted in massive displacement and extensive damage. On 10 November 2020

a Statement was signed by the Leaders of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation, following which the Government declared its intention to rehabilitate and reconstruct conflict affected areas in and around Nagorno-Karabakh, in preparation for the return of over 652,000 IDPs.

Addressing the needs of these IDPs and providing pathways for sustained livelihoods and self-reliance is a key national priority. In the past, the Government of Azerbaijan put in place a comprehensive and well-resourced set of assistance programmes for IDPs. These included the adoption of 34 laws, 118 presidential decrees, and 416 decisions on the social protection of refugees and IDPs. Furthermore, the Government supported the local integration of 315,000 IDPs in 110 new settlements and promoted various investments to improve the living conditions and protection of these groups.

The UNCT will support Azerbaijan to assess recovery needs and conditions for the voluntary, safe and dignified return of displaced persons to their homes. In the short term, various humanitarian response activities already took place in coordination with the UN system to alleviate the sufferings of these communities. Emergency relief was provided in the areas of shelter, water and sanitation, primary healthcare, psycho-social support, and other vital interventions. The UNCT will continue supporting these national response efforts. It has also reviewed its development planning under this Cooperation Framework and in agency-specific programme documents to ensure that all actions will help support the socio-economic integration of IDPs among other vulnerable groups.

1.2. National Vision for Sustainable Development

Although the government's development concept Azerbaijan 2020: Vision for the Future concludes at the end of 2020, the Strategic Roadmap for the Prospects of the National Economy maintains relevance with its long-term outlook by 2025. The formulation of a new Vision 2030 is under consideration—an intention the Government has made in its 2nd Voluntary National Review report submitted at the High-Level Political Forum in 2019. The new vision is expected to drive SDG attainment

through a focus on diversifying the economy, raising output productivity, improving household/national resilience, improving service delivery, and expanding social and environmental protection. Addressing the large-scale effects of the conflict in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan and accelerating inclusive and resilient growth are also expected to remain central to the Government's 2030 Vision.

1.2.1 Azerbaijan 2020: Look into the Future Investment Priorities

The Government has come a long way in meeting its current Vision 2020 strategic priorities, listed below:

-  **Towards a highly competitive economy;**
-  **The improvement of the transport, transit, and logistic infrastructure;**
-  **The balanced development of regions;**
-  **The development of information and communication technologies and ensuring the transition to an information society;**
-  **The development of human capital and the establishment of an effective social security system and labor market institutions;**
-  **The improvement of legislation and strengthening of institutional potential;**
-  **The development of civil society;**
-  **The protection and effective management of cultural heritage; and,**
-  **Environmental protection and ecological issues.**

At the same time, the Strategic Roadmap for the Prospects of the National Economy – providing a strategy for 11 vital sectors – completed its first phase for 2016-2020 and is now transitioning into long-term outlook up to 2025, aiming to ensure macroeconomic stability, improve the business environment and promote private sector inflows. In 2020, a COVID-19 Action Plan was announced to support the population in dealing with the consequences of the crisis. The plan covered

4.8 million beneficiaries, with over 600,000 individuals qualifying for emergency help in the form of cash transfers. The plan also includes provisions to start rethinking the economic model, encourage private sector-led innovation, and stimulate the digital economy. Though a short-term response, the plan paves the ground for more strategic foresight on the ways in which people can be made resilient to potential economic shocks of this scale in the future.

1.2.2. Trends, Challenges, and Future Priorities

In the absence of a national development plan fully anchored in SDGs and a Vision 2030, and as part of the Cooperation Framework formulation, the UN Resident Coordinator's office and UNCT conducted consultations to determine national priorities. Meetings were held with the Office of the President, Office of the Prime Minister and Executive Ministries, the State Statistics Committee, and the State Committee for Family, Women and Children's Affairs, as well as civil society

leaders, heads of international development agencies and IFIs, scholars, and representatives of vulnerable communities. Through the consultation process, the Government counterparts identified the following strategic themes, around which UNCT prioritization must be aligned:

-  Economic diversification;
-  Private sector development;
-  Combating gender-based violence and discrimination;
-  Combating social exclusion;
-  Strengthening measures to eliminate violence against children and child labor;
-  Regional and global economic integration;
-  Mitigating spatial disparities among regions;
-  Strengthening early childhood and primary education, and technical and vocational education;
-  Strengthening social and employment services;
-  Strengthening primary health care provision, and preventive care;
-  Strengthening the justice system;
-  Strengthening agricultural extension outreach;
-  Boosting human capital and skills development;
-  Modernization and digitization of critical services;
-  Public Finance Management (PFM) reforms to improve state efficiency;
-  National tourism development;
-  Strong integration of the SDGs as key sector performance indicators linked to the budget;
-  Improved water management, environmental protection and climate adaptation and mitigation; and,
-  Strengthening evidence-based government through the development of national statistics.

With the appointment of a reform-oriented cabinet in late 2019, the appetite for accelerating change in these areas appears to have increased.⁴ Although on track to meet most Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), targets related to gender, education, healthcare, and the environment require greater attention. Linkages are also missing between the country's sustainable development agenda and its human rights commitments, including the recommendations it endorsed in its 2018 cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and the concluding observations of reviews by Treaty Bodies such as the ICCPR, the ICESCR, the CRC, and CEDAW.

As regards economic policy, diversification remains a primary strategic goal, and measures have been taken to reduce state monopolies that continue to crowd out the private sector and undermine the potential of MSMEs. Addressing the recovery needs following the conflict in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan also puts a strain on Government services and budget.

Within this context, this section assesses key national development priorities and needs, articulated in the Government strategy, and the extent to which they are linked to the SDGs.

Macroeconomy is Not Resilient

to Shocks: Azerbaijan is not only dealing with the aftermath of COVID-19 but also the fallout caused by the collapse in global oil prices in 2014, which led to a deep fiscal crisis, budget deficits, and currency devaluation. These, in turn, led to a spike in inflation, increased food prices and poverty rates, and contracted the financial sector, impacting business growth. The Government has taken several actions to strengthen macroeconomic and financial stability in the country, ensure their sustainability and implementation of coordinated policy in this area. In this regard, important decisions such as the establishment of the Financial Stability Board in 2016, the adoption of Strategic Roadmaps for the National Economy of the Republic of Azerbaijan, more prudent coordination of fiscal and monetary policy can be noted. As a result of the correction in oil prices, as well as the economic reforms listed above, economic growth rose again to 2.4 percent in the first half of 2019.

Despite these developments, wages have not kept pace with the cost of living. Thus, the Government has embarked on a large social protection programme – raising both minimum pensions and wages – at a considerable cost (12 percent of the annual budget).

The 2015 crisis created momentum for structural reforms, which saw the elimination of some duties and taxes for import-export

operations and the simplification of several licenses for businesses. Tax and customs authorities were also rendered more transparent. Consequently, Azerbaijan's ranking in Economic Freedom Index, developed by the Heritage Foundation, improved by 16 notches, making the country the 44th freest economy 186 nations surveyed. The country's position in many other global assessment indices (Doing Business, Global Competitiveness Index, among others) has also improved, reflecting the recent reforms. Despite this progress, major structural barriers prevent a shift toward a non-oil-based economy. Weak competition and monopolistic behavior in both real and financial sectors remain major impediments. Domestic financial systems are also dominated by a few commercial banks, with the largest three banks accounting for over 60 percent of the total asset base of the banking sector. The high collateral requirement for credit is another significant factor constraining access to credit for SMEs and smallholder farmers. Better access to finance and an improved business climate can provide an impetus to private sector growth, employment generation, and diversification. Currently, Azerbaijan remains vulnerable to oil prices, which in the first half of 2020 fell to their lowest in two decades, far below the US\$ 55 average established in the national budget. A move towards supporting a circular economy has never been more necessary.

⁴ It should be noted that this appetite remains focused on creating centers of excellence as opposed to wholesale machinery of government reforms including privatization, civil service reforms and decentralization.

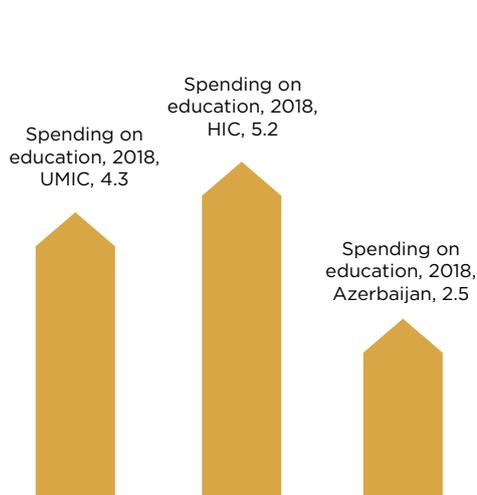
■ Lack of Human Capital:

It is difficult to diversify the economy and drive non-oil growth unless a quantum leap is achieved in human capital development. The National Strategy for the Development of Education in the Republic of Azerbaijan as well as the Strategic Roadmap for the Prospects of the National Economy of the Republic of Azerbaijan both recognize the need to invest in human capital. The country has made significant progress in setting up strategic targets such as “to improve general education and develop specialization” and “to improve the material and technological infrastructure to develop human capital”. Azerbaijan has also encouraged international cooperation, which helped import advanced technical expertise into certain sectors.

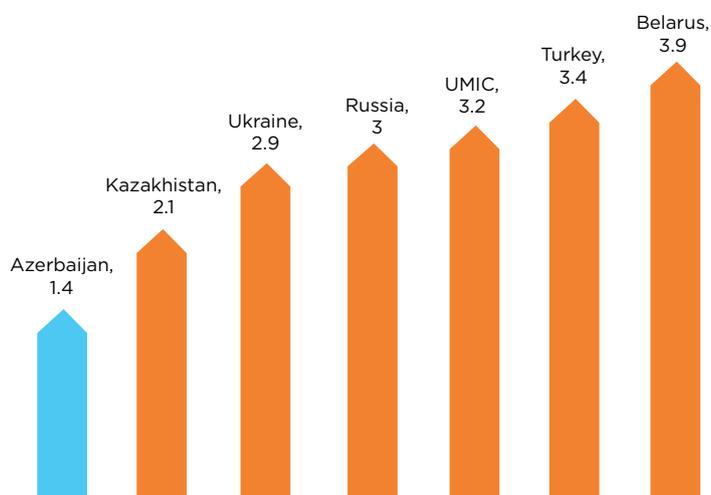
Skill shortages in the national workforce continue to undermine development. Despite increases in budget allocations in 2019 for education (up by 11.6 percent) and health care (by 23.1 percent), the overall sectoral expenditures remain low based on country comparators. On the Human Capital Index, Azerbaijan ranks 69th out of 157 countries. Globally, 56 percent of all

children born today will grow up to be, at best, half as productive as they could be; and 92 percent will grow up to be, at best, 75 percent as productive as they could be. A child born in Azerbaijan today will be 60 percent as productive when they grow up as they could be if they enjoyed complete education and full health.⁵ Lack of human capital was cited by the Government and the private sector as a primary driver of weak economic performance, requiring greater coordination between market needs and labor skills. Although the development of human capital is one of the main strategic goals in the Strategic Roadmap for the Prospects of the National Economy of the Republic of Azerbaijan, overall national strategies, including the strategic (sector) roadmaps, give lower priority to human capital, education, environment, and health sectors – essential ingredients to achieve the SDGs by 2030. Addressing these gaps, as well as enacting policy reforms that enhance the business climate, would attract private capital and foster innovation and transition to a knowledge-based economy.

**PUBLIC SPENDING ON EDUCATION,
PERCENT OF GDP (2018)**



**PUBLIC SPENDING ON HEALTH,
PERCENT OF GDP**



⁵ World Bank Human Capital Index, 2018: https://databank.worldbank.org/data/download/hci/HCI_2pager_AZE.pdf

Healthcare (SDG 3):

A strong healthcare system, currently free at the point of delivery, remains the cornerstone of sustainable development in Azerbaijan. The Ministry of Health (MoH) leads policy and regulatory oversight, acknowledging the impetus to a shift from curative to preventive care. This shift involves greater health promotion and disease prevention in a forward-looking model that the WHO can support and which is already being undertaken, such as through the recently established Food Safety Agency.⁶ In 2016, given rising out of pocket expenses, the Government established the State Agency for Mandatory Health Insurance (SAMHI) to provide citizens with better financial protection. In 2018, the Management Union of Medical Territorial Units in Azerbaijan (TABIB) was created to ensure the implementation of mandatory health insurance in the country. WHO continues supporting the shift to preventive care using a variety of awareness campaigns, training programmes, and digital tools such as online conferences and digital applications. It has expanded partnership in these areas to the MoH, the Centre for Public Health and Reforms, TABIB, and SAMHI, including the promotion of wider availability of primary healthcare. Major challenges in overhauling the system include low public spending on health in general (and on primary and mental health in particular), high infant and maternal mortality rates (despite a recent downward trend), and inadequate services in rural areas. Pressure on the national healthcare system during

the COVID-19 pandemic and hostilities in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan in 2020 highlighted an additional need to ensure that hospitals and medical staff are well equipped to deal with pandemic risks and reach the most vulnerable, including rural populations, IDPs, and older or disabled persons who are not able to leave their homes to seek treatment. The Government has taken a number of important steps – the construction of makeshift hospitals, the acquisition of new medical equipment, and cooperation with development partners in these areas, etc. – to address these issues in a short period.

⁶ The evidence for this is clear, particularly the rise in diabetes, hypertension, obesity and other non-communicable diseases (NCDs). The vision for NCD prevention is reflected in two strategic documents: The 2017-2021 Action Plan of the Ministry of Health, and the 2015-2020 National Strategy for the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases



Education (SDG 4):

The Government's Strategy for Development in Education (2013-2025) guarantees universal access and supports the principle of life-long learning. While primary and secondary enrollment rates remain high, the overall enrollment at the pre-school level (25 percent in 2014-2016) is relatively low. Pre-school learning has been a priority for the Ministry of Education. Working with UNICEF since 2016, the pre-school learning for 5-year-old children at the expense of the state budget in general education institutions has reached 80 percent in 2019 versus 24 percent in 2013. As a result of several measures, school readiness has been ensured in the settlements and remote villages that have historically lacked preschool education. For the 2020-2021

academic year, due to the pandemic, it was not possible to increase the school enrollment rate to 90 percent as a result of personal decisions of parents.

Pilot initiatives are also carried out to develop community-based early learning centers to increase access to early learning for children aged 3-4, with the aim to gradually achieve 50 percent pre-school coverage across all age groups of children within the coming three to five years. At the primary and secondary levels, challenges revolve around quality and distribution, as well as access for categories such as children with disabilities and adolescent girls.

Spatial disparities in quality have been accentuated by urbanization while human resource challenges remain present for the sector as a whole, with implications for standards. The digital divide that was visible during the COVID-19 crisis uncovered disparities between schools in urban and rural areas, particularly with increased demand for online teaching. Schooling was also severely disrupted for children who lived in displaced communities during the escalation in hostilities in 2020. Outdated school-based management systems require upgrading. Furthermore, given the role of vocational education in the country's economic development and its positive impact on the formation of human capital, special attention needs to be paid to this area.

Digital transformation (SDG 9):

In recent years, Information and communications technology (ICT) coverage has expanded in Azerbaijan. As of 2020, 3G covers over 97.6 percent and 4G covers 93.0 percent of the territory populated and 81.0 percent of the population uses the internet in Azerbaijan (as of early 2020). The biennial 2020 United Nations E-Government Survey ranks Azerbaijan 70th according to the E-Government Development Index, and 73rd according to the E-Participation Index among 193 countries. The Global Innovation Index 2019, developed by Cornell University, INSEAD, and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), ranks Azerbaijan 84th among 129 countries, based on results of the development of its innovation ecosystem. As regards target 9.5, the research and development (R&D) spending (percent of GDP) remains low in Azerbaijan at 0.2 percent. The Global Competitiveness Index puts Azerbaijan 19th among 141 countries in terms of the digital skills of population indicator. However, with the outbreak of COVID-19 and the shift to remote working

and studying, gaps in internet accessibility have been exposed, highlighting the scope for improved utilization of the ICT infrastructure in the country. Furthermore, the crisis has created an environment that could be tailored to accelerate cross-cutting effects on e-governance, digital economy, e-agriculture, e-healthcare, e-education, and other sectors. Likewise, implementation of the pilot project Smart City (2020-2021) in the near future will follow from the National Action Plan on the Promotion of Open Government for 2020-2022, approved by the Presidential Decree No. 1859 of 27 February 2020. It will accelerate the implementation of high-tech solutions and stimulate the application of innovative solutions in regions across Azerbaijan. It will also ensure the participation of the private sector together with the public sector and contribute to positive results in the socioeconomic sectors.

Agriculture (SDGs 2, 6, 15):

Agriculture remains a strong pillar of growth, and between 2013-2017 constituted some 5.6 percent of GDP and 36 percent of labor.⁷ Small landholders account for 80 percent of all production, and with comparative advantages in certain export products and the strong employment elasticity, lifting barriers to access finance and market, and investing in these MSMEs can substantially increase value addition across the sector. The agriculture sector will acquire added significance as a driver of economic growth in the regions. The Government is moving towards a policy of agriculture-led industrialization, with a particular focus on good governance, proximity to farmers, innovation and digitization (promoting e-agriculture concepts and smart villages), value chain development, and export promotion.

⁷ <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/institutional-document/510266/cps-aze-2019-2023.pdf>

The Ministry of Agriculture's long-term strategy is built around five pillars: building analytics, delivering solutions, driving knowledge and capacities, providing assistance, and enabling trading. Promoting women's representation in rural organizations and support for women entrepreneurs is also being provided, with strong linkages to SDG 5.

Employment and Social Protection:

The Presidential Decree of 9 August 2018 resulted in profound changes in social protection. The Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population has pioneered an overhaul of the entire minimum wage, pension, and disability system (around 12 percent of the national budget as of early 2020). Consequently, significant progress has been achieved on numerous indicators. For example, in September 2019, the minimum wage was increased by 40 percent to 250 manats. The increase covered about 600,000 people, including 450,000 public sector employees. In 2019, the average monthly amount of all types of pensions was 264 manats, while the average monthly amount of age pension was 292 manats (up 19 and 17 percent on both indicators, respectively). In October 2019, the minimum pension was increased from 160 to 200 manats (up 25 percent), covering some 600,000 people. Automation of age and disability pensions was implemented.

The Government has also pioneered service shedding in the public sector through

the setup of the State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations (including ASAN Service⁸), the State Agency for Sustainable and Operational Social Security (DOST Agency) under the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of Population of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and the Easy Support for Family Business (ABAD) public legal entity. The ASAN Service, which received the UN Public Service Award in 2015, is considered to be among the best practices in the world in terms of delivery of public services in a transparent, accessible and innovative manner.

These policies are a testament to the Government's commitment to cut red tape significantly. Thus, many services in the areas of activity of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population are now fully digitized. Services concerning employment, labor relations, social protection and social insurance under the DOST Agency of the Ministry are based on the 'one-stop shop' principle.

The reintegration of more than 650,000 formerly displaced people in economic life also remains a social protection priority. Announced in mid-2020, the package of COVID-19 benefits was arranged for the people who lost their jobs, including in the informal sector, to register online to get a single payment, equal to subsistence rate, thereby reflecting the Government's vision for universal access to social protection.

⁸ The State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan was established by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan No.685, of 13 July 2012. The first "ASAN service" center was opened on 29 December 2012 and started operating as of 15 January 2012

Gender Equality (SDG 5):

Consultations with the Government showed that accelerating progress in gender equality remains critical to leaving no one behind. Lack of political representation in business, public and political life has contributed to a gender gap score of 0.676 in 2017, the second lowest in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.⁹ According to the WEF's Global Gender Gap Index, which ranks 144 countries on gender parity, Azerbaijan's standing fell from 86 in 2016 down to 98 in 2017 in four dimensions (economic participation (38 down to 45), educational attainment (83 down to 91), health and survival (138 down to 142), and political empowerment (124 down to 131). Besides, Azerbaijan has one of the most skewed sex ratios at birth globally (a drop from 116-114 boys to 100 girls in 2014-2017). An estimated 14 percent of Azerbaijani women between 15 and 49 years of age experience intimate partner violence (physical and/or sexual) at least once in their lifetime.¹⁰ Evidence also shows that 33 percent of men report perpetrating violence against a partner while 32 percent of women report experiencing physical violence. A high number of women also consider that partner violence can be acceptable, with 11 to 59 percent believing that various specific circumstances justified a partner's use of violence against a woman.¹¹ According to Government statistics, women's share in employment is 48.1 percent compared to 51.9 percent for men, and women face a higher unemployment rate, at 5.9 percent, compared to 4.1 percent for men. Women are mostly concentrated in low-paid sectors, according to Democracy Monitor, and occupational patterns are highly gender-segregated with 73.8 percent of women working in the field of education,

and 76.5 percent working in health and social services. It is worth noting that recent wage reforms in the education sector have pushed the sectoral average monthly wage close to the country average. Overall, women earn only 50.6 percent of what men earn in the labor market. Women are underrepresented as business owners, with only 21.5 percent of registered businesses being operated by women. As of 1 January 2020, there were 198,305 individual women entrepreneurs in Azerbaijan.

Though present in the civil service, women are underrepresented at all levels, especially senior levels and in judicial positions. As of 1 January 2020, 83.9 percent of men and 78.4 percent of women use the Internet. The State Committee for Family, Women and Children's Affairs is committed to addressing these gaps. The National Action Plan for promoting the value of a girl child (2020-2025), drafted with UN support, was endorsed in February 2020. Four national action plans are pending approval of the Cabinet of Ministers: Gender Equality (2019-2024), Prevention of and Response to Gender-based Violence (2019-2023), Implementation of Resolution (S/RES/1325) on Women, Peace and Security (2019-2023), and the Action Plan on Ensuring Women's Employment. Future priorities of Government include: (i) updating laws related to gender equality; (ii) increasing awareness on women's rights; (iii) combating gender-based violence; (iv) increased support for women entrepreneurs; and (v) sexual and reproductive health and family planning. Besides, awareness-raising events are held by the Committee related to the implementation of the Action Plan on the Prevention of Gender-biased Sex Selection (GBSS) for the period of 2020-2025.

⁹ World Economic Forum. 2017. The Global Gender Gap Report, 2017. Geneva

¹⁰ [UN Women. 2010. Global Database on Violence Against Women.](#) (accessed 15 October 2019)

¹¹ UNFPA/SCFWCA (2018) Gender equality and gender relations in Azerbaijan: current trends and opportunities. Findings from the Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES). Baku, Azerbaijan

The plan was approved by the Order of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan, of 24 February 2020, to increase the level of knowledge in the field of reproductive behavior of families at risk, strengthen the education of young people and adolescents in the field of sexual culture, prevent the increase of the number of unwanted pregnancies and subsequently, the number of abortions, and prevent sex-based selection during pregnancy.

Environment and Climate Change (SDGs 13 and 15):

Climate change has already made a negative impact on Azerbaijan, with the water sector exposed to the most severe implications. Drought and declining water resources have been observed over the past few years. At the same time, many areas below sea level are flooded, which reduces

agricultural productivity. Ecotourism has significant potential and there are 10 protected natural areas with national park status. These areas have strong potential for joining UNESCO designated sites, particularly the Global Geoparks Network and the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. As such, establishing Geoparks and nominating Biosphere Reserves would give an additional impetus to nature-based tourism growth in the country. Azerbaijan has acceded to the Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol; it has also ratified the Sendai Framework and is aiming to increase the use of alternative and renewable energy sources. Furthermore, Azerbaijan has set the target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 35 percent by 2030 under the Paris Climate Agreement.



Water (SDG 6):

The bulk of Azerbaijan's water resources is generated outside the country. Climate change has led to declining water resources over the past few years. The Government has initiated prompt measures for the effective management of water resources. A Commission was established to make arrangements for the efficient use of water resources, improve water economy management, and coordinate activities in this area. An Action Plan to Ensure the Effective Use of Water Resources in 2020-2022 was approved by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Although Azerbaijan acceded to the UNECE Water Convention in 2000, the failure of neighboring countries to do so and the absence of a legal basis for transboundary cooperation and water resource management undermines water safety initiatives. By the end of 2020 only half of the country's population has got access to a potable water supply network. There are also heavy losses in the distribution system, with up to 50 percent of the supplied water missing the final destination. Azerbaijan is a country with a long-term average annual water use index above 30.5 percent and water shortages are observed in some districts due to water stress which has increased to 78 percent in 2019.¹² Water shortages affect land productivity and threaten the livelihoods of small farmers and rural populations more broadly. Water usage efficiency is also low with 0.230 m³ used to realize 1 unit of economic output, above the regional average of 0.111 m³.¹³ The national policy is now focused on improving water treatment, reducing losses, creating alternative water resources, recycling, quality, and waste management.

Regional Cooperation and Integration:

Several large-scale projects have been implemented to develop international transport corridors passing through the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan, a country of geostrategic importance. Meanwhile, the Government is investing in the infrastructure of the North-South and East-West international transport corridors and is taking important steps to harmonize logistics and simplify trade. These projects include the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway and the construction of the New Baku International Sea Trade Port. Similarly, the railway infrastructure of these corridors has been upgraded, and all roads have been brought to the first technical level. Work is underway to increase the country's existing transportation capacity and provide new opportunities, thereby transforming Azerbaijan into an important trade and logistics hub and creating digital transport corridors. Azerbaijan pursues a policy aimed at developing infrastructure and connectivity in the region, ensuring integration into the global economy, and safeguarding security and stability. This policy is implemented in cooperation with neighboring countries. The establishment of the Alat Free Economic Zone, a special territory of regional importance, is central to the increase of the inflow and outflow of goods, job creation, as well as support for regional economic cooperation and integration. On the same point, the Baku International Sea Trade Port received the PERS-EcoPorts certificate of the European Sea Ports Organization in 2019. The certificate promotes deployment of advanced technologies, especially in the fields of energy use, waste management, air quality, digitalization, and automation.

¹² Water stress index was re-evaluated on the basis of data of hydrological points where water balance was observed in accordance with the "Rules for compiling water balances by republic, water basins and administrative territorial units" approved by the Order of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated May 3, 2019.

¹³ <https://sdghelpdesk.unescap.org/re/azerbaijan.html>

Azerbaijan is an active member of regional trade platforms CAREC and TRACECA, while UNCTAD is also supporting e-commerce growth with the European Union. These platforms can help stimulate economic growth, increase the competitiveness of Azerbaijani products, and accelerate regional development, as preconditions for inclusive economic growth, poverty reduction, and sustainable development. Moreover, Azerbaijan plays an increasingly important role in regional stability through its chairmanship of NAM, GUAM, and the Turkic Council, and has deployed important efforts to promote regional and global solidarity in response to COVID-19. Azerbaijan maintains close cooperation with the European Union in the framework of the European Neighborhood Policy and its eastern regional dimension, the Eastern Partnership. Several focus areas of the EU-Azerbaijan Partnership Priorities document – stronger economy, stronger governance, stronger connectivity, and stronger society – are in alignment with the UNSDCF priorities, aiming at improving the quality of life through enhanced policy response. The partnership also supports the delivery of global policy goals set by the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. On the other hand, Azerbaijan closely cooperates with the OSCE. The implementation of the OSCE project Promoting Green Ports and Connectivity in the Caspian Region will enhance digitalization, as well as the efficiency and competitiveness of transit and trade operations among the seaports of Baku, Aktau, Kuryk, and Turkmenbashi, and raise the attractiveness of the Trans-Caspian transport route. Besides, Azerbaijan is a member of the Partnership for Good Governance (PGG) of the Council of Europe, which supports the country to bring national legislation and practice closer to the norms of general international law in the field of human rights, the rule of law and democracy. The second phase of this partnership covers 2019-2021 and is focused, inter alia, on cyber resilience, access to jus-

tice for women and victims of discrimination, and ending child sexual exploitation and abuse, all of which are the areas targeted by UNSDCF. Azerbaijan is also a member of the EU Water Initiative Plus for Eastern Partnership Countries (EUWI+), which helps six countries in the region advance their legislation in the field of water management and improve the management of transboundary river basins. The Cooperation Framework implementation will build upon the benefits of the country's participation in the UN SPECA¹⁴ on such issues as water, energy, environment, sustainable transport, transit and connectivity, trade, statistics, knowledge-based development, and gender, drawing as required on the UN Regional Economic Commissions (UNECE and ESCAP) for sub-regional policy analysis, data and advisory services.

Effective institutions, including justice (SDG 16):

The consultations showed that efforts are needed to enhance the accountability and transparency of public institutions, promote the rule of law, and further engage civil society actors in institutional oversight. Strengthening the capacity of the criminal justice and legal system, particularly the Constitutional Court, Supreme Court, Ministry of Justice, and the Office of the Prosecutor General, in line with the norms of general international law remains a top priority in protecting human rights and attracting investors. The successful implementation of the Presidential Decree, of 3 April 2019, on the enhancement of judicial and legal reforms – a roadmap aimed at improving access to, transparency and efficiency of the delivery of justice services – is vital to reinforce public confidence in the judiciary and create a favorable business environment. Access to justice also deserves greater attention, particularly for the people standing aside the public sphere, such as victims of human trafficking and domestic violence.

¹⁴ <https://unece.org/speca>

■ **Post-conflict rehabilitation**

(SDG 16):

the rehabilitation of all conflict-affected territories, the secured and dignified return and reintegration of IDPs, as well as the reintegration of populations in all conflict-affected territories are major post-conflict rehabilitation goals for Azerbaijan.

■ **The Status of Statistics (SDG 17):**

The Government recognizes that evidence is the key to effective policy formulation. Azerbaijan aims to adapt to the European Statistical Standards (ESS). In 2019, the National Information Portal on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was jointly established by the State Statistics Committee (SSC) and UNDP. The State Statistics Committee also launched its SDG report, presenting statistics on 86 indicators. With the support of UNFPA, the national statistical database is regularly updated with new sex-disaggregated indicators across a range of sectors. Data challenges can be found in many sectors, and they highlight the leading role that UNCT can play in strengthening data systems. In early 2020, a joint UNCT and SSC taskforce was formed to strengthen the data framework for SDG monitoring and reporting. A national Multi-Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) is also to be rolled out with UNICEF's support.

■ **National Budget Allocations and the SDGs (SDG 17):**

The national budget is not directly linked to SDG performance. In 2020, a budget deficit is expected with an expenditure of US\$ 16.58 billion and predicted revenues of US\$ 16.23 billion.¹⁵ By the end of 2020, revenues from other cities and regions, excluding

Baku, will be US\$ 494 million, an increase of 28.6 percent from 2019. Transfers from the State Oil Fund (SOFAZ) to the budget increased from 7.6 billion manats in 2016 to 11.3 billion manats in 2020.¹⁶ One key feature of the 2020 budget is a 9.9 percent increase in social expenditure to constitute around 40.7 percent of the total budget. State expenditures continue to increase at a faster rate than fiscal resources, despite the push to increase non-oil revenues. This pattern is likely to continue as the country allocates more resources to health and social services to cope with the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19 and the fallout of the conflict in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan. As a result, the expected fiscal deficit is likely to be larger than what has been forecasted in budget papers. Improving Public-Private Dialogue (PPD) through Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) can further leverage in greater capital in anticipation of greater demand for social and environmental services in the coming years.

¹⁵ Revenue is expected to fall drastically lower with the 2020 collapse in oil prices and lower tax revenues caused by the COVID-19 crisis

¹⁶ <https://www.oilfund.az/en/report-and-statistics/budget-information/4>
<https://www.oilfund.az/en/report-and-statistics/budget-information/41>

1.3. Progress Towards the SDG

Azerbaijan is set to make considerable progress towards the attainment of the 2030 Agenda, though a number of targets risk being missed. The country has prioritized all 17 SDG goals, 88 targets, and 119 indicators. The indicators and targets have been chosen based on national priorities, strategies, and the country's development needs. In 2016, a year after launching the SDG initiative, the Government established the National Coordination Council for Sustainable Development (NCCSD), a high-level government panel to coordinate the integration of SDG targets into state strategies, plans and programs and to monitor the country's progress towards the 2030 Agenda. The Council's Secretariat is based at the Ministry of Economy and reports to the SDG Council chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister. Two Voluntary National Reviews have been conducted to date and the National Information Portal on SDGs has been launched. These actions have provided a clear framework around which joint partnership priorities can be coordinated and monitored.

Voluntary National Review of SDGs:

The 2019 Voluntary National Review (VNR) highlighted achievements met, lessons learned, and ongoing challenges in the implementation of SDGs 4, 8, 10, 13, 16, and 17. Primary challenges included the following:

i Insufficiently developed and aligned statistical framework, and lack of comprehensive quality data around which targets can be prioritized;¹⁷

i The ongoing conflict in and around the Nagorno Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan and lack of a lasting political settlement continue to impede SDG achievement;

i Limited environmental awareness undermines the fight against climate change, requiring efficient and responsible resource consumption, waste management in major industries, and a shift to a circular economy.

The lessons learned included the increasing private sector participation and financing of the SDGs as well as costing and integrating the nationalized SDG targets and indicators into the state budgeting, along with other state planning documents.

Common Country Analysis (CCA) Results

The CCA identifies six major areas where efforts must be scaled up to attain the SDGs: (i) the income-generating ability of young people and other groups such as women and small farmers, who remain vulnerable to economic shocks; (ii) the quality and reach of public services to the most vulnerable in society, including in the education, health, and justice sectors; (iii) environmental pollution and degradation; (iv) spatial and gender inequalities; (v) institutional capacity to design evidence-based development policies; and (vi) the enduring consequences of the conflict in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The analysis has found out that some groups suffered the consequences of the currency devaluation crisis of 2015, as well as the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2020 flare-up of hostilities more than others, thereby pressing the country to adopt new policies that promote long-term resilience to these shocks. Therefore, the CCA recommends a people-centric approach, recognizing the specific impact of development challenges on vulnerable groups, and targeting concrete changes at the level of well-being and the enjoyment of human rights and freedoms.

¹⁷ The results of the CCA point to (i) data scarcity on key issues (ii) lack of data disaggregation (iii) data reliability concerns, and (iv) direct data gaps with only 35 percent of all SDG indicators available.

When these challenges were assessed against vulnerability determinants, the following three major groups were highlighted as being left behind:

- **Children:** Particularly those living in large households, in displaced communities, on the street or in institutional care. Children with disabilities, and girls were also found to face greater vulnerabilities.
- **Women:** Especially those living in displacement, as well as single mothers, adolescent girls living in rural areas, victims of gender-based violence, and pregnant women with disadvantaged backgrounds; and
- **Other groups:** Adults with disabilities, internally displaced persons living in rural areas, smallholder farmers, people who abuse drugs and substances, elderly men and women, the Roma population, refugees and stateless persons, migrants, LGBTI persons, and victims of trafficking. Besides, young people have not been able to take full advantage of development, as they remain ill-equipped for the demands of future labor markets.

The CCA suggests that the recovery phase from COVID-19 and the 2020 escalation of hostilities should be used as a catalyst for policies to eliminate the root causes of marginalization that make the five identified challenges to sustainable development persist. For instance, unequal pay and access to property between women and men limits households' ability to sustain livelihood and avoid poverty. Stereotypical attitudes make children with disabilities less likely to continue their education, even if schooling for children with disabilities continues being provided in various forms. In 2019, only 14,301 out of 54,000 school-aged children who were registered with disabilities on a purely medical

classification were enrolled in certain forms of special education as defined by national legislation.¹⁸ According to the Ministry of Education, a significant number of children with disabilities studies in general education institutions.

The digital divide also prevents people in rural areas and urban populations living in poverty from enjoying the benefits of digitalized public services. As of 1 January 2020, only 4.8 percent of households with an average monthly income of less than 200 manats owned a computer compared to 80.1 percent of households that earned more than 400 manats per month. Similarly, while the number of internet users per 100 habitants in Baku is 91.7, the same indicator for the southern region of Lerik stands at 71.1.

Observations regarding the need to address the root causes of marginalization that produce development gaps align with several recent recommendations of UN Human Rights Mechanisms, including the Human Rights Council. In 2018, Azerbaijan completed the third cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). Of the 259 recommendations it received, 179 were accepted for implementation and 66 for further review¹⁹

Several recommendations supported by the Government specifically focus on the groups identified in the CCA as left behind, for instance:

¹⁸ State Statistics Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan and UNICEF, calculated by UNICEF, 2019.

¹⁹ <https://lib.ohchr.org/HRBodies/UPR/Documents/Session30/AZ/MatriceRecommendationsAzerbaijan.docx>

-  **140.105** Ensure women's decision-making powers concerning their health status and the use of abortion for family planning;
-  **140.144** Continue implementing programmes and projects aimed at ensuring access to inclusive education for all children with disabilities;
-  **141.99** Grant all asylum seekers access to the asylum system, by ensuring that the definition of refugees is compatible with article 1 of the 1951 Convention;²⁰
-  **140.97** Continue strengthening poverty reduction policies for rural areas, including through measures to strengthen small sustainable agriculture.

Given the interplay between these recommendations and the SDGs, the UNSDCF provides a platform for their systematic implementation and reporting on progress by the Government. Thus, the formulation of all results and indicators incorporate baselines and targets that help measure the extent to which marginalized groups have been able to enjoy their human rights as a result of sustainable development programming. Emphasis is placed on policy mechanisms that may accelerate progress in achieving these targets. The CCA proposes several possible accelerators and drivers: (i) decentralize

service delivery, (ii) promote evidence-based policy formulation, (iii) avoid duplication of state functions and crowding out of the private sector, (iv) reduce overdependence on oil for growth and fiscal resources, (v) address perceptions of corruption, and (vi) recognize limitations in legal enforcement and compliance.

²⁰ Under the Law "On the Status of Refugees and IDPs" the definition "Refugee" is fully compatible with the referred 1951 Convention.

1.4. Gaps and Challenges

Despite considerable progress, of the 17 SDGs and 88 targets selected by the Government, six have been highlighted by the CCA as requiring particular attention. These include:

-  **Target 3.4:** reduce premature mortality from NCDs;
-  **Target 5.5:** share of women in leading positions;
-  **Target 7.2:** share of renewables in total energy mix; ²¹
-  **Target 8.3:** informal employment;
-  **Target 9.5:** spending on research; and
-  **Target 11.6:** pollution and waste management.

The analyses emerging from VNRs, CCA, and SPW outcomes reveal the primary gaps that impede progress towards the full attainment of the 2030 Agenda. Given that social, gender and income disparities are substantially geographic in nature, gaps are both vertical (i.e. sectoral) and horizontal (i.e. administrative) in nature.

-  **Gap 1: Limited income-generating opportunities (combined with weak human capital) available to vulnerable groups.** Income for 40 percent of the population sits just above the poverty line²², with public sector salaries (often female-dominated jobs) also set relatively low. Although social protection measures address some of these concerns, solutions that empower individuals and promote long-term resilience need to be found.
-  **Gap 2: Insufficient reach of frontline public services including education²³, health and social protection to the most vulnerable,** as targeted policy responses are limited by data scarcity and lack of disaggregation. PFM reforms, particularly the introduction of Medium-Term Expenditure Frameworks (MTEFs), will be central to achieving Vision 2030 and closing this gap.

²¹ The country's target is to increase capacity from 17 percent percent to 30 percent percent by 2030 due to renewable energy sources.

²² In 2018 the National Poverty Line was 175.2 manats based on a minimum consumption basket.

²³ Despite these challenges positive steps were taken to minimize the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. By order of the Cabinet of Ministers, 15,209 students from socially vulnerable families were paid tuition fees (12,124 in higher education, 2,830 in secondary specialties, and 255 in vocational education). These measures have continued in 2020-2021 and they concerned 15218 students. The state budget also covered tuition fees of more than 17,000 IDPs, orphans and children deprived of parental care, children of military personnel who lost their lives in the conflict in an around the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and students with disabilities. This order also allowed more than 50 percent of students admitted to higher education in 2020 to study at the expense of the state.



Gap 3: Environmental pollution and degradation undermine human development, ecological stability and growth. Dependence on oil contributes to this gap and, while Azerbaijan is party to various international plans and protocols, efforts need to be further strengthened in this area.



Gap 4: Spatial and gender inequalities continue to exist as a result of exclusionary social practices and policies that do not sufficiently address the impact of geographic and market isolation on women.²⁴ These are observed in multiple dimensions, from income generation to service delivery access.



Gap 5: Capacity gaps remain in key institutions such as health, education, and business-enabling services. Despite major improvements, gaps in human capital, transparency issues, and perceptions of corruption undermine public trust and limit the fiscal benefits of service-shedding.

Based on these gaps, the UNCT have identified several entry points at the policy level that it will be able to support as they involve structural reforms rather than short-term response measures. In designing this response, detailed in the next chapter, the UNCT has specifically focused on interventions that do not just inform and support Government policies but also help strengthen national capacities for the benefit of the furthest behind.

²⁴ The Gini coefficient, for example, increased from 3.47 in 2000 to 17.07 in 2018.



CHAPTER 2: UN DEVELOPMENT
SYSTEM SUPPORT TO THE 2030
AGENDA

This chapter outlines how the UN development system can best support Azerbaijan in accelerating progress towards the 2030 Agenda by attaining prioritized SDG targets and indicators. It builds on the findings of the United Nations-Azerbaijan Partnership Framework (2016-2020) Evaluation, the results of the CCA country diagnostics, and stakeholder consultations. The chapter articulates the collective response of the United Nations as a vehicle for supporting rights-oriented economic transformation, offering options to

reframe development policies and practices to ensure they work for everyone. A new set of partnerships is proposed, particularly with the private sector and civil society, development finance institutions and institutional investors. This helps lay out concrete actions to turn the collective promise of leaving no one behind into tangible results. More than anything, however, the priorities, established in the present chapter, constitute tailored responses to the needs and realities identified in partnership with the Government, and men and women of Azerbaijan.

2.1. Theory of Change

Using the results of the CCA, the UNCT have identified accelerators, which are catalytic interventions that address the bottlenecks impeding progress. With a focus on the period 2021-2025, the theory of change provided below translates these accelerators into critical linkages between the causes of gaps and solutions to be put in place across activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts under each of the priority areas.

The overall theory of change underlying the UNSDCF is that the SDGs can only be achieved in Azerbaijan when people left behind are empowered to realize their rights through adequate institutional support and increased resilience. The country will be able to stay on track for the SDGs and mitigate the enduring impact of COVID-19 and other potential crises on people, including conflict-induced, when drivers of exclusion and marginalization are removed. This transformation addresses capacity gaps identified in the CCA and in further consultations with the Government, in particular the need for greater avenues for public participation in decision-making, more accountability in the delivery of public and social services, and policies that serve to eliminate discrimination. The transformation requires a change of mindset in which policy responses and indicators of achievement

are reformulated based on entitlement than according to the needs. Both the Government and its UN partners are primarily accountable to rights holders in their interventions, and they use statistical evidence as well as international human rights norms and principles to measure their quality and effectiveness.

The theory of change is also founded on the premise that UNCT support constitutes a very small percentage of the Government, private sector, and development finance institutions' spending. As a result, an optimal approach is proposed that ensures the UN system builds from its natural comparative advantage and works to improve evidence-based policy and decision making to leave no one behind. Identifying and delivering best practice that can be replicated and scaled beyond individual projects is recognized as an essential prerequisite for the achievement of results. The UNSDCF recognizes that there is a ground-breaking opportunity for international organizations, multilateral development banks, and the international community to push for systemic changes in the country towards financing SDGs. Therefore, the UNCT will support the Government's efforts towards: a) integrating the SDGs in the national development plan, and as part of the monetary policy;

b) developing an intelligent approach to collect, measure and track the implementation of the SDGs by the public and private sector; c) improving strategic collaboration across public and private sectors to strategize SDG implementation; d) launching fiscal incentives and policies to attract, retain and scale-up responsible investments to green assets and projects; e) managing public-private partnerships programmes to incentivize and nurture inclusive and sustainable businesses; f) aligning non-financial risk management systems (environmental, social, and governance practices) in public financing policies; and g) designing a holistic and participatory Integrated National Financing Framework that encapsulates the necessary conditions to support green growth. This approach will help ensure an integrated response to the needs of the Government to optimize resource allocation towards national development ambitions, as well as to ensure their alignment with the SDGs agenda. In addition, the UNCT will play a strategic role to expand the dialogue and coordination between public agencies and the private sector, and to nurture relationships with international organizations and investors.

Change that Enables Structural Solutions

The UNSDCF moves away from agency-specific projects to collaborative and structural solutions that address the root causes of marginalization and are more closely aligned with Government priorities. To do so, it introduces a new way of working at the outcome and output levels in which a new constellation of UNCT partnerships directly speaks to rights holders. This new modality has been chosen as it unites all UN entities working with Azerbaijan around a more synergistic engagement inclusive of the most vulnerable in society, and it also helps better situate

the UN system's contribution to sustainable development outcomes.

As the United Nations focuses its efforts on strengthening public policy for those left behind, several steps are taken to ensure that institutions are well equipped to deliver on the SDG promise and fulfil the country's human rights commitments. Under the UNSDCF, institutional capacities are further strengthened to improve evidence, benefit from best practices, access new financing modalities, and strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of impact. The theory holds that bringing systemic changes informed by expert advice and placing people at the centre of all decisions delivers greater multipliers. Thus, strengthening public policies and building institutional capacities to reach those left behind will bring positive changes to existing systems and improve the human impact of public policy. For example, support for education, healthcare and agriculture is system-wide and not project-based. Support for inclusive and gender-equitable growth focuses on policy, regulatory, and best practice development. Such support may be provided through a country-level **SDG Accelerator Pooled Fund** that consolidates and leverages funding towards the country priority SDGs and facilitates policy makers' access to world-class expertise in the priority areas. Furthermore, the UN Joint SDG Fund will ensure the Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) is based on a holistic vision of fiscal planning and management that goes beyond traditional public financial management techniques to include resources of private nature. This will help operationalize future SDG-aligned policies as well as promote an integrated and gender inclusive financing framework.

Improving Resilience and Reducing Vulnerability

Vulnerability to social and economic shocks reflects the diminished capacity of an individual or group to anticipate, cope with, and recover from the impact of a natural and/or human-made hazard. The CCA showed that vulnerable groups and people living in poverty are more prone to experience the adverse impact of crises as they lack the skills and mechanisms to be able to cope with those extraordinary events. Therefore, the Cooperation Framework will be implemented in a manner that builds the capacity of people and institutions to better plan, as well as prepare for and respond to hazards. In all interventions, the emphasis is placed on achieving changes at the level of skills as well as the availability and quality of services that decrease fragility and improve preparedness. These include, for instance, employability and entrepreneurship targets, high-impact health interventions, mechanisms that promote public participation in decision-making, and adaptive technologies and policies in agriculture and climate action as well as urban and smart cities development. Given the importance of Information and Communications Technology in COVID-19 response and in post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction, the UNCT will support the acquisition of new digital capacities that facilitate access to public and social services for vulnerable groups and strengthen e-governance systems. Data disaggregation will also be used in all indicators to assess the extent to which resilience parameters have positively reflected on the situation of different groups and their ability to cope with risk.

Strengthening the Recovery Efforts

This Cooperation Framework was concluded at a time when Azerbaijan embarked on an ambitious national recovery plan that seeks to reconstruct and rehabilitate its conflict-

affected territories and set the conditions for the safe and voluntary return of thousands of IDPs. All results have been formulated in a manner that supports the reintegration and socioeconomic development of conflict-affected populations, thus supporting national efforts for long-term social cohesion and peacebuilding. The UNCT will work with the Government of Azerbaijan and development partners to identify and deploy appropriate international practices and tools to support the planning and implementation of recovery activities. This will include the use of Recovery and Peace Building Assessment (RPBA) methodology to help the Government identify, prioritize and sequence recovery and peacebuilding efforts and processes. Finally, the UNSDCF will deepen UN capacity for engagement with the Government and civil society on conflict recovery normative frameworks, including Women, Peace and Security and Youth, Peace and Security.

Improving Evidence to Strengthen Public Policy and Investment

The Government acknowledges the need to improve the evidence base upon which public policy and investment are made. The UN system will, therefore, work with the authorities, research institutions and civil society organizations to strengthen data collection, analysis and reporting in the priority areas identified. A joint Task Force between the UNCT and the State Statistics Committee (SSC) was established in early 2020 to strengthen SDG data collection and monitoring methods. Additional collaboration will include diagnostic analyses on all outcome areas such as inclusive growth, value chains, and equitable opportunities for economic participants, and assessments of the regional cooperation on water and environmental issues.

Strengthening Human Capital Within the Existing Systems

At the heart of the development challenge is enabling the expansion of human capital. The UN cannot address this constraint independently. However, change will occur through joining efforts with Government, development partners, private sector and civil society, to strengthen technical expertise for frontline delivery structures, improve linkages between primary, secondary, tertiary and vocational training in line with market demand, and lay down the foundation for a knowledge economy.

Introducing Innovative Practices including New Financing Modalities

Given the transboundary nature of several of the identified challenges, in each of the priority areas, change will be accelerated by introducing, piloting and upscaling best practices from other countries. Innovation is required as Azerbaijan constitutes a hybrid economy, with dominant oil and public sector economies. Innovation to improve frontline services, to leverage private capital, to transition from funding to financing and to support the knowledge economy will feature heavily. Over the course of the Cooperation Framework, the introduction of innovative financing models will improve competitiveness, efficiency and accountability as well as improve product development and exports. Moreover, a national innovation platform will be established to engage the private sector, vulnerable groups, civil society and academia to canvass alternate approaches. The UNSDCF resource mobilization strategy to follow the Cooperation Framework will outline how the Government and the UN system can best leverage UN comparative advantages to mobilize new forms of capital to support the SDGs.

Enabling Interdependent Changes

The framework recognizes that the outcomes of UN interventions are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. UN expertise in multisectoral planning will strengthen linkages

between inclusive growth, frontline services (education, health, agriculture, and justice), the environment and gender priorities. For example, accelerating inclusive growth for marginalized communities cannot succeed in isolation from human capital development and the elimination of urban/rural disparities. Similarly, improving primary health care has strong linkages with the water and sanitation infrastructure and environmental pollution. Improving gender equality will require a whole-of-government and whole-of-market approach recognizing the different impacts of development challenges on men and women, boys and girls. The theory of change holds that development gaps cannot be filled through a single-sectoral engagement, but rather with a comprehensive and multidimensional approach.

Establishing National Platforms to Improve Public Policy Dialogue

For change to happen, the private sector and civil society must be engaged, particularly in areas experiencing spatial and gender disparity, and in parts of the economy expected to rise to the challenge of diversification. Yet there remain limited spaces for sustained participation in decision-making by the private sector and civil society. More intensive dialogue with the private sector and civil society is essential to ensure greater representation of groups left behind in policy and involved in decision-making. The engagement of employers and workers' organizations in national efforts to address economic and labor market challenges is also a key component of public policy. The UN system will therefore work with the Government to establish national platforms to support dialogue with these various stakeholders. Using its convening power and normative role, the UNCT will advocate for and provide substantive guidance to this dialogue and ensure the least visible groups in society are able to steer policy response. This approach will help enable bottom-up accountability, emphasizing the role of regional and district authorities in delivering equitable services.

2.2. Strategic Priorities

The vision that emerged from the CCA process and capacity gap analyses was narrowed **down into four priority areas** for the UN development system to focus on over the period of 2021-2025. These priority areas have been selected on the ground that they respond to country-wide challenges in achieving the 2030 Agenda and reflect the transformative interventions underpinning the theory of change, particularly those addressing the inequitable distribution of power relations in society as well as access

to and management of resources. In other words, these priorities help address a wide range of the root causes and gaps that impede the progress on the SDGs. Furthermore, these priorities provide strategic openings for the UN System to collaborate with multiple sectors and stakeholders and use its comparative advantages to the fullest. Last, the priorities have the buy-in of the Government, as they converge with its own vision of development in the coming five years.



Across the four priority areas, the UNSDCF is intended to ensure the country stays on track of the achievement of the 2030 Agenda targets despite the disruption caused by COVID-19 and the 2020 conflict escalation in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Thus, the targets set are either

formally aligned to international SDG targets, or expressed as nationally localized targets. The alignment of SDGs to results under each priority area is provided below, with full details provided in Annex 1 (Results Matrix).

**PRIORITY
AREA 1**

focuses on SDGs 2 (Zero Hunger) and 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). The Outcome impacts poverty (SDG 1), innovation (SDG 9), education (SDG 4), reducing inequality within society (SDG 10), and promoting peaceful and inclusive societies (SDG 16), and building sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11).

**PRIORITY
AREA 2**

focuses on SDGs 1 (No Poverty), 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing), 4 (Quality Education), 5 (Gender Equality), 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). The Outcome impacts fostering innovation (SDG 9), reducing inequality within society (SDG 10), and building sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11).

**PRIORITY
AREA 3**

focuses on SDGs 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), 13 (Climate Action), and 15 (Life on Land). The Outcome impacts reducing inequality within society (SDG 10), good health and wellbeing (SDG 3), building sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11), fostering partnership for the Goals (SDG 17), and protecting life below water (SDG 14).

**PRIORITY
AREA 4**

focuses on SDGs 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing), 5 (Gender Equality) and 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). The Outcome impacts reducing inequality within society (SDG 10), good health and wellbeing (SDG 3), education (SDG 4), and peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 17).

As the UNCT works with the Government and other stakeholders to address these priorities, its value addition will be demonstrated through offerings such as:

-  **Policy formulation;**
-  **Establishing evidence through improved data collection, analysis and reporting;**
-  **Introducing best practices and country experiences;**
-  **Convening stakeholders;**
-  **Piloting, replicating and scaling up success stories;**
-  **Identifying and promoting quick wins;**
-  **Providing a normative baseline for development outcomes; and,**
-  **Joint monitoring and impact evaluation.**

At the same time, UNCT's strategic contribution to these priorities will be manifested in three ways. First, the UNCT will help ensure that national efforts in the post-conflict and COVID-19 recovery phase are steered toward the achievement of the SDGs under each priority area. To this end, the UNCT will work closely with the Government of Azerbaijan to ensure that the forthcoming National Development Strategy (Vision 2030) is comprehensive and ambitious, yet achievable, and that it addresses the major impediments in SDG attainment. An initial proposal for UNCT support in articulating Azerbaijan's Vision 2030 for the SDG, ranging from policy advice to financing modalities, was addressed to the Chairman of the National Coordination Council for Sustainable Development. Collaboration with the Government is essential as there is a risk of duplicated efforts and wasted resources if these strategic foresight agendas do not converge. The UNCT is well positioned to fulfil this leading role as it has worked well with national actors in Government and in the development community during the early response phases to assess long-term recovery needs. The assessment of the socioeconomic impact of COVID-19, led by the UNCT in consultation with the Government and development partners, will complement the findings of the previous evaluation documents (UNAPF evaluation and CCA) by identifying the long-term impact of the pandemic on vulnerable populations. Similarly, the result of the humanitarian needs assessment, which was jointly conducted with the Government in November 2020, will lay the foundation for longer-term response. Informed by these assessments, the UNCT will continue offering support to ensure Azerbaijan stays on track of the achievement of the 2030 Agenda despite the disruption caused by COVID-19 and the conflict.

Second, in delivering against these priorities, the UNCT's modalities of engagement will promote clarity and accountability for results, ensuring they are directly attributable to support by UN development system at-large rather than to single entities as in the past. This will also give Azerbaijan a unique opportunity to benefit from a large SDG knowledge base, including through UN organizations that are not physically present in the country. Several entities, including UNECE, UNIDO, UNDRR, and UN-Habitat, among others, have already expressed strong interest in mobilizing their technical resources for the benefit of these priority areas.

Last, the UNCT will support its partners in Government and in the development community with innovative tools and methodologies that help put these priorities to action in the most optimal manner. Platforms, such as the UN Global Compact, the SDG Civil Society Forum as well as international and national volunteer schemes and engagement mechanisms, will help attract new ideas, connections and/or implementing partners to accompany actions under each priority area, from design to measurement and reporting. This will represent a significant expansion of partnerships than in previous frameworks, and it will open a space for more systemic analysis and evaluation of actions under each priority area.

2.3. Intended Development Results

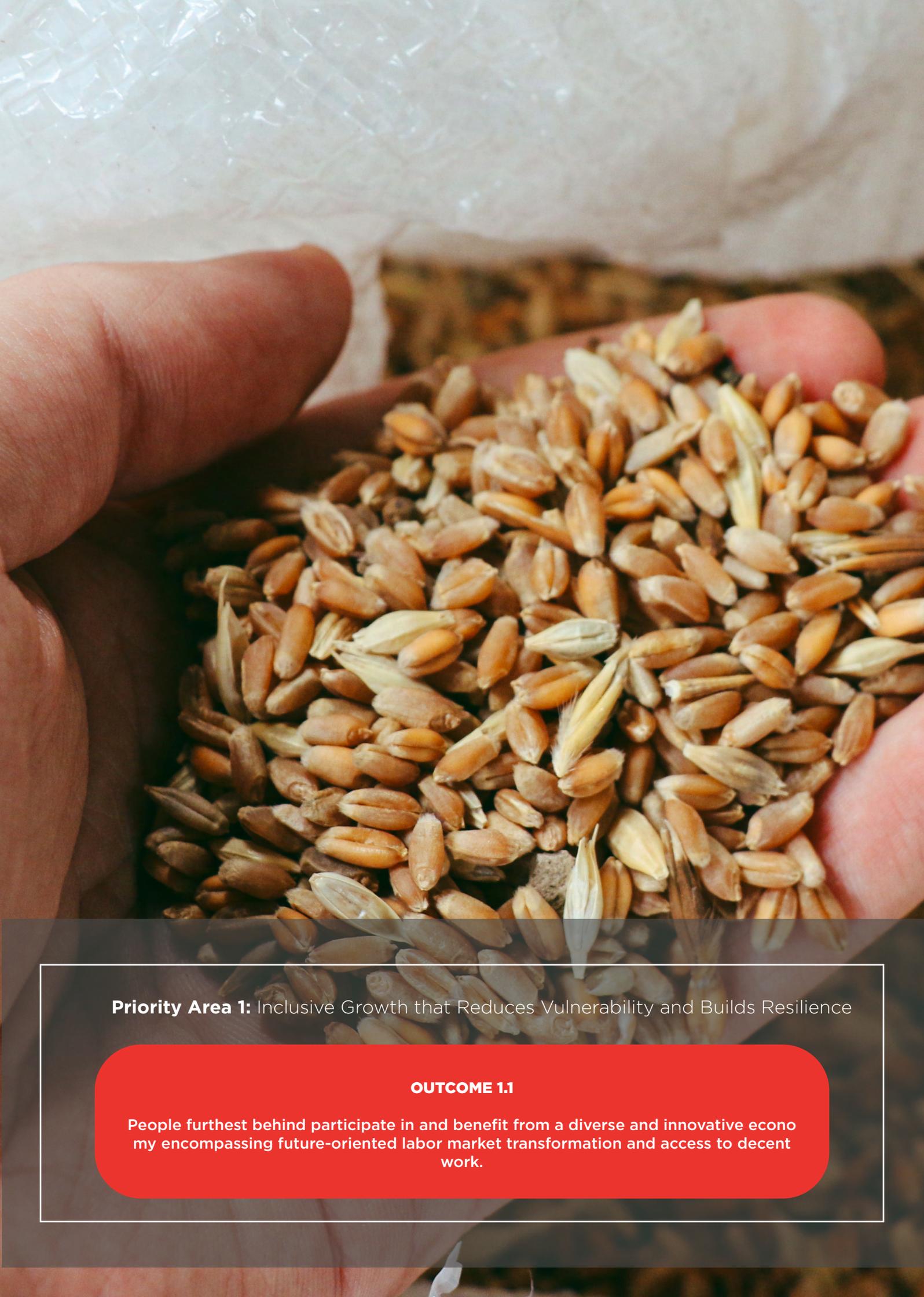
The Azerbaijan – UNSDCF Theory of Change Overview with intended development results is provided below:

PRIORITY AREAS	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	SDGS TARGETED
PRIORITY AREA 1 Inclusive Growth that Reduces Vulnerability and Builds Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1.1 MSMEs and social enterprises, including women-owned businesses, are set up and sustained for the benefit of the furthest behind 1.1.2 Enhanced human capital and a skilled workforce are available in key sectors 1.1.3 International standards regarding decent work, inclusion and the future of the work are mainstreamed in policy and in practice 1.1.4 Rural populations are able to diversify their income sources and sustainably improve livelihoods 	1.1 People furthest behind participate in and benefit from a diverse and innovative economy encompassing future-oriented labor market transformation and access to decent work	SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) SDG 8 (Decent Works and Economic Growth)
PRIORITY AREA 2 Stronger Institutions for Better Public and Social Services Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1.1 The national education system is strengthened to ensure inclusive access to quality education and training 2.1.2 National primary health care and nutrition systems are strengthened to ensure universal coverage and quality, inclusive and high-impact interventions 2.1.3 Providers of public and social protections services have improved capacity to target the most vulnerable groups with quality, effective and innovative solutions 2.1.4 National policies and mechanisms are strengthened to promote and protect human rights increase access to justice and participatory mechanisms, and sustain social cohesion 2.1.5 Institutional capacity are enhanced to effectively develop and implement governance programmes, public service delivery, youth engagement and modernization of services to bridge the digital divide 2.2.1 Institutional capacities are strengthened to improve monitoring and reporting on the SDGs and on furthest behind persons 2.2.2 National capacities are enhanced to generate evidence-based policies and decisions 	2.1 People furthest behind benefit from enhanced national capacities and governance structures for social protection and quality public and social services in line with Azerbaijan's international commitments 2.2 Quality, disaggregated and timely data is available and used to inform decision-making and policies that leave no one behind	SDG 1 (No Poverty) SDG 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing) SDG 4 (Quality Education) SDG 5 (Gender Equality) SDG 12 Responsible Consumption and Production SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) SDG 17 Partnerships for the Goals
PRIORITY AREA 3 Protecting the Environment & Addressing Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1.1 Institutional capacities to plan track and report on climate change, and to access climate finance and technologies, are strengthened 3.1.2 Adaptive policies on land use integration to the tourism value chain and water management are set up to enhance the resilience of vulnerable communities 3.1.3 Energy policies and solutions reduce emissions and save energy 3.1.4 Evidence-based policies mechanisms and practices are adopted to reduce environmental hazards and pollution in urban and rural areas 	3.1 People including those left behind benefit from climate strategies and environment protection policies that ensure natural resource are sustainably managed, livelihood are protected, and resilience strengthened	SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) SDG 13 (Climate Action) SDG 15 (Life on Land)
PRIORITY AREA 4 A Gender Equitable Society that Empowers Woman and Girls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1.1 Costed action plans on gender equality are set up and implemented 4.1.2 Stereotypes of women and girls are reduced in public discourse 4.1.3 Women and girls have skills and knowledge to enjoy equal rights and opportunities 	4.1 Woman and girls including those furthest behind, benefit from enhanced national mechanisms that ensure they are protected from discrimination and violence and empowered to participate in all spheres of life	SDG 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing) SDG 5 (Gender Equality) SDG 8 (Decent work and Economic Growth)

2.4. Cooperation Framework Outcomes and Partnerships

The UNSDCF's four strategic priorities are jointly delivered by the Government and the UN system across five Outcome areas. The theory of change is presented below for each Outcome area, reflecting the transformative effect of actions under each priority and the value-addition of the UN system in partnership with the Government, private sector, international development, and other partners.

In addition to promoting external partnerships, results have been designed in a manner that enables stronger coordination between UN and national actors, reducing the time and cost of implementation. Changes at the outcome as well as output levels minimize the need for the UN to develop activity or project-specific agreements with the authorities as in the past. They also facilitate a combination of strategic oversight by the Resident Coordinator and the technical leadership and expertise of various UN entities in their respective mandates. For example, the Country Programme Documents of UNDP, UNICEF, and UNFPA are all founded on the UNSDCF outcomes.



Priority Area 1: Inclusive Growth that Reduces Vulnerability and Builds Resilience

OUTCOME 1.1

People furthest behind participate in and benefit from a diverse and innovative economy encompassing future-oriented labor market transformation and access to decent work.

Theory of Change

As the Common Country Analysis has shown, young men and women, persons in situations of displacement or return, persons in informal employment, small farmers and people without the ability to adopt a teleworking modality (because of the nature of their work or for lacking technological skills) will be more vulnerable to the loss of livelihood than others. Economic reform is needed, not just to strengthen productivity but more importantly, to achieve inclusive growth that primarily benefits these groups and other weak sections of the population. Establishing coherent domestic policies around equal access and redistribution is an essential condition to the realization of this Outcome, for it both makes the economy more innovative and strengthens the social contract.²⁵

To achieve this reformist vision of the economy, the UN will work with national actors to ensure that labor market transformation rests on business-driven innovation as well as enhanced human capital. Where there is an enabling environment for innovation, and where people acquire the literacy and access to resources allowing them to increase their economic participation, vulnerability is reduced, and the economy becomes strong enough to sustain employability and protect livelihoods. The COVID-19 and post-conflict path for economic recovery will be used to promote the setup of new MSMEs and social enterprises that restore and expand the economic participation of groups left behind. The UNCT will also tap into its network of expertise and best practices to support new labor market policies and individual capacities. It will ensure that young men and women, in particular, are able to acquire skills that match the needs of future employers, and that workers in the informal sector including in the rural areas and in the

areas affected by the conflict have access to new income-generating opportunities that reduce the risk of losing livelihoods. The capacity of labor market institutions, including public employment services, will also be strengthened with innovative tools to deliver more inclusive and accessible services to the most vulnerable, the unemployed, as well as to employers. A strengthened system for national labor statistics and international standards regarding the right to work, including those under the ICESCR, CEDAW, and ILO Conventions, will guide economic thinking, as they will help measure the extent to which economic diversification and innovation have equally benefited these various groups. To generate equal access to livelihood opportunities in urban as well as rural areas, the UNCT will support interventions enhancing urban planning and promoting a balanced territorial development.

UN activities will link up an integrated urban development process with housing as well as with sectoral policies in order to improve local economic growth while mainstreaming the environmental dimension of urbanization and climate adaptation into the development process.

Additional emphasis will be placed on interventions that ensure economic growth is sustainable, diversified and private-sector lead. The UNCT will work with national actors to strengthen institutions that create an enabling business environment for transition to a knowledge-based economy.

This will be done through designing policies that eliminate barriers to access to finance, reduce the regulatory burden and promote innovative practices.

²⁵ <https://www.oecd.org/mcm-2018/documents/C-MIN-2018-5-EN.pdf>

Affordable credit and SMEs integration into value chains and markets is the lifeline for progress on economic diversification. Stronger participation in value chains will provide SMEs with the opportunity to achieve higher productivity, advanced technology and expanded market access. On the other hand, SMEs' involvement in value chains demands greater managerial and financial resources, the ability to meet international standards and the protection of in-house intellectual property.²⁶ To meet these challenges, the UN will work with the Government and SMEs to achieve effective partnerships between public and private sectors to help reap greater benefits of the contained value chains.

The path towards more diversified and private sector-led economic growth will be further supported through targeted interventions in sectors for which Azerbaijan has a competitive advantage, allowing it to develop innovation ecosystems and embrace the Fourth Industrial Revolution. The UNCT will work with national stakeholders to create an enabling environment for this shift and promote the allocation of substantial funding for research and development purposes. New policy measures to incorporate innovation into green growth and harness positive synergies between the economy and the environment will be prioritized.

This outcome primarily targets SDG 8, using indicators SDGs 8.5.1, 8.6.1, 8.8.2 around employment, income, training and labor standards. SDG 2.4.1 indicator focus on productive and sustainable farming that will benefit small-scale food producers and farmers. The Outcome impacts poverty (SDG 1), industry and innovation (SDG 9), education (SDG 4), reducing inequality within society (SDG 10), promoting peaceful and inclusive societies, including through better access to information (SDG 16), and building sustainable cities and communities, including through the protection of cultural and natural heritage (SDG 11).

Partnerships

In order to realize this Outcome, the UNCT will work with key government counterparts to ensure they align their policies and data collection practice to SDG and human rights indicators on employment. This partnership will also be an opportunity for government institutions to better consolidate and mainstream SDG data in policies that involve different government agencies – a key recommendation of the UNAPF evaluation. Partners include the Ministry of Economy, National Coordination Council for Sustainable Development, Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, Office of the Human Rights Commissioner (Ombudsperson), Ministry of Transport, Communications and High Technologies, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Youth and Sports, State Statistics Committee, ANAMA, State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Justice, State Committee for Family, Women and Children's Affairs, State Committee for Refugees and IDPs, and State Committee on Work with the Azerbaijani Diaspora, among other partners outlined in the results framework.

Development actors to support this transformation include the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in promoting standards for diversified and inclusive growth, as well as accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO). Partnership will be extended to USAID, seeking their technical assistance on MSME financing, competitiveness and workforce development. Support will also be sought from the World Bank to identify best practices and innovative employment policies that can inform this Outcome. In addition, the UNCT will set up non-governmental discussion fora allowing new actors to influence the economic agenda and reflect the voices and expectations of target groups. These will take the shape of national public-private and civil society dialogue platforms as well as volunteer groups bringing together policy, business and civil society leaders, particularly among youth communities.

²⁶ https://unctad.org/en/Docs/diaeed20095_en.pdf



Priority Area 2: Stronger Institutions for Better Public and Social Services Delivery

OUTCOME 2.1

People furthest behind benefit from enhanced national capacities and governance structures for social protection and quality public and social services, in line with Azerbaijan's international commitments*

(*including Human Rights and ILO standards)

Theory of Change

The Common Country Analysis showed that changes in the quality and availability of public and social services are not equally perceived by all groups of the population. For example, the closure of schools and the transition to distance education as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2020 escalation of hostilities have made education more accessible for children with disabilities, though it also placed some restrictions on children from low-income families who had difficulty accessing essential technical resources for distance education. This has resulted in an exacerbation of structural inequalities in education. Older persons, who are asked to isolate for fear of infection, risk losing access to essential healthcare in public hospitals. Women and girls in confinement can find it more challenging to report cases of domestic violence or seek support from state and non-state protection services in a systematic manner. Access to justice can also be constrained for people living in areas where court processes have not been digitized, including in conflict-affected regions. Populations who continue being displaced across several rural areas, particularly close to the formerly occupied territories, face added challenges related to safety, access to quality education and healthcare, and reduced opportunities to generate income.

The theory of change suggests that unless these inequalities and access constraints are systematically redressed as part of the COVID-19 and conflict recovery phase, Azerbaijan may not be able to enhance the quality and reach of its public services in a way that will allow it to attain the SDGs. When governance structures are more responsive to shocks of public services, and when protection services are made available to vulnerable groups without discontinuity, society emerges as more resilient to emergencies and quality services becomes become available to all.

Therefore, interventions will focus on achieving stronger governance structures and frontline service delivery, allowing vulnerable groups to benefit from social protection, inclusion as well as maintaining access to these services. Particular emphasis will be placed on expanding people's knowledge of and access to the ICT infrastructure to enhance e-governance and ensure that public and social services are available and accessible online. At the same time, the UNCT will seek to complement changes in formal governance structures with initiatives that build capacity for resilience and social cohesion at community-level, with a focus on awareness of human rights and justice frameworks. This will help address root causes of social unrest that may undermine efforts to sustain peace and prevent future conflicts.

The Outcome, therefore, focuses on several tracks of intervention for which the UNCT is well-positioned to make a difference given its sectoral expertise: education, health, social protection, e-governance, and the justice system. Considering that universal access to these public services is already guaranteed by law, the UNCT will support change(s) by identifying improved service delivery models, volunteer mechanisms and establishing standard operating procedures and technical skills for civil servants to target vulnerable groups. To be able to better track progress, the UNCT will ensure that baselines and achievements for this response are guided by ILO and international human rights standards under the ICESCR, the CRC, the CRPD and CEDAW regarding accessibility, quality and adequacy.

In **education**, the focus of the intervention will be on inclusive access to education and vocational training, ensuring that teachers and trainers are able to deliver quality curricula to all.

If this occurs, Azerbaijan will be able to go beyond the target of universal gross enrolment in pre-primary education and rather achieve an equitable, skill-driven education system that maximizes human capital and wellbeing. In healthcare, the UNCT will strengthen national strategies that monitor the quality of service delivery and promote a patient-centric approach, including home visits for older persons, and nutrition and reproductive health counseling for women. If this is achieved, there will be the expanded availability of quality health for all, with greater access to primary and preventive care for which the Government is already introducing a compulsory insurance system. UNCT will offer additional support to ensure greater availability of human resources and professional expertise, more equipment for Public Health Care centers in the regions, and a more efficient referral system. Ensuring social inclusion through investments in networks of public space and transform communities and change mindsets through innovative community-led approaches will be catalytic in improving health and wellbeing. Indicators including SDGs 3.8.2, 3.4.1, 3.7.1, 4.3.1, and 5.6.1 on reproductive healthcare have been chosen for this Outcome component.

Given the barriers the marginalized groups may face in accessing frontline services or seeking remedy when they lose that access, Outcome 2.1 places additional stress on **judicial strengthening**. Intervention in this area will focus on enhancing the qualifications of public and social service providers, including development of a social workforce, to respond to the needs of these groups, including persons with disabilities. It will also promote policies on access to justice and legal aid for invisible communities such as asylum seekers. It will open new spaces where the grievances of returnees and other conflict-impacted groups can also be addressed, and where civil society organizations can meaningfully engage with decision-makers at the national and local levels. If these

interventions are completed, the foundations for transformed institutions will be laid, with increased accountability and transparency that will accelerate the attainment of SDGs. Indicators for this outcome include SDG 1.3.1, 1.a.2, coverage of social protection, SDGs 16.6.2 and 16.7.2 regarding public perceptions/satisfaction and capacity building, and 12.7.1 on sustainable public procurement policies. The Outcome impacts fostering innovation (SDG 9), reducing inequality within society (SDG 10), and building sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11).

Partnerships

To achieve this Outcome, the UNCT will work with key institutions in social and public services delivery. These include: Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, State Agency for Mandatory Health Insurance, DOST Agency, TABIB, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Transport, Communications and High Technologies, Ministry of Justice, State Statistics Committee, State Committee for Refugees and IDPs, the Azerbaijani Community of Nagorno-Karabakh of the Republic of Azerbaijan, State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations, and the Office of the Human Rights Commissioner (Ombudsperson). Development partners, including USAID and the World Bank, will also be invited to support this Outcome with expertise in governance and institutional reform. Partnership will be extended to actors in the private sector to explore possible PPPs in the area of vocational training and preventive healthcare. Finally, non-governmental organizations will be invited to take the lead in setting up the dialogue agenda on public participation in decision-making and volunteerism for development, provide supplementary social services to vulnerable populations, as well as support to communities affected by conflict.

OUTCOME 2.2

Quality*, disaggregated and timely data is available and used to inform decision-making and policies that leave no one behind

(* up-to-date, accurate, collected and analyzed in line with internationally accepted methodology)

Theory of Change

The theory of change for Outcome 2.2 is predicated on the understanding that statistics provide an indispensable element in the information system of a society, serving the Government with data about the economic, demographic, social and environmental situation. The focus on the wellbeing and rights of vulnerable groups throughout the UNSDCF requires a dedicated effort to improve Azerbaijan's ability to situate them and make them more visible. All priority areas demand a greater process of generating disaggregated data beyond age, sex and origin, to include attributes such as disability, ethnicity, employment, income, and immigration status, among others. Supporting this process is identified as an area of particular value for the UN as a means of strengthening public policy for those left behind. It also responds to recommendations by Human Rights Mechanisms to better anchor development data around international human rights standards. In order for the Government to fulfil a heightened focus on the most vulnerable and marginalized, improving the sourcing and management of disaggregated data is fundamental. This is carried out using a variety of interventions, such as training state officials on results-based planning, promoting disaggregation in household surveys, supporting the setup of a national statistical plan, improving analysis and evidence-based planning, strengthening

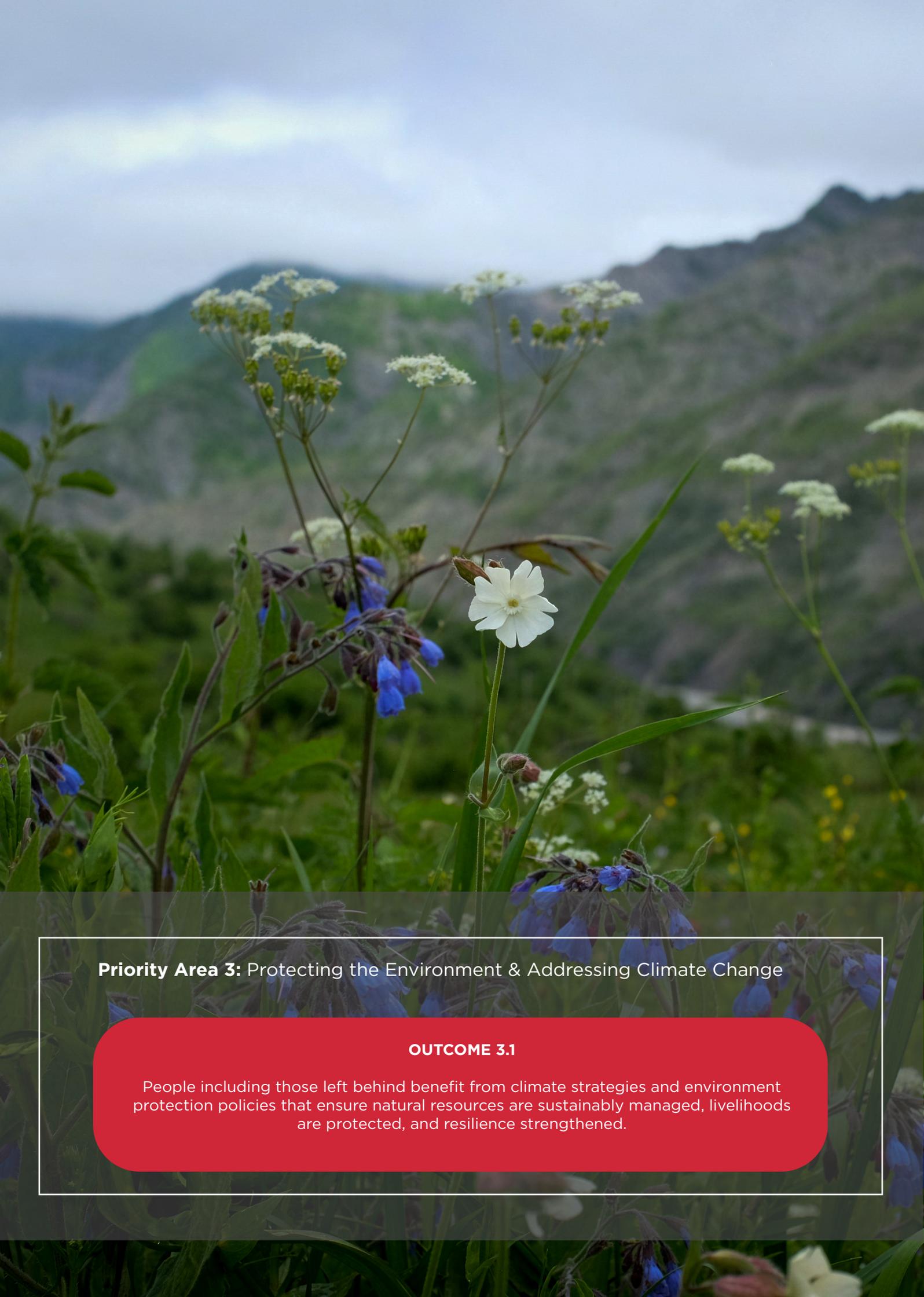
population projections, and encouraging the proactive disclosure of governmental information (SDG 16.10.2). This is, therefore, a cross-sectoral outcome that will support progress in all priority areas towards the 2030 Agenda. A primary indicator is SDG 17.18.1, proportion of sustainable

development indicators produced at the national level with full disaggregation when relevant to the target. Data generation, management and analysis will only inform policy if properly integrated into the formal decision-making processes. The second indicator identified for this outcome is, therefore, SDG 17.18.3, presence of a national statistical plan that is fully funded and under implementation, by source of funding.

Partnerships

The UNCT envisions strong cooperation with the State Statistics Committee in strengthening data collection and management systems, including the National Information Portal on the Sustainable Development Goals. This partnership will be founded on the principle of participation, encouraging state institutions to involve concerned populations groups in the collection of data concerning their situation. It will also promote accountability in the use of data, ensuring it feeds into national policies and is reported back to target populations.

For this, the UNCT will engage other government actors such as the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Agriculture, State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations, DOST Agency, Ministry of Transport, Communications and High Technologies, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Labor and Social Protection as well as the State Committee for Family, Women and Children's Affairs. Additional partnerships will be established with civil society and academic institutions to collect data at the level of local communities that supports government censuses and surveys.



Priority Area 3: Protecting the Environment & Addressing Climate Change

OUTCOME 3.1

People including those left behind benefit from climate strategies and environment protection policies that ensure natural resources are sustainably managed, livelihoods are protected, and resilience strengthened.

Theory of Change

The Common Country Analysis found out that environmental degradation had made some sections of the population lag behind in the development process. For instance, people who engage in subsistence farming, including in conflict-affected areas, are especially exposed to reduced land productivity as a result of industrial pollution and soil degradation. They also lack the skill and access that allow them to cover their financial risk and sustain their livelihoods. The Government, particularly the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, are aware of these challenges, have established state programmes and crafted the legislation to tackle them, including the ratification and development of international treaties and national strategies. However, while in the current context green routes to recovery from COVID-19 and the conflict are encouraged, a gap remains in terms of the country's ability to ensure that economic reconstruction does not reproduce an environmentally unfriendly model.

The theory of change asserts that, for people to be protected from the adverse impacts of environmental degradation and climate change, climate plans, agreements and protocols need to be effectively implemented, including Azerbaijan's commitment under the Paris Climate Agreement. The shift to a green economy entails developing climate modeling plans and climate change reporting mechanisms underpinned by SDG 13.2.1, "operationalization of an integrated climate strategy", as this outcome's primary indicator. This translates into a number of impactful actions, such as the setup of national plans

assessing climate-solution technologies with a focus on those furthest behind, the shift to energy reduction solutions, adaptive strategies on land use, and the integration of vulnerability assessments and other evidence in environmental policies.

The UN will support the transition towards the circular economy, which carries a transformational potential to generate substantial economic and environmental benefits. Interventions will target key pillars of the circular economy, including preserving and extending the useful lifetime of goods, utilizing waste streams as a source of secondary resources, accounting for the systems perspective during the design process, and tracking and optimising resource use. Thus, this Outcome area will help ensure that economic growth is decoupled from the consumption of finite resources. Investment in waste prevention, eco-design and re-use will help the country make significant savings while also decreasing annual greenhouse gas emissions, reducing pressure on the environment, and improving the security of the supply of raw materials. The transition to green growth will also increase the competitiveness of Azerbaijani firms, stimulate innovation and boost job creation.

In terms of climate mitigation and adaptation, UN advisory support will also be necessary for establishing a national green climate fund, a legal riparian water management agreement, and a national waste and wastewater management plan as well as technical assistance under five Multilateral Environmental Agreements.²⁷

²⁷ [Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution](#)
[Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context](#);
[Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes](#);
[Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents](#);
[Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters](#)

The country will be linked to the UN-Habitat's Cities and Climate Change Initiative (CCCI), and the global City Resilience Initiative which will help to mainstream the climate adaptation into national urban policy discussions. Local climate action will be promoted and implemented to extend energy efficiency in the area of housing/ building rehabilitation, neighborhood upgrading (including embedding urban heritage in larger territorial settings) and upgrading of basic urban services while promoting nature-based solutions. Establishment of green and public spaces and consideration for membership of new UNESCO-designated territories, such as Global Geoparks and Biosphere Reserves, will offer innovative solutions to improve the quality of the built environment, air quality, ground water quality, enhance local resilience and promote sustainable lifestyles, consequently improving the health and well-being.

SDGs 6.4.1, 7.3.1, and 15.3.1 have been adopted as indicators to measure progress towards these ends. Establishing a national adaptation plan and reinforcing early warning systems will also be crucial to improve risk mitigation and management - measured through SDG 13.1.2, 13.1.3 and 13.2.1 - as will be the adoption and implementation of national disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. The Outcome impacts reducing inequality within society (SDG 10), good health and wellbeing (SDG 3), building sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11), fostering partnership for the Goals (SDG 17), and protecting life below water (SDG 14).

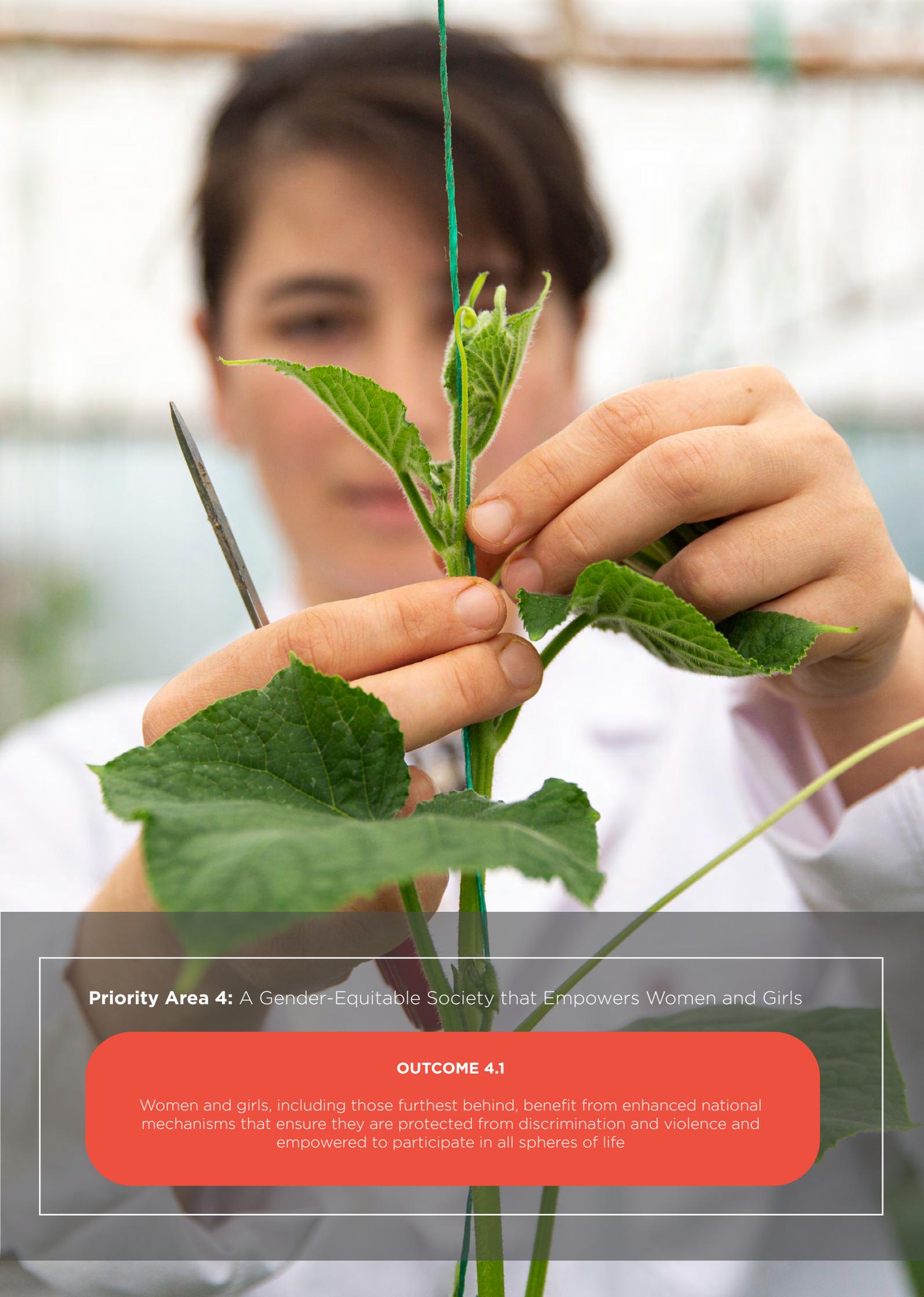
Partnerships

New regional partnerships will need to be established to improve regional cooperation

in environmental protection and climate. Moreover, the theory change suggests that new conservation financing modalities are required (such as a national conservation fund, PES, etc.) which call for new partnerships between the Government, philanthropic sources, development finance partners and institutional investors.

Within Government, synergies between the sector roadmaps are necessary for a whole-of-government approach led by the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, and including collaboration with the Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Transport, Communications and High Technologies, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Emergency Situations, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and State Agency for Alternative and Renewable Energy Sources under the Ministry of Energy, among other entities including the National Coordination Council for Sustainable Development (NCCSD).

Other actors, including the private sector and civil society organizations, will be engaged in corporate responsibility for climate action. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) will also support cooperation objectives the exchange of best practices at the regional level.



Priority Area 4: A Gender-Equitable Society that Empowers Women and Girls

OUTCOME 4.1

Women and girls, including those furthest behind, benefit from enhanced national mechanisms that ensure they are protected from discrimination and violence and empowered to participate in all spheres of life

Theory of Change

The Common Country Analysis singled out gender inequality as a sustainable development challenge because of the need to acknowledge and address the specific prejudice suffered by women that prevents their full participation in public and private life. Thus, the analysis recommended that gender inequality should not just be integrated into the UNSDCF's response to development challenges (for example, in the choice of indicators) but tackled with a dedicated result and vision of change.

The primary theory of change adopted here is that a conscious policy that counters discrimination and challenges stereotypes on gender roles is required for sustainable development outcomes to work for all. The policy should be directed at improving women's representation in the workforce, combating wrong perceptions on their role in society, eliminating all forms of violence and harmful traditional practices against them, and building their senior management capacity in the Government.

Proposed actions to achieve this vision include a combination of costed action plans on gender equality, legislative changes, and advocacy initiatives to eliminate stigmatizing narratives on women in the education curricula and in professional life. Further efforts will also be undertaken to ensure that women and girls, especially those in marginalized communities and those impacted by conflict, acquire new skills empowering them to aspire to leadership positions in the economic and political spheres. The voices of women and girls will be used to improve the inclusivity of public policies and create a gender-sensitive policy shift, embracing the principle of leaving no one behind.

Selected indicators to monitor progress reflect the tripartite approach of transforming

the role of women in society (SDG 5.3.1, SDG 5.2.1 and sex at birth ratio) and the political and private sphere (reflected in SDG 5.1.1, SDG 5.5.2, SDG 5.5.1, 5.a.1, 5.a.2, 8.5.1), the availability of systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment (SDG 5.c.1) and access to sexual and reproductive health-care services (SDG 3.7.1 and SDG 3.7.2). In addition, working with authorities to improve the disaggregation of data will improve the evidence base, thereby increasing effectiveness. The UN system will support gender-aware policy appraisals, including sex-disaggregated public expenditure analyses and beneficiary assessments of public service delivery. The Outcome impacts reducing inequality within society (SDG 10), good health and wellbeing (SDG 3), education (SDG 4), and peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 17).

Partnerships

The United Nations System will foster more effective and sustainable partnerships with development partners to advance and monitor commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment, while also documenting good practices in achieving this outcome. Partnerships with the Government, academia, the private sector and civil society organizations are vital for the success of this outcome. Key government partners include the State Committee for Family, Children and Family Affairs, State Statistics Committee, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Youth and Sport and Ministry of Justice. International partnerships and link-ups include ADB, USAID, and the World Bank, as well as strong linkages with the private sector and civil society. For example, women business and sports leaders will be championed as brand ambassadors.

2.5. Synergies Between Cooperation Framework Outcomes

The theory of change deliberately aims to enable interdependent changes across the outcome structure, reflecting the multisectoral planning and mainstreaming of issues that are expected of the UN system to deliver. Synergies between outcomes increase the catalytic effects of one action on another.

The framework provides for several institutional and policy synergies that allow different UN entities to work on all results regardless of mandate. At the institutional level, Outcomes and their respective Outputs were designed in a manner that reflects a multilateral approach, disaggregating performance indicators to a level that requires the involvement of most UNCT members for each result. Outcome formulations were also made consistent to focus on achieving changes in the status of people left behind across all priority areas. This will encourage UN entities and their partners to think of single actions that can help advance several results at once. Joint programmes and partnerships will allow these institutions to leverage their comparative advantages, aligning them around every outcome and making collective work necessary. At the policy level, the proposed **SDG Accelerator Pooled Fund** will not only promote policy coherence but serve all outcome areas. An

adequate level of integration between joint partnerships, thematic collaboration and agency-specific work will also be ensured by the Annual Performance Review of UNSDCF implementation, which will remain crucial to enhancing the overall effectiveness of the UN System in Azerbaijan and its impact on the 2030 Agenda. The UNSDCF also complements and connects with other planning frameworks, such as the country reviews undertaken by the different UN Human Rights Mechanisms, including Treaty Bodies and the Human Rights Council.

Beyond in-country synergies, the UNSDCF will help advance regional cooperation frameworks, such as regional cooperation with riparian states over transboundary water usage, the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Programme, and the Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia (TRACECA), all of which could one day extend to embracing the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) of China and also initiate possible joint projects with the regional organizations of which the Republic of Azerbaijan is a member.

2.6. Sustainability

To ensure positive sustainable change(s), the development pathways identified under this Cooperation Framework stress a move towards building institutional capacities that are more effective (impactful) and efficient (value for money). In addition, the framework opens a space for new stakeholders to engage in the sustainable development trajectory of

the Republic of Azerbaijan, which will help ensure continued investment in the results and wider sharing and management of risks. The UNSDCF also uses structural solutions that will ensure its sustainability because they are fully engrained into key public policies, including the national budget formulation and execution process.

The implementation approach pursued in this Cooperation Framework differs from the UN-Azerbaijan Partnership Framework (UNAPF) (2016-2020). It discourages the delivery of separate programmes and rather targets the adoption of best practices that can be replicated and brought to scale. It also focuses on the achievement of durable solutions rather

than quick fixes, looking into SDG accelerators that help deliver those solutions. Looking at the 2030 horizon, it will create enduring capacities both at the level of policymakers and rights-holders that will help maintain the Republic Azerbaijan on track for the SDGs attainment.

2.7. UNCT Configuration

The unanimous adoption of 2030 Agenda not only provides a common framework for state and non-state actors, but also reinforces the normative role of the UN system in acting on behalf of all rights holders, not just decision-makers. The UN system is the natural counterpart to the Government in supporting the attainment of SDG goals for the benefit of all. UN expertise in large-scale planning, collecting statistical data to support decisions and the integration of cross-cutting themes into programmes will be of great assistance to Government partners. Other fundamental characteristics of the UNCT are its convening authority, its standard-setting expertise, as well as technical strengths in policy advisory and advocacy. Both in-country entities and those based outside will play a catalytic role to help shape national planning and provide strategic guidance on the sustainable development agenda in Azerbaijan.

Given the growing importance of mobilizing private capital, the UNCT encourages new partnership arrangements to tackle gaps and overcome challenges using the skills, competencies and capacities of the private sector. The global shift towards the adoption

of integrated national financing frameworks places the UNCT in a strategic position to support the Government in designing and implementing strategies that will realign and attract public and private SDG investments. In this context, UNCT will not only support financial intermediation between partners but also strengthen institutional capacities around more effective service delivery models and standard operating procedures. UNCT will also deploy common instruments and tools to improve country-level coherence, while also leveraging multiple sources of financing into the proposed SDG Accelerator Pooled Fund arrangements.

Finally, through the Resident Coordinator's Office, the UNCT will continue convening international development partners and actors in civil society and academia on a regular basis, to help assess emerging trends in and opportunities for the Republic of Azerbaijan to benefit from international technical support in its efforts to meet the 2030 Agenda.



CHAPTER 3: COOPERATION
FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION
PLAN

3.1. Implementation Strategy and Strategic Partnerships

The UN reforms outlined in the General Assembly's Resolution 72/279 empower the Resident Coordinator to ensure greater efficiency of the work of the UNCT through the joint implementation of the UNSDCF. Efficiency demands a greater focus on increasing accountability of the RC and UNCT in implementing the UNSDCF in coordination and partnership with key stakeholders. Given the switch from funding to financing, part of the new way of working includes a focus on developing stronger and more accountable relations with all key implementation partners, including Government, legislative and judicial branches, committees and commissions, the private sector, civil society

organizations, academia, development partners, and regional bodies. To guarantee alignment of UN entities' activities and results to that of UNSDCF, all UN country programmes and projects will be solely derived from the Outcomes of the results framework, with the Cooperation Framework being operationalized through Joint Work Plans developed in line with the UNSDCF.

In support of UNAPF (2016-2020) evaluation findings, guidance provided by government counterparts and partners, and in order to increase efficiency, the following broad principles are adopted for the UNSDCF:

-  Maintain a strategic focus on human rights and leaving no one behind, improving the evidence base and better understanding the drivers of exclusion;
-  Maintain an integrated planning approach at the Outcome and Output levels, with UN entities focused on areas of comparative advantage;
-  Support government budget allocation toward scalable and impactful programmes and investments; streamlining communication and engagement with the private sector, the investment community, and civil society
-  Based on comparative advantages, work to build capacities in policy-making, delivery and tracking results, as a continuous process across the life of the UNSDCF; and
-  Guarantee that national SDG targets and indicators become the default monitoring framework around which impacts can be measured and verified.

3.2. Governance

Experience including with COVID-19 response has shown that coordination mechanisms are most effective when they fully engage Government and UN stakeholders both at the strategic and operational levels. Therefore, in addition to regular monitoring and evaluation, the UNSDCF will benefit from the political leadership and available technical expertise within the Government and the UN Country Team to ensure that all activities and results are on track. The convening role of the Ministry of Economy is the key to helping bring together experts in different Government departments and their counterparts at the UN.

The primary vehicle for overseeing implementation will be the Joint Government-UN Steering Committee (JSC), under which Results Groups will be established as required. The Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Group, the Operations Management Team (OMT), and the Communication Group will also act as key structures in the implementation of the UNSDCF. In addition to the Results Groups, the UNCT will establish thematic and operational groups to ensure UNCT programme and operation functions contribute to UNSDCF implementation.

The JSC will be co-chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator representing the UNCT and the Minister of Economy representing the Government of Azerbaijan. Terms of Reference that outline the responsibilities and membership of the JSC will be developed. As per the recommendations of the UNAPF (2016-2020) evaluation, other stakeholders including representatives of vulnerable groups, will also be given due consideration for membership of the JSC to ensure accountability and transparency in the implementation of the Cooperation Framework.

Senior government officials at the level of Deputy Ministers and Heads of UN agencies will be appointed to co-chair the UNSDCF Result groups. National and UN agency leads per Outcome

3.3. Joint Work Plans

The UNSDCF will be operationalized through the development of Joint Work Plans (JWPs) that will present the planned programmatic sub-outputs and resource contributions of each UN development system entity to Cooperation Framework outputs, consistent with the Theory of Change. They can be either unique to an agency or shared by two or more UNCT members.

The Joint Work Plans will be discussed within and across Results Groups to ensure that gaps and overlaps, the potentials for synergy and joint programmes are identified and streamlined. The Joint Work Plans will be endorsed by the UNCT and the Joint National-UN Steering Committee. The endorsed Joint Work Plan will be the basis for the Annual Performance Review, which will feed directly into the preparation of the Annual

3.4. Others

Given the need to put in place innovative financing measures, consideration will be given to establishing an **SDG Accelerator Pooled Fund**. The fund will allow UNSDCF interventions to tap into a capital stack that supports de-risking alongside more traditional forms of funding such as donor grants. Such a fund could be based on matching contributions from Government and international development partners. Other mechanisms will be considered, such as the

area will be determined by the Government and UNCT. Results Groups will convene meetings to discuss progress, challenges, opportunities and new learning, as well as how to adapt the implementation of joint work plans as identified in their TORs.

Given the ongoing fiscal and health crisis, the JSC co-chairs will adjust the UNSDCF as required, ensuring that it remains relevant and responsive to recovery plans. Moreover, the JSC will guarantee that its work is aligned with national development processes and mechanisms, particularly those monitoring progress toward the attainment of the 2030 Agenda. Close coordination with the National Coordination Council for Sustainable Development (NCCSD) will be ensured.

UN country results report to the Government. All Joint Work Plans will be prepared online in UNINFO.

The UNSDCF recognizes that operational challenges may emerge as the JWPs are set up and implemented. These may include delays in delivery, cumbersome administrative processes, or the possible misinterpretation of certain activities. To help anticipate and address those challenges, the Legal Annex (Annex 2) emphasizes the necessity to ensure that all activities are delivered as a joint product of the United Nations, notwithstanding the differences in agency mandates. This will help reduce paperwork as well as the need for disparate coordination mechanisms.

launch of a public-private partnership platform and the deployment of impact assessments and panel surveys, allowing impacts to be attributed to efforts deployed under the UNSDCF.

Implementation of the UNSDCF will also be guided in consultation and with the support of the UN Youth Advisory Council to ensure programme activities are youth sensitive.



CHAPTER 4: MONITORING
AND EVALUATION PLAN

4.1. Monitoring Plan

Monitoring the UNSDCF is a core function of the UNCT to be undertaken in close collaboration with the Ministry of Economy, the State Statistics Committee, frontline service delivery ministries and partners. Tracking progress will be carried out using UNINFO. A costed multi-year monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan will be developed by the UNCT and submitted to the Joint Steering Committee (JSC) for endorsement. The Monitoring Plan will serve as a reference document for UNCT to plan activities that reflect the data needs of the UNSDCF Results Framework.

The UNCT and the Government acknowledge that data scarcity affects setting clear baselines for many sectors, which were also highlighted by the CCA findings. Thus, UNCT started several initiatives to strengthen national data systems which will help set clear baselines and track progress toward UNSDCF results, but also provide sound and reliable data for Voluntary National Reviews and National Information Portal on SDGs. In this regard, a Joint Taskforce of the UNCT and the State Statistics Committee was formed in March 2020 to strengthen SDG Monitoring and Reporting. The Task Force conducted an in-depth assessment of existing mechanisms for SDG monitoring and developed a work plan to address capacity gaps identified in the assessment, including ways to address missing statistics and indicators concerning the situation of vulnerable groups and the potential to develop innovative data collection approaches. Cooperation will continue in the shape of an exchange of best practices, trends and lessons learned in line with the UNSDCF and the State Program on the Development of Official Statistics (2018-2025).

In addition, a national Multi-Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) is to be rolled out in 2021, alongside the socio-economic impact assessment on COVID-19, which will provide key data points for monitoring the UNSDCF results and related SDG targets and indicators.

To facilitate a One UN system response, an interagency UN Monitoring and Evaluation Group (UN-MEG) and SDG Taskforce will provide technical support to UN Agencies to ensure the adoption of joint monitoring systems wherever possible. UN-MEG will jointly monitor and measure progress towards the attainment of SDG indicators. It will maintain close relations with the Ministry of Economy and the State Statistics Committee and benefit from secretariat support of the Resident Coordinator's Office.

4.1.1. Risks and Opportunities

The 2020 macroeconomic, health and military crises act as a reminder that the attainment of national development goals can easily be delayed if resources are redirected to meet other objectives. The collapse in global oil prices placed a considerable threat on government spending, as did tensions with Armenia, while the COVID-19 pandemic may further contract growth and increase long-term health spending to the detriment of other priorities. In this context, macroeconomic volatility to external shocks has had a profound impact on the socioeconomic status of society, with a disproportionately negative impact on the informal economy, community resilience and social cohesion.

The long-term effects of the conflict in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan will continue posing a significant challenge to development programming. The scope to address the full range of challenges related to reconstruction and rehabilitation of the formerly occupied regions using this Cooperation Framework remains limited. However, the UNCT will continue supporting national response efforts in support of returnees with technical, financial and operational expertise, as required. In addition, this framework will be utilized to strengthen national capacities in ways that will help mitigate the dire consequences of the conflict as well as increase the resilience of returnees as well as national and local institutions supporting them.

The primary assumption of the UNSDCF is that the Government of Azerbaijan will continue to prioritize attainment of the 88 SDG targets despite these challenges, implying continuity in financing the social sectors and environmental and climatic protection. In this context, the

main risk over the period 2021-2025 is that fiscal shocks and dedicating international assistance to combat socioeconomic and health impacts derail progress in certain Outcomes. There is also a contingent risk that over-dependence on a few donors and a more constrained pool of giving will further exacerbate the resourcing challenge.

At the same time, the recovery path offers considerable opportunity to accelerate reforms that have not been progressing and to modernize the service delivery framework. This assumes strong political will to build back better with an SDG mindset, as well as a risk mitigation strategy that put human rights at the centre, preserve democratic space, and meaningfully engage civil society in the Government response. At the policy and delivery level, this will involve considerable effort in adopting inclusive policies to strengthen the education and health systems. It will also suppose conscious decisions to use the recovery phase to bridge the rural and urban service delivery divide, redesign the national employment and social protection framework, as well as address imbalances preventing women from enjoying the same opportunities as men. Building upon Azerbaijan's rich tradition of multiculturalism, the framework will help stimulate additional efforts to protect the rights of minorities, promote tolerance and strengthen social cohesion.

All of this speaks to the need to rapidly increase investments in human capital. Environmental challenges – many of which have their roots in regional practices – as well as negative impacts of the oil industry and industrialization can also undermine progress, with increased fragility and disaster risks.

4.1.2. Cooperation Framework Review and Reporting

Each Result Group will conduct an Annual Performance Review with its stakeholders to discuss achievements, challenges, opportunities and lessons learned, ahead of the last Joint National-UN Steering Committee meeting. UNINFO reports will be the basis of the discussion. Based on this review and the evolving country context, the Results Groups will propose to the UNCT amendments to the Cooperation Framework and/or to the Joint Work Plan to ensure continued relevance and effectiveness of UN support to the country.

The JSC will meet once a year at the Joint National-UN Steering Committee Annual Performance Review in line with the national budget process and fiscal year, to provide strategic direction and oversight of execution and reflect on the results captured in the draft Annual UN Results Report. Should the COVID-19 emergency be prolonged, or new emergencies occur over the course of the period 2021-2025, additional research and policy advisory work can be commissioned by the JSC, in order to mitigate impacts that would affect the execution of the UNSDCF.

The results of all reviews will be made available to inform the Voluntary National Reviews and other relevant reporting and review exercises, including by Human Rights Mechanisms.

A high-quality UN Country Results Report will be developed that captures the full footprint of UN development Results (not activities) in support of the 2030 Agenda and will be submitted to the endorsement of the Joint National-UN Steering Committee.

4.2. Evaluation Plan

In 2024 an independent evaluation of the UNSDCF will be undertaken. An evaluation plan will be designed by the UN-MEG and submitted for validation and approval to the JSC. The evaluation will assess the status of planned UNSDCF results, and the extent to which made a significant contribution to national development processes, in particular in relation to making sure that no one is left behind. The independent evaluation will be based on the United Nations Evaluation Group's norms and standards, which also establish rules on the independence of the evaluators and quality criteria that the UNSDCF evaluation will have to meet. The evaluation will benefit from the lessons learned in the UNAPF (2016-2020) during the previous programming cycle. UNCT country program evaluations will be

aligned to the same period as the UNSDCF evaluation in order to feed into that process. The RC and UN-MEG will guarantee that the sequence of evaluations, and learning made across the programming cycle, are clearly documented. Working with the Government, it may also be possible to undertake an impact assessment in key sectors with the support of an independent control group. All evaluations will be carried out according to a schedule to be agreed upon by the JSC, and they will engage national authorities to seek their input and findings.



ANNEX 1: RESULTS FRAMEWORK

UNSDCF Results Framework 2021-2025

IMPACT: People left behind in Azerbaijan’s sustainable development trajectory are empowered to realize their rights through adequate institutional support and increased resilience.

PRIORITY AREA 1: INCLUSIVE GROWTH THAT REDUCES VULNERABILITY AND BUILDS RESILIENCE UN Lead: UNDP, ILO and FAO

National development priorities: Economic diversification; Private sector development; Mitigating spatial disparities between regions; Strengthening agricultural service and extension outreach; Boosting human capital and skills development; Public Finance Management (PFM) reforms to improve state efficiency;

Strategic Road Map for the production and processing of agricultural products
Strategic Road Map for the production of consumer goods at small and medium-sized entrepreneurship level
Strategic Road Map for the development of vocational education and training
Strategic Road Map for the development of financial services

State Program on the socioeconomic development of regions of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2019-2023
State Program on Azerbaijani Youth in 2017-2021
State Program on the enhancement of international competitiveness of the higher education system in the Republic of Azerbaijan 2019-2023
State Program on the development of agricultural cooperation in the Republic of Azerbaijan
State Program on the development production of citrus, wine, cocoon and silk, rice (2018-2025), tea (2018-2027), cotton (2017-2022), tobacco (2017-2021) in the Republic of Azerbaijan

National Employment Strategy 2019-2030
Azerbaijani Youth Development Strategy 2015-2025

Regional frameworks: [Eastern Partnership \(EaP\)](#) [CAREC](#) [TRACECA](#) [SPECA](#)

SDGs and SDG targets:

SDG 2 Zero Hunger: 2.4
SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth: 8.5; 8.6; 8.8

RESULTS	PROPOSED PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	BASELINES (YEAR)	TARGET (DURATION OF COOPERATION FRAMEWORK)	SOURCE/ MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTION STATEMENT
<p>Outcome 1.1</p> <p>People furthest behind participate in and benefit from a diverse and innovative economy encompassing future-oriented labor market transformation and access to decent work</p> <p>UN Agencies: FAO, ILO, IOM, UNDP, UNECE, UN-Habitat, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNV, UN Women, UNESCO, UNESCAP (+WB, USAID)</p>	Share of micro, small and medium entrepreneurship subjects in GDP, percent	14.9 percent (2019)	35 percent	Baseline: Small and Medium Business (SMB) Development Agency; Target: Strategic Road Map on the production of consumer goods at the level of small and medium enterprises; (custodian agency UNIDO)	<p>Assumptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Political will to adopt national inclusive growth policies and execute - Strong engagement, collaboration and interest from the private sector - Government approves of the UN convened national PPD platform - Partners are willing and committed to supporting the UN system - Policy continuity beyond the life of UN system support - The transition to digital economy and remote work modalities accelerate post-COVID19

RESULTS	PROPOSED PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	BASELINES (YEAR)	TARGET (DURATION OF COOPERATION FRAMEWORK)	SOURCE/ MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTION STATEMENT
Partners: Ministry of Economy, NCCSD, Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Transport, Communications and High Technologies, Ministry of Finance, State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Youth and Sports, State Committee for Family, Women and Children's Affairs, State Committee for Refugees and IDPs and State Committee on Work with Diaspora, UNYAC, Private sector (tbd), CSOs (tbd), Innovation Labs, Youth organizations	SDG 8.6.1 Proportion of youth (aged 15-24 years) not in education, employment or training *(Not prioritised, data not available in the Portal) Additional disaggregation: people of working age; by sex and to reflect the situation of specific groups such as refugees	Proportion of young people (15-24 years old) not in the labor market or education: 23 percent (2017)	Proportion of young people (15-24 years old) not in the labor market or education -19 percent	Source: 2019-2030 Employment Strategy of the Republic of Azerbaijan; adjusted for 2025 (custodian agency ILO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased space for participation of target groups especially the vulnerable - Diverse financing options are explored and set up - LNOB principles are upheld by the implementing partners - Expansion to districts are encouraged - Changing priorities are timely incorporated into the programming
	SDG 8.8.2 Level of national compliance with labor rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) based on ILO textual sources and national legislation by sex and migrant status *(Not prioritised, data not available in the portal)	tbd	tbd	(custodian agency ILO)	
	SDG 8.5.1 Average hourly earnings of employees, by sex, age, occupation and persons with disabilities *(Prioritized, data available in the portal, however not disaggregated)	3.5 AZN (2018)	5 AZN	Baseline: National Information Portal on SDGs Target: National Employment Strategy; adjusted for 2025 (custodian agency ILO)	

OUTPUT STATEMENT	INDICATOR STATEMENT	BASELINES (YEAR)	TARGET (DURATION OF COOPERATION FRAMEWORK)	SOURCE/ MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTION STATEMENT
Output 1.1.1: MSMEs and social enterprises, including women-owned businesses, are set up and sustained for the benefit of the furthest behind (UN Women, UNDP, UNIDO, ILO, FAO, UNECE, UN-Habitat, IOM)	1.1.1.1 Number of MSMEs and social enterprises operating in lower income communities	0 (2020) ²⁸	500 (owned by women-125)	Agency reports Lead agency: UNDP	
	1.1.1.2 Number of people (disaggregated by sex) with adequate knowledge and resources to set up MSMEs	285 (all women) (2020)	425 women	Agency reports Lead agency: UNDP	
	1.1.1.3 Increase in public budget for programs supporting MSMEs, including access to finance, markets, technology, and entrepreneurship skills *An indicator could also be included to measure the gender-responsiveness of these budget (with a percentage breakdown for programmes targeting women)				
Output 1.1.2: Enhanced human capital and a skilled workforce are available in key sectors (UNICEF, UNDP, UNIDO, FAO, UNV, UNESCO)	1.1.2.1 Number of - education facilities that offer knowledge and skills matching labor market needs (to be tracked with a sub-indicator measuring the percent employability after graduating these education facilities)	0 (2019)	100	Agency reports Lead agency: UNICEF	
	1.1.2.2 Number of persons who receive tailored support for employment in the formal labor market (disag. by youth, women, PwD, refugees)	0 (2020)	700 (210 women)	Agency reports Lead agency: UNDP	
	1.1.2.3 Number of employees by sector participating in retraining programs, developing new skills, upgrading or updating skills (disaggregated by sex)	0 (2020)	290 (162 women)	Agency reports Lead agency: UNDP	
	1.1.2.4 Number of young women and men equipped with necessary skills to successful self-realization, especially from the most vulnerable groups	0 (2020)	1000 (50 % women)	Agency reports Lead agency: UNESCO	

²⁸ Data under output indicators are subject to revisions and update under the M&E plan

OUTPUT STATEMENT	INDICATOR STATEMENT	BASELINES (YEAR)	TARGET (DURATION OF COOPERATION FRAMEWORK)	SOURCE/ MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTION STATEMENT
<p>Output 1.1.3:</p> <p>International standards* regarding decent work, inclusion and the future of work are mainstreamed in policy and in practice</p> <p>(*including ILO, HR, and other global standards on access and the existence of an enabling environment)</p> <p>(UNHCR, UNDP, UNIDO, ILO)</p>	11.3.1 Number of policies and actions adjusted to international standards that support the right to work for vulnerable groups (disaggregated by sex, refugees, PwD)	1 on refugees (2019)	+1 on refugees	Agency reports	
	11.3.2 Number of legal, regulatory and administrative procedures adapted or established for promoting MSME				
<p>Output 1.1.4:</p> <p>Rural populations are able to diversify their income sources, and sustainably improve their livelihoods</p> <p>(UNDP, ILO, FAO, UN-Habitat, UNV)</p> <p>UPR recommendations 140.94; 140.97</p>	11.4.1 Proportion of farmers with multiple sources of income (disag. by sex)				
	11.4.2 SDG 2.4.1 Proportion of agricultural area under productive and sustainable agriculture * (Prioritized, data not available in the portal)	0 (2020)	>100,000 ha	Lead agency: UNDP (custodian agency FAO)	
	11.4.3 Share of SMEs in the field of agriculture, forestry and fisheries (disag. by region, gender)				

PRIORITY AREA 2: STRONGER INSTITUTIONS FOR BETTER PUBLIC AND SOCIAL SERVICES DELIVERY
UN Lead: UNICEF, UNFPA, WHO, UNDP

National development priorities:

Strengthening early childhood and primary education, and technical and vocational education; Strengthening primary health care provision and preventive care; Strengthening the justice system; Modernization and digitization of critical services; Mitigating spatial disparities between regions; Combating gender and social exclusion; Strong integration of the SDGs as key sector performance indicators linked to the budget; Strengthening evidence-based government through development of national statistics.

State Program on the socioeconomic development of regions of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2019-2023

State Program on the enhancement of international competitiveness of the higher education system in the Republic of Azerbaijan 2019-2023

State Program on the Development of Inclusive Education for Persons with Disabilities in the Republic of Azerbaijan 2018-2024

State Program on the Development of the Official Statistics in the Republic of Azerbaijan in 2018-2025

State Program on the development of Azerbaijani justice 2019-2023

State Program on Mandatory Preventive Medical Examination of Children 2018-2022

State Program on ensuring of food safety in the Republic of Azerbaijan 2019-2025

Azerbaijani Youth Development Strategy 2015-2025

Strategy on development of civil service in the Republic of Azerbaijan 2019-2025

Strategy of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Children 2020-2030

National Action Plan to promote Open Government

Strategic Roadmap for the Development of Telecommunication and Information Technologies in the Republic of Azerbaijan

Regional frameworks: [Eastern Partnership \(EaP\)](#) [International Comparison Program CIS](#) [Partnership for Good Governance](#)

SDGs and SDG targets:

SDG 1 No Poverty: 1.3; 1.a

SDG 3 Good Health and Wellbeing: 3.4; 3.7; 3.8

SDG 4 Quality Education: 4.3

SDG 5 Gender Equality: 5.6;

SDG 12 Responsible Consumption and Production: 12.7

SDG 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions: 16.6; 16.7; 16.10

SDG 17 Partnerships for the Goals: 17.18

OUTCOME STATEMENT	PROPOSED INDICATORS	BASELINES (YEAR)	TARGET (DURATION OF COOPERATION FRAMEWORK)	SOURCE/ MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTION STATEMENT	
Outcome 2.1 People furthest behind benefit from enhanced national capacities and governance structures for social protection and quality public and social services, in line with Azerbaijan's international commitments* (*including Human Rights and ILO standards) FAO, ILO, IOM, OHCHR, UNDP, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, UNOPS, UNV, WHO, UNESCO, UNESCAP UPR recommendations 140.79; 140.80; 140.82; 140.89; 140.90; 140.93 Treaty Bodies concl. observations: CESCR E/C.12/AZE/CO/3, paras 11, 13, 14 CEDAW/C/AZE/CO/5, para 39 (c) CRPD/C/AZE/CO/1, paras 33, 35 CRC/C/AZE/CO/3-4, paras 17, 18, 20, 39, 53 CMW/C/AZE/CO/2, paras 19, 26, 27, 43	Gross enrolment ratio in pre-primary education (3-5 years old), by sex Sub-indicator: Coverage of school readiness of 5-year-old children	Total: 39.71 percent; Boys: 39.90 percent; Girls: 39.49 percent (2018) Total: 80 percent, boys: 54 percent; girls: 46 percent (2019)	50 percent 90 percent	UNICEF Ministry of Education	Assumptions: - Political will exists to reform and improve public services - Anti-corruption efforts are expedited - Economic downturn following the COVID-19 pandemic is successfully mitigated - Resilience to natural disasters and human-made crises including regional dynamics and the conflict in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan - Private sector and civil society are more closely engaged in public policies - School based management system approved and piloted by government - Partners are willing and committed to support the UN system	
	SDG 4.3.1 Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex Proxy: Number of students in different education institutions * (Prioritized, data is planned to be collected)	tbd - Formal General education: 1510248 - Secondary special education: 55922 - Vocational education: 22088 - Higher education: 183085 - Informal: tbd Total: 1771343 (2019)	tbd	tbd		(Custodian agency UNESCO-UIS) Ministry of Education
	Average Service Coverage	70.9 (2018)	75.5	Source (Custodian agency WHO)		

OUTCOME STATEMENT	PROPOSED INDICATORS	BASELINES (YEAR)	TARGET (DURATION OF COOPERATION FRAMEWORK)	SOURCE/ MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTION STATEMENT
Partners: Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, NCCSD, Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population, State Agency of Mandatory Health Insurance, Ombudsperson Office, State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations, DOST Agency, Ministry of Transport, Communications and High Technologies, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Youth and Sports, State Committee for Family, Women and Children's Affairs, State Committee for Refugees and IDPs, Azerbaijani Bar Association, UNYAC, Private sector (tbd), CSOs (tbd)	SDG 3.8.2 Proportion of population with large household expenditures on health as a share of total household expenditure or income * (Prioritized, data is planned to be collected)	tbd	tbd	(Custodian agency WHO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policy continuity beyond the life of UN system support - Increased space for participation of target groups especially the vulnerable - Diverse financing options are explored and set up - LNOB principles are upheld by implementing partners - Expansion to districts is encouraged - Changing priorities are incorporated into the programming cycle in a timely fashion
	SDG 3.4.1 Mortality rate attributed to cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory disease * (Prioritized, data available in the portal)	466.3 (per 100000) (2018)	350 (Applying OECD reduction target)	Baseline: National Information Portal on SDGs (Custodian agency WHO)	
	SDG 3.7.1 Proportion of women of reproductive age (aged 15-49 years) who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods * (Not prioritized, data not available on portal)	13-14 percent (modern methods) (2006,2011) 45-47 percent (use of contraceptives) (SSC)	25-27 percent 60-65 percent	Baseline: Demographic and Health Survey in 2006 (by Macro International); in 2011 (by ISIM)); SSC Target: UNFPA (Custodian agency DESA-PopDiv)	
	SDG 5.6.1 Proportion of women aged 15-49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care * (Prioritized, data is planned to be collected)	Baseline is expected from MICS in 2021	tbd	(Custodian agency UNFPA)	
	Prevalence of anemia in women of reproductive age	38.5 percent (2013)	tbd	Baseline: UNICEF Azerbaijan Nutrition Survey (2013)	
	SDG 1.3.1 Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable * (Prioritised, data available in the portal)	5.56 (the share of Unemployed persons receiving unemployment benefit as a proportion of total number of unemployed persons) (2018)	10 (tbd)	Baseline: National Information Portal on SDGs (Custodian agency ILO)	

OUTCOME STATEMENT	PROPOSED INDICATORS	BASELINES (YEAR)	TARGET (DURATION OF COOPERATION FRAMEWORK)	SOURCE/ MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTION STATEMENT
	<p>SDG 1.a.2 Proportion of total government spending on essential services (education, health and social protection)</p> <p>* (Prioritised, data available in the portal)</p>	21.23 percent (2018)	30 percent	<p>Baseline: National Information Portal on SDGs</p> <p>(Custodian agency UNESCO-UIS)</p>	
	<p>SDG 16.7.2 Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability and population group</p> <p>* (Not prioritised, data not available in the portal)</p>	tbd	tbd	(Custodian agency UNDP)	
	<p>SDG 16.6.2 Proportion of population satisfied with their last experience of public services</p> <p>Additional disaggregation: by sex, age, disability</p> <p>* (Not prioritised, data not available in the portal)</p>	<p>99.4 percent (survey of 50 percent of the service users: 36.7 percent - women, 63.3 percent - men; 10.3 percent - youth (18-25).</p> <p>For electronic services, 55 percent of respondents have used electronic services and satisfaction level is 4.23 out of 5</p>	99.8 percent and satisfaction level of 4,7 out of 5	ASAN (Custodian agency UNDP)	
	<p>SDG 16.10.2 Azerbaijan adopts and implements constitutional, statutory and/or policy guarantees for public access to information</p> <p>* (Not prioritised, data available in the portal)</p>	1	1	<p>Baseline: National Information Portal on SDGs</p> <p>Voluntary reporting to UNESCO (Access to Information)</p> <p>UNESCO report on SDG 16.10.2</p> <p>(Custodian agency UNESCO)</p>	

OUTCOME STATEMENT	INDICATOR STATEMENT	BASELINES (YEAR)	TARGET (DURATION OF COOPERATION FRAMEWORK)	SOURCE/ MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTION STATEMENT
<p>Output 2.1.1:</p> <p>The national education system is strengthened to ensure inclusive access to quality education and training.</p> <p>(OHCHR, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNDP, UNODC, ILO, UNESCO)</p> <p>UPR recommendations 140.40; 140.45; 140.106; 140.107; 140.138; 140.144; 140.152; 141.91; 141.93; 141.100</p> <p>Treaty Bodies concl. observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CESCR E/C.12/AZE/CO/3, paras 17, 23 • CEDAW/C/AZE/CO/5, paras 13 B, C, 29 • CRPD/C/AZE/CO/1, paras 33, 35, 40, 41 • CRC/C/AZE/CO/3-4, paras 37, 56 E, 57 F, 64, 65 • CMW/C/AZE/CO/2, paras 32, 33 	2.1.1.1 Number of educational institutions that offer inclusive education and training	4 (2019)	200	Agency reports Lead agency: UNICEF	
	2.1.1.2 Country shows improvements in reading literacy	472 (2016)	500	National assessment reports, Progress in International Reading Literacy Study Reports Lead agency: UNICEF	
	2.1.1.3 Scope and quality of national teacher professional development - score (1-4)	3 (2019)	4	MoE reports Lead agency: UNICEF	
	2.1.1.4 Number of vocational education and training centres ²⁹ modernized to render quality education for those who seek to acquire relevant skills (including technical and vocational skills) for employment, decent jobs, and entrepreneurship	0	5	Lead agency: UNDP	
	2.1.1.5 Number of initiatives offering inclusive online training to young men and women to acquire professional skills				

²⁹ Total number of vocational education and training centers in the country: for 2019/2020 academic year - 97 total: 94 (subordinate to the Ministry of Education); 2 (subordinate to other institutions); 1 private

OUTCOME STATEMENT	INDICATOR STATEMENT	BASELINES (YEAR)	TARGET (DURATION OF COOPERATION FRAMEWORK)	SOURCE/ MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTION STATEMENT
<p>Output 2.1.2:</p> <p>National primary health care and nutrition systems are strengthened to ensure universal coverage and quality, inclusive and high-impact interventions.</p> <p>(UNICEF, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNDP, UNODC, UNOPS, WHO)</p> <p>UPR recommendations 140.89; 140.99; 140.100; 140.101; 140.102; 140.103; 140.104; 140.105; 140.131</p> <p>Treaty Bodies concl. observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CESCR E/C.12/AZE/CO/3, paras 9, 16 • CRC/C/AZE/CO/3-4, paras 58, 59, 60, 61 B, 63 • CEDAW/C/AZE/CO/5, paras 32, 33 • CRPD/C/AZE/CO/1, paras 17, 18, 19 • CMW/C/AZE/CO/2, para 37 	2.1.2.1 National NCD Strategy (or costed Action Plan -including nutrition action plan targeting stunting and anemia) developed and implemented				
	2.1.2.2 Increase in the number of family doctors and home visits as part of the primary health care system				
	2.1.2.3 Existence of monitoring and quality assurance services for health care service delivery				
	2.1.2.4 Reproductive health counseling and services are incorporated in the Primary Health Care system			Agency reports	
	2.1.2.5 A national infection prevention and control (IPC) strategy or action plan developed and implemented.				
	2.1.2.6 A national model for PHC in Azerbaijan developed and tested based on national pilot projects.				
	2.1.2.7 Number and types of essential medicines procured to strengthen the national healthcare procurement system and improve the treatment of tuberculosis (TB) and HIV/AIDS patient as well procurement of PPE for COVID-19 outbreak response	0	22 types of medicines for TB; 25 types of medicines for people living with HIV	Agency reports Lead agency: UNDP	
	2.1.2.8 SDG 12.7.1 Degree of sustainable public procurement policies and action plan implementation *(Not prioritized, data not available in the portal)		75 percent	Custodian agency – UN Environment Target: State Service for Antimonopoly and Consumer Market Control	

OUTCOME STATEMENT	INDICATOR STATEMENT	BASELINES (YEAR)	TARGET (DURATION OF COOPERATION FRAMEWORK)	SOURCE/ MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTION STATEMENT
<p>Output 2.1.3: Providers of public and social protection services have improved capacity to target the most vulnerable groups with quality, effective and innovative solutions</p> <p>(UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP, UNODC, ILO, FAO, UN-Habitat)</p> <p>UPR recommendations 140.18; 140.29</p> <p>Treaty Bodies concl. observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CESCR E/C.12/AZE/CO/3, para 5 • CEDAW/C/AZE/CO/5, paras 23 C, D; 37 • CRPD/C/AZE/CO/1, paras 9, 21, 33 • CRC/C/AZE/CO/3-4, paras 12, 52, 53, 54, 55 • CMW/C/AZE/CO/2, paras 41, 42 	2.1.3.1 Number of public and social service providers who are qualified to address the needs of vulnerable groups				
	2.1.3.2 National social service strategy and system developed and implemented				
	2.1.3.3 Social model, functionality definition and other principles of the CRPD are applied in national policy and strategies in supporting people with disabilities				
	2.1.3.4 Number of social workers per 100,000 population	1 per 100,000 (2019)	3 per 100,000	Agency reports Lead agency: UNICEF	
<p>Output 2.1.4</p> <p>National policies and mechanisms are strengthened to promote and protect human rights, increase access to justice and participatory mechanisms, and sustain social cohesion.</p> <p>(OHCHR, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNDP, UNODC, ILO, UN-Habitat, WHO)</p>	2.1.4.1 Number of persons seeking to address their alleged human rights or labor rights violations who successfully had access to justice (disaggregated by sex and to include e.g. access to asylum system; access to child justice system)	<p>Number of persons having access to free legal assistance provided by OHCHR -980</p> <p>Number of persons having access to free legal assistance provided by the Bar Association-553</p>	<p>Number of persons having access to free legal assistance provided by OHCHR -3980</p> <p>Number of persons having access to free legal assistance provided by the Bar Association-over 6900</p>	Agency reports Lead agency: OHCHR	

OUTCOME STATEMENT	INDICATOR STATEMENT	BASELINES (YEAR)	TARGET (DURATION OF COOPERATION FRAMEWORK)	SOURCE/ MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTION STATEMENT
<p>UPR recommendations 140.1; 140.2; 140.4; 140.5; 140.6; 140.13; 140.17; 140.23; 140.24; 140.26; 140.36; 140.39; 140.42; 140.43; 140.44; 140.69; 140.70; 140.72; 140.73; 140.88; 141.25; 141.50;</p> <p>Treaty Bodies concl. Observations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CESCR E/C.12/AZE/CO/3, paras 5, 20, 22, 27 • CCPR/C/AZE/CO/4, paras 5, 9, 11, 12, 25, 27, 29, 31, 33, 37, 39, 41 • CEDAW/C/AZE/CO/5, paras 7, 9, 11, 16, 23 • CRPD/C/AZE/CO/1, paras 9, 13, 26, 27, 29, 31, 37, 39, 45 • CRC/C/AZE/CO/3-4, paras 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 33, 39, 46, 48, 49, 55, 57, 67, 70, 72, 76, 77 • CMW/C/AZE/CO/2, paras 9, 13, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 27, 28, 29, 35, 39, 45 • CAT/C/AZE/CO/4, paras 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 21, 23, 25, 27, 33, 35, 37, 39, 41 • CERD/C/AZE/CO/7-9, paras 6, 8, 12, 20, 22, 26, 28 	<p>2.1.4.2 Number of practicing lawyers per capita (especially in the regions of the country) and efficient public institutions (mechanisms) delivering free legal aid</p>	<p>Practicing lawyers per 100,000 persons: 63 (urban) / 5 (rural)</p> <p>On site free legal services delivered by the Bar Association: 2 (urban) / 6 (rural)</p>	<p>practicing lawyers per 100,000 persons: 72 (urban) / 15 (rural)</p> <p>On site free legal services delivered by the Bar Association: 12 (urban) / 20 (rural)</p>	<p>Agency reports Lead agency: OHCHR</p>	
	<p>2.1.4.3 Number of national policies to promote human rights and labor rights, engagement of civil society and gender equality in compliance with international human rights standards.</p>	<p>On human rights: 5 (National Program for Action to Raise Effectiveness of the Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms in the Republic of Azerbaijan; Strategy of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Children and National Action Plan on Implementation of the Strategy for Children 2020-2025; Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities; Azerbaijan 2020: A Vision of the Future)</p> <p>On labor rights: 2 (Labour Code; Decent Work Programme of the Republic of Azerbaijan (2016-2020)) - ILO inputs required</p> <p>On engagement of civil society: 3 (National Action Plan for the Promotion of Open Government 2020-2022 (Chapter V on expanding the activities of civil society members, increasing public participation and civilian oversight); Law of Non-Governmental organizations (Public Associations and Foundations); The Law on Citizens' Appeal</p> <p>On gender equality: 1 (National Action Plan on the Prevention of Domestic Violence for 2020-2023)</p>	<p>On human rights: At least 7 (in case of adoption of the National Action Plan on the Protection of the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities)</p> <p>On engagement of civil society: at least 3</p> <p>On gender equality: At least 2 (In case of adoption of the National Action Plan on Gender Equality)</p>	<p>Agency reports Lead agency: OHCHR</p>	

OUTCOME STATEMENT	INDICATOR STATEMENT	BASELINES (YEAR)	TARGET (DURATION OF COOPERATION FRAMEWORK)	SOURCE/ MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTION STATEMENT
	2.1.4.4 Number of national policies to implement UN normative framework on peace and security				
	2.1.4.5 Number of targeted initiatives to promote inclusive dialogue and support for conflict-affected communities, including with a focus on gender	1	4	Agency reports Lead agency: UNDP	
	2.1.4.6 Number of civil society organizations who receive capacity building on engagement in public policy making, local development and confidence building	0	25	Agency reports Lead agency: UNDP	
Output 2.1.5. Institutional capacities are enhanced to effectively develop and implement governance programmes, public service delivery, youth engagement and modernization of services to bridge the digital divide	2.1.5.1 Number of mechanisms and policies applied to improve access to information and communications technology, MIL (Media, Information and Literacy) and e-government services	0	5	Agency reports Lead agency: UNDP	
(OHCHR, UNDP, UNODC, UN-Habitat, UNV, UNICEF, IOM, UNESCO)	2.1.5.2 Number of capacity-building activities implemented for government institutions to improve meaningful engagement of youth in social and public life				
	2.1.5.3 Number of the public-private partnership structure, charter, and innovative operational plan in the tourism sector for destination management organization regions	0	1	Lead agency: UNDP	

OUTCOME STATEMENT	PROPOSED INDICATORS	BASELINES (YEAR)	TARGET (DURATION OF COOPERATION FRAMEWORK)	SOURCE/ MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTION STATEMENT
<p>Outcome 2.2</p> <p>Quality*, disaggregated and timely data is available and used to inform decision-making and policies that leave no one behind</p> <p>(* up-to-date, accurate, collected and analyzed in line with internationally accepted methodology)</p> <p>FAO, ILO, IOM, UNDP, UNDRR, UNECE, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, UNV, WHO, UNESCAP</p> <p>Partners: State Statistics Committee, NCCSD, State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations, DOST Agency, Ministry of Transport, Communications and High Technologies, Ministry of Finance, Private sector (tbd), CSOs (tbd), Think tanks, Research Institutions, Universities, Innovation Labs</p>	<p>SDG 17.18.1 Statistical capacity indicator for Sustainable Development Goal monitoring</p> <p>(The IAEG-SDGs is currently reviewing a statistical capacity indicator for 17.18.1.)</p> <p>* (Not prioritised, data not available in the portal)</p> <p>Alternative indicator: Proportion of SDG indicators data available</p>	<p>34.8 percent (Global Indicators)</p>	<p>56% (Global Indicators)</p>	<p>National Information Portal on SDGs and SSC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Political will is in place to improve the state of SDG statistics with the focus on vulnerable and marginalized groups - The vitality of data for policy making is acknowledged - Partners are willing and committed to supporting the UN system - Private sector and civil society are more closely engaged - Increased transparency in data communication - Aspiration to test innovative and high-tech solutions - Partnerships with non-traditional actors is encouraged
	<p>SDG 17.18.3 Presence of a national statistical plan that is fully funded and under implementation, by source of funding</p> <p>* (prioritised, data available in the portal)</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>National Information Portal on SDGs</p> <p>(Custodian agency PARIS21)</p>	

OUTCOME STATEMENT	INDICATOR STATEMENT	BASELINES (YEAR)	TARGET (DURATION OF COOPERATION FRAMEWORK)	SOURCE/ MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTION STATEMENT
Output 2.2.1: Institutional capacities are strengthened to improve monitoring and reporting on the SDGs and on furthest behind persons (UNFPA, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNDP, UNODC, ILO, FAO, UNDRR, UNECE, UN-Habitat, UNV, WHO, IOM)	2.2.1.1 Number of state officials trained on methodologies for collecting and reporting data on SDG indicators through UN support				
	2.2.1.2 Existence of a less than 5 years old household survey providing data by gender, wealth, ethnic group and location on both access and learning				
	2.2.1.3 Increase in the availability of data and indicators regarding people furthest behind in national SDG reports (disaggregated by age, sex, refugee status, level of education)				
	2.2.1.4 Number of sex-disaggregated indicators developed and incorporated into national population database for informed programming, planning and monitoring of progress on ICPD agenda	320	370	Lead agency: UNFPA	

OUTCOME STATEMENT	INDICATOR STATEMENT	BASELINES (YEAR)	TARGET (DURATION OF COOPERATION FRAMEWORK)	SOURCE/ MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTION STATEMENT
<p>Output 2.2.2:</p> <p>National capacities are enhanced to generate evidence-based policies and decisions</p> <p>(UNDP, ILO, FAO, UNICEF, UNDRR)</p>	2.2.2.1 Draft costed national statistical plan prepared with UN support				
	2.2.2.2 Number of joint UN-Government research initiatives conducted to inform policies and decisions	0	5		
	2.2.2.3 Availability of population projections at national and sub-national levels (disaggregated by age, sex and location) to analyze correlations between demographic changes and socio-economic development processes				
	2.2.2.4 Number of government officials with improved knowledge and capacity on result-based planning and budgeting with UN support				

PRIORITY AREA 3: PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT & ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE

UN Lead: FAO, UNDP

National development priorities:

Regional and global economic integration; Mitigating spatial disparities between regions; Improved water resource, environmental protection and climate adaptation and mitigation; Public Finance Management (PFM) reforms to improve state efficiency;

Strategic Roadmap for the production and processing of agricultural products

Strategic Roadmap for the development of utility services (electricity and thermal energy, water and gas)

State Program on the geological study of subsurface and the effective use of the mineral resource base 2020-2024

National Strategy for the improvement of solid domestic waste management in the Republic of Azerbaijan 2018-2022

State Program on the Social and Economic Development of Regions - 2019-2023

Action Plan for Ensuring the Effective Use of Water Resources in 2020-2022

Regional frameworks: [Eastern Partnership \(EaP\)](#) [EUWI+ programme](#)

SDGs and SDG targets

SDG 6 Clean Water and Sanitation: 6.4

SDG 7 Affordable and Clean Energy: 7.3

SDG 13 Climate Action: 13.1; 13.2

SDG 15 Life on Land: 15.3

OUTCOME STATEMENT	PROPOSED INDICATORS	BASELINES (YEAR)	TARGET (DURATION OF COOPERATION FRAMEWORK)	SOURCE/ MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTION STATEMENT
Outcome 3.1: People including those left behind benefit from climate strategies and environment protection policies that ensure natural resources are sustainably managed, livelihoods are protected, and resilience strengthened FAO, IOM, UNDP, UNDRR, UNECE, UN-Habitat, UNIDO, WHO, UNESCO, UNESCAP	SDG 13.2.1 Azerbaijan reports its nationally determined contributions, long-term strategies, national adaptation plans, strategies as in adaptation communications and national communications * (Not prioritized, data planned to be collected)	0	1	Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources (MENR) (Custodian agency UNFCCC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government is responsive to the adoption of new conservation financing modalities - Civil society/academia active in environmental protection; - Government is committed and reports under the international agreements; - Benefits to green economy and increased revenues in the long term is acknowledged - Regional political interests are reconciled; - Regional states agree to participate in and contribute towards regional cooperation in the environment space
	SDG 15.3.1 Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area Additional disaggregation: land degradation in the territories regained by Azerbaijan * (Prioritised, data not available in the portal)			(Custodian agency UNCCD)	
	SDG 6.4.1 Change in water-use efficiency over time * (Not prioritised, data available in the portal)	4.85 USD/cubic meter (2018)	6 USD/cubic meters	National Information Portal on SDGs / MENR (Custodian agency FAO)	

OUTCOME STATEMENT	PROPOSED INDICATORS	BASELINES (YEAR)	TARGET (DURATION OF COOPERATION FRAMEWORK)	SOURCE/ MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTION STATEMENT
<p>Partners: Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Economy, NCCSD, Ministry of Transport, Communications and High Technologies, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health, Ministry of the Internal, Affairs, Ministry of Emergencies, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Academia of Sciences, UNYAC, Private sector (tbd), CSOs (tbd)</p>	<p>SDG 7.3.1 Energy intensity measured in terms of primary energy and GDP</p> <p>* (Prioritized, data available in the portal)</p>	<p>524.2 kg/1000 manats (2018)</p>	<p>510 kg /1000 manats</p>	<p>National Information Portal on SDGs</p> <p>(Custodian agencies IEA DESA-UNSD)</p>	
	<p>SDG 13.1.2: Azerbaijan has adopted and implemented national disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030</p> <p>* (Not prioritized, data not available in the portal)</p>	<p>0 (in progress)</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Ministry of Emergencies</p> <p>(Custodian agency UNDRR)</p>	
	<p>SDG 13.1.3: Local governments adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies</p> <p>* (Not prioritized, data not available in the portal)</p>	<p>0 (in progress)</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Ministry of Emergencies</p> <p>(Custodian agency UNDRR)</p>	
	<p>An INFF coordinated structure established with the Government and development partners, private sector to operationalize future SDG-aligned policies including on the green strategy.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Ministry of Economy</p> <p>Lead agencies UNDP and UNFPA</p>	

OUTCOME STATEMENT	INDICATOR STATEMENT	BASELINES (YEAR)	TARGET (DURATION OF COOPERATION FRAMEWORK)	SOURCE/ MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTION STATEMENT
Output 3.1.1: Institutional capacities to plan, track and report on climate change, and to access climate finance and technologies, are strengthened (UNDP, UNIDO, FAO, UNECE, UN-Habitat, WHO, UNDRR, UNESCO) +international environmental funds (e.g., GEF and GCF)	3.1.1.1 Number of gender-responsive national reports/plans produced to track climate change (including mitigation and finance) and assess the climate-solution technologies, with focus on furthest behind	0	1	Agency reports Lead agency: UNDP	Climate and environmental financing will increase significantly
	3.1.1.2 Amount of national and international finance in USD mobilized for climate change-related planning and action	0 (international finance)	2690000 (international finance)	Agency reports Lead agency: UNDP	
	3.1.1.3 Increase in technology mobilized for climate change-related planning and action				
	3.1.1.4 Number of institutions with strengthened scientific and analytical capacities applying scientific knowledge and technological know-how into DRR and CCA practices				
Output 3.1.2: Adaptive policies on land use, integration to the tourism value chain and water management are set up to enhance the resilience of vulnerable communities (UNDP, ILO, FAO, UNICEF, UNDRR, UNESCO) UPR recommendation 140.97	3.1.2.1 Proportion of communities vulnerable to land degradation who have been covered by adaptation policies				
	3.1.2.2 Proportion of communities vulnerable to water stress who have been covered by adaptation policies				
	3.1.2.3 Number of hectares of rehabilitated pasture areas				
	3.1.2.4 Proportion of protected areas, forests and lands under sustainable management with improved climate resilience				
	3.1.2.5 Number of communities involved in the tourism value chain along the tourist route				
	3.1.2.6 Number of protected "nomadic routes"	0	10	Agency reports Lead agency: UNDP	
	3.1.2.7 Number of territories/areas considered potentially as UNESCO-designated sites				

OUTCOME STATEMENT	INDICATOR STATEMENT	BASELINES (YEAR)	TARGET (DURATION OF COOPERATION FRAMEWORK)	SOURCE/ MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTION STATEMENT
<p>Output 3.1.3:</p> <p>Energy policies and solutions reduce emissions and save energy</p> <p>(UNDP, FAO, UNECE, UN-Habitat, IOM)</p>	<p>3.1.3.1 Number of energy saving solution applications that are gender-responsive and integrate LNOB principle</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>Agency reports Lead agency: UNDP</p>	
	<p>3.1.3.2 Square meters covered by the energy management information system</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>1000000 square meters</p>	<p>Agency reports Lead agency: UNDP</p>	
	<p>3.1.3.4 Share of population who benefited from improved coverage by cost-efficient and sustainable energy in the public sector, disaggregated by sex</p>				
<p>Output 3.1.4:</p> <p>Evidence-based policies, mechanisms and practices are adopted to reduce environmental hazards and pollution in urban and rural areas</p> <p>(UNDP, FAO, UNECE, UN-Habitat, WHO)</p>	<p>3.1.4.1 Proportion of policies and practices that integrate evidence on the impact of environmental hazards on the entire population including vulnerable communities (disag. by sex and by rural/urban)</p>				
	<p>3.1.4.2 Proportion of policies and practices that integrate evidence on the impact of pollution on vulnerable communities (disaggregated by sex, age and rural/urban)</p>				

PRIORITY AREA 4: A GENDER-EQUITABLE SOCIETY THAT EMPOWERS WOMEN AND GIRLS

UN Lead: UN Women, UNFPA

National development priorities:

Combating gender and social exclusion; Mitigating spatial disparities between regions; Strengthening the justice system; Boosting human capital and skills development; Public Finance Management (PFM) reforms to improve state efficiency;

State Program on the Azerbaijani youth in 2017-2021

Employment Strategy of the Republic of Azerbaijan 2019-2030

Regional frameworks: [Eastern Partnership \(EaP\)](#) [Partnership for Good Governance](#)

SDGs and SDG targets:

SDG 3 Good Health and Wellbeing: 3.7

SDG 5 Gender Equality: 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.5, 5.a, 5.c

SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth: 8.5

OUTCOME STATEMENT	PROPOSED INDICATORS	BASELINES (YEAR)	TARGET (DURATION OF COOPERATION FRAMEWORK)	SOURCE/ MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTION STATEMENT
Outcome 4.1: Women and girls, including those furthest behind, benefit from enhanced national mechanisms that ensure they are protected from discrimination and violence and empowered to participate in all spheres of life (FAO, ILO, OHCHR, UNDP, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, WHO, UN Women, UNESCO, UNESCAP) UPR recommendations 140.19; 140.20; 140.37; 140.38; 140.51; 140.53; 140.56; 140.57; 140.65; 140.105; 140.109; 140.110; 140.113; 140.114; 140.116; 140.118; 140.120; 140.121; 140.123; 140.124; 140.127; 140.129; 141.88	SDG 5.c.1 Presence of systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment (gender-based budgeting) * (prioritized, data not available in the portal)	0 (SCFWCA started working on this together with partners)	1	SCFWFA (Custodian agencies UN Women, UNDP, OECD)	Assumptions: Political appointments depend on political leadership and civil service interests Gender-responsive budgeting is embraced by the Ministry of Finance and key Sector Ministries Authorities agree on a UN-sponsored National Gender Platform as part of the Public Policy Dialogue
	SDG 5.1.1 Availability of legal frameworks that promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex (including legal framework on women's equal right to ownership of land) * (prioritized, data available in the portal)	ongoing	1	National Information Portal on SDGs (Custodian agencies UN Women, World Bank, OECD)	
	Percentage of CEDAW Committee Concluding Observations (2020) and relevant comments of the ILO Supervisory Bodies implemented	tbd	tbd	UNFPA, ILO	

OUTCOME STATEMENT	PROPOSED INDICATORS	BASELINES (YEAR)	TARGET (DURATION OF COOPERATION FRAMEWORK)	SOURCE/ MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTION STATEMENT
<p>Treaty Bodies concl. observations CCPR/C/AZE/CO/4, paras 15, 16 CEDAW/C/AZE/CO/5, paras 8, 13, 15, 19, 23, 25, 27, 31, 35, 39 CESCR E/C.12/AZE/CO/3, paras 10, 18, 19 CRPD/C/AZE/CO/1, paras 16, 17 CRC/C/AZE/CO/3-4, para 31 CAT/C/AZE/CO/4, para</p> <p>Partners: State Committee for Family, Women and Children's Affairs, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, NCCSD, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Population, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ombudsperson Office, State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations, DOST Agency, Ministry of Finance, , Ministry of Youth and Sports, UNYAC, Media, Private sector (tbd), CSOs (tbd)</p>	<p>SDG 5.2.1. Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age (disaggregated by e.g. refugee status)</p> <p>* (prioritized, data planned to be collected)</p>	<p>712 crimes registered on violence toward women by an intimate partner (Sept 2019-Sept 2020) 1 percent or 5 of these offenses are sexual violence, 99 percent or 707 is physical violence.</p> <p>All victims are over 18 years old.</p> <p>The share of violence by intimate partners in total crimes toward women is 32 percent (712 out of 2,237)</p> <p>Victims of domestic violence: 1038 women including 1 pregnant and 12 girls (76 percent of total 1358 victims); (2019)</p> <p>Forms of domestic violence:</p> <p>premeditated murder: 37 women including 1 girl and 1 pregnant, 7 men, (33 women died)</p> <p>attempted murder: 24 women including 2 girl, 1 pregnant; 13 men</p> <p>intentional infliction of harm to health:</p> <p>serious: 23 women, 18 men</p> <p>less serious: 94 women, 36 men</p> <p>minor: 831 women including 7 girls; 233 men</p> <p>torture: 8 women including 1 girl; 1 man</p> <p>threats (to kill or make serious damage to health): 2 women</p> <p>other: 19 women (15 injured); 12 men;</p>	<p>Number of crimes related to the violence toward women by intimate partners to decrease by 30 percent</p>	<p>Source on intimate partners: Ministry of Internal Affairs</p> <p>Source on domestic violence: Prosecutors Office</p> <p>(Custodian agencies WHO, UN Women, UNICEF, UNFPA)</p>	

OUTCOME STATEMENT	PROPOSED INDICATORS	BASELINES (YEAR)	TARGET (DURATION OF COOPERATION FRAMEWORK)	SOURCE/ MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTION STATEMENT
	SDG 5.3.1 Proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in union 1) before age 15 and 2) before age 18 * (prioritized, data planned to be collected)	number of marriages-366 (before age 18) (2019)	tbd	SCFWFA (Custodian agency UNICEF)	
	Sex ratio at birth in the population	114 boys per 100 girls (2019)	110/100	SCFWFA	
	SDG 8.5.1 Average hourly earnings of women and men employees, by occupation, age and disability status *(Prioritized, data available in the portal, however not disaggregated)	3.5 AZN (2018)	5 AZN	Baseline: National Information Portal on SDGs Target: National Employment Strategy; adjusted for 2025 (custodian agency ILO)	
	SDG 5.5.2 Proportion of women in managerial positions *(Prioritized, data available in the portal)	35.6 percent (2018)	40 percent	Baseline: National Information Portal on SDGs Target: SCFWFA (custodian agency ILO)	
	SDG 5.5.1 Proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments and (b) local governments *(Prioritized, data available in the portal)	a) 18.2 percent 22 women (2020) b) Number of women deputies of local executive authorities - 76, heads - 1 (2019) Number of committee chairwomen in parliament - 2 (13.3 percent)	a) 25 percent	SCFWCA; National Information Portal on SDGs (custodian agency UN Women)	
	Number of local and national mechanisms created to address gender-based violence in Azerbaijan	tbd	tbd	UNFPA	
	SDG 3.7.1 Proportion of women of reproductive age (aged 15-49 years) who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods * (Not prioritized, data not available on portal)	13-14 percent (modern methods) (2006, 2011) 45-47 percent (use of contraceptive) (SSC)	25-27 percent 60-65 percent	Baseline: Demographic and Health Survey (2006 (Macro International), 2011 (ISIM)); SSC (Custodian agency DESA-PopDiv)	
	SDG 3.7.2 Adolescent birth rate (aged 10-14 years; aged 15-19 years) per 1,000 women in that age group * (prioritized, data available in the portal) Number of live births per 1000 women aged 10-14 years and 15-19 years	15-19: 48.1 percent Rural: 66.9 percent Urban: 28.9 percent (2019) 15-17: 13.2 percent Rural: 18.2 percent Urban: 8.2 percent (2019) 15-17: 1.6 percent (2,320) 15-19:10 percent (14,155) (2019)	tbd 15-19: 7 percent	(Custodian agency DESA-PopDiv) SSC, SCFWFA, UNFPA	

OUTCOME STATEMENT	PROPOSED INDICATORS	BASELINES (YEAR)	TARGET (DURATION OF COOPERATION FRAMEWORK)	SOURCE/ MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTION STATEMENT
<p>Output 4.1.1:</p> <p>Costed action plans on gender equality are set up and implemented</p> <p>(UNFPA, UNDP, UNODC, ILO, WHO)</p> <p>UPR recommendations 140.25; 140.28; 140.108; 140.119; 140.122; 140.126</p>	<p>4.1.1.1 Number of endorsed and costed national action plans on gender equality and the elimination of gender discrimination and violence</p>	<p>Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings;</p> <p>National Action Plan on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2020-2024</p> <p>Law on ensuring gender equality (between men and women) 2006</p>			
	<p>4.1.1.2 An active national institution with a mandate to coordinate monitor implementation of national policies on gender equality is in place</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Yes</p>		
	<p>4.1.1.3 SDG 5.a.2: The legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women's equal rights to land ownership and/or control</p> <p>*(Prioritized, data available in the portal)</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Yes (assess the enjoyment of these rights in practice by women)</p>	<p>Baseline: National Information Portal on SDGs</p> <p>Custodian agency FAO</p>	
	<p>4.1.1.4 Number of legislations adopted or amended to promote gender equality in line with relevant human rights and labor rights standards</p>				

OUTCOME STATEMENT	PROPOSED INDICATORS	BASELINES (YEAR)	TARGET (DURATION OF COOPERATION FRAMEWORK)	SOURCE/ MEANS OF VERIFICATION	ASSUMPTION STATEMENT
Output 4.1.2: Stereotypes of women and girls are reduced in public discourse (OHCHR, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP, UNODC, UNESCO) UPR recommendations 140.111; 140.115; 140.117 Treaty Bodies concl. observations CCPR/C/AZE/CO/4, para 15A CEDAW/C/AZE/CO/5, paras 20, 21, 28 C, D, E, 29 D, E	4.1.2.1 Number of local initiatives/actions to address gender stereotypes and discriminatory social norms				
	4.1.1.2 Number of primary and secondary school materials revised to eliminate stereotypical portrayal of women and girls				
	4.1.2.3 Frequency of stereotypical language in job advertisements				
Output 4.1.3 Women and girls have skills and knowledge to enjoy equal rights and opportunities (UNICEF, UNHCR, UNDP, UNODC, ILO, FAO, UN-Habitat, UNESCO) UPR recommendations 140.125; 140.128 Treaty Bodies concl. observations CCPR/C/AZE/CO/4, para 15C CEDAW/C/AZE/CO/5, paras 31, 35	4.1.3.1 Number of women and girls who are involved in learning STEM or business of science industry supported by UN				
	4.1.3.2 Number of women and girls who have participated in skill development programmes for learning, personal empowerment, active citizenship and employability through UN-supported programmes (disag. to include refugees)				
	4.1.3.3. Proportion of women from marginalized background who successfully had access to justice				
	4.1.3.4 SDG 5.a.1: (b) share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure (prioritized, data is planned to be collected)				

ANNEX 2: LEGAL ANNEX

The aim of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF- hereinafter referred to as CF- is to ensure that the work of the UN in the Republic of Azerbaijan fully contributes to the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. The CF will be implemented in a transparent, evidence-based and participatory manner. It will also be founded on the principle of delivering-as-one emanating from the UN Development System Reform Agenda, promoting a common understanding of the terms and guidelines of cooperation with the United Nations and minimizing the need to sign project-specific agreements between the UN Country Team members and the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Specifically, the following Legal Basis of the Relationships will guide the implementation of the CF.

Whereas the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan (hereinafter referred to as “the Government”) has entered into the following:

I. With United Nations Development Programme (hereinafter referred to as UNDP) have entered into a basic agreement to govern UNDP’s assistance to the country (Standard Basic Assistance Agreement (SBAA), which was signed by both parties on January 6, 2001. Based on Article I, paragraph 2 of the SBAA, UNDP’s assistance to the Government shall be made available to the Government and shall be furnished and received in accordance with the relevant and applicable resolutions and decisions of the competent UNDP organs, and subject to the availability of the necessary funds to the UNDP. In particular, decision 2005/1 of 28 January 2005 of UNDP’s Executive Board approved the new Financial Regulations and Rules and along with them the new

definitions of ‘execution’ and ‘implementation’ enabling UNDP to fully implement the new Common Country Programming Procedures resulting from the UNDG simplification and harmonization initiative. In light of this decision, this Cooperation Framework together with a work plan (which shall form part of this Cooperation Framework and is incorporated herein by reference) concluded hereunder constitute together a project document as referred to in the SBAA.

The United Nations Volunteers programme (hereinafter referred to as UNV) is administered by UNDP and covered by SBAA.

II. With the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), a Basic Cooperation Agreement (BCA) concluded between the Government and UNICEF on 25 May 2002.

III. With the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), a Basic Agreement was concluded between the Government and UNFPA on 09 June 2017.

IV. With the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Agreement for the opening of the FAO Azerbaijan Partnership and Liaison Office and provision on 25 May 2015.

V. With the World Health Organization (WHO), a Basic Agreement concluded between the Government and WHO on 2 September 2003.

VI. With the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), a Country Co-operation Agreement concluded between the Government and UNHCR on 9 July 1996.

VII. With the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNOHCHR) 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 Residents Coordinators and members of the UNCTs in the South Caucasus.

VIII. With the International Organization of Migration (IOM), a Cooperation Agreement was signed between the Government of Azerbaijan and the IOM on 8 December 1999.

IX. With the International Labour Organization (ILO), a Cooperation Agreement was signed between the Government of Azerbaijan and the ILO on 3 July 1993.

X. With the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the provisions of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement between the United Nations Development Programme and the Government, signed and entered into force on 6 January 2001 shall be applied, mutatis mutandis, to UNIDO projects and programmes in Azerbaijan.

XI. With the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the provisions of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement between the United Nations Development Programme and the Government, signed and entered into force on 6 January 2001 shall be applied, mutatis mutandis, to UNODC projects and programmes in Azerbaijan.

XII. With the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the provisions of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement between the United Nations Development Programme and the Government, signed and entered into force on 6 January 2001 shall be applied, mutatis mutandis, to UNESCO projects and programmes in Azerbaijan.

XIII. For all other agencies, including non-resident entities: 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 agency's governance structures.

The UNSDCF will, in respect of each of the United Nations system agencies signing, be read, interpreted and implemented in accordance with and in a manner that is consistent with the basic agreement between such United Nations system agency or international organization and the Host Government, as well as the 1946 Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations to which Azerbaijan acceded on 13 August 1992.

1. Government commitments.

1.1. Without prejudice to these agreements, the Government shall apply the respective provisions of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations (the “General Convention”). The Government shall also accord to the Agencies and their officials and to other persons performing services on behalf of the Agencies, the privileges, immunities and facilities as set out in the cooperation and assistance agreements between the Agencies and the Government. In addition, it is understood that all United Nations Volunteers shall be assimilated to officials of the Agencies, entitled to the privileges and immunities accorded to such officials under the General Convention or the Specialized Agencies Convention.

1.2. The Government will be responsible for dealing with any claims, which may be brought by third parties against any of the Agencies

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 and assistance agreements, except where it is any claims and liabilities resulting from operations under the cooperation and assistance agreements, except where it is mutually agreed by Government and a particular Agency that such claims and liabilities arise from gross negligence or misconduct of that Agency, or its officials, advisors or persons performing services.

1.3. Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, the Government shall insure or indemnify the Agencies from civil liability under the law of the country in respect of vehicles provided by the Agencies but under the control of or use by the Government.

2. Miscellaneous.

2.1. Nothing in this Agreement shall imply a waiver by the UN or any of its Agencies or Organizations of any privileges or immunities enjoyed by them or their acceptance of the jurisdiction of the courts of any country over disputes arising of this Agreement.

2.2. Nothing in or relating to this document will be deemed a waiver, expressed or implied, of the privileges and immunities of the United Nations and its subsidiary organs, including WFP, whether under the Convention on

the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations of 13th February 1946, as applicable, and no provisions of this document or any Institutional Contract or any Undertaking will be interpreted or applied in a manner, or to an extent, inconsistent with such privileges and immunities.



**UNITED NATIONS AND
GOVERNMENT OF AZERBAIJAN**

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
COOPERATION FRAMEWORK
2021 - 2025