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United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023 - 2027 for Nepal

United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023 – 2027 for Nepal

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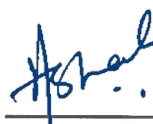Mr. Roshan Cooke
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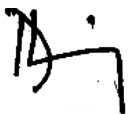
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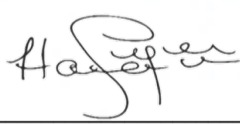
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Joint Statement

The Government of Nepal and the United Nations (UN) System in Nepal have worked closely to prepare and present this United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for Nepal (2023-2027).

The UN is proud to have been a longstanding and trusted partner of the Government of Nepal (GoN) and the people of Nepal over many decades. The present collaboration, as reflected in this UNSDCF, witnesses a strong alignment of development priorities with those set out in Nepal's 15th Plan and emergent 16th Plan.

This UNSDCF is signed by the GoN and the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) at a moment of heightened significance in our mutual attention to advancing inclusive and sustainable development. To these ends, this UNSDCF will support the country and its people to recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, secure further progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), graduate from Least Developed Country (LDC) status, and implement programmes aimed at accelerating nationwide social and economic transformation.
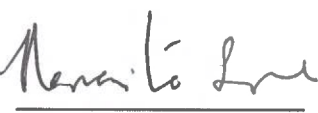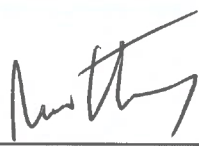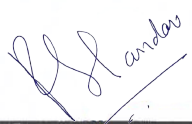
In overall terms the UNSDCF supports the GoN in its aspiration to create an inclusive and sustainable development trajectory within which no one is left behind, with strengthened institutions and communities at all levels that are capable of mitigating, adapting and managing the significant risks posed by climate change.

In addition to the GoN, and underscoring our joint commitment to its priorities and results, 21 UN agencies are signatories to this Cooperation Framework. Within that scope, the UNCT will also draw on the capabilities of the entire UN system and continue to implement reforms that ensure the UN 'delivers as one' for the realization of development results.

The UN commits to working together with the GoN and people of Nepal in a transparent and accountable manner to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for the benefit of all people.

Government of Nepal   United Nations

Secretary   United Nations Resident Coordinator
Mr. Kewal Prasad Bhandari   Hanaa Singer-Hamdy

Executive Summary

Nepal has made **impressive strides in development** in recent decades. The number of people living in poverty has declined significantly and rates of maternal and child mortality have been in decline, alongside improvements in nutrition and reductions in stunting.[1] Life expectancy and school enrolment rates have increased and access to drinking water and sanitation has improved. Roads, communications and the air transport infrastructure have also expanded.[2] The country has accelerated the use of hydropower as a sustainable source of energy, including as an export and source of revenue.[3] Collectively these development gains have contributed to achieving a progressively higher Human Development Index (HDI), reaching 0.602 in 2021-2022[4], enabling Nepal to **graduate from Least Developed Country (LDC) status** within the timeframe of this Cooperation Framework.[5]

The pre-COVID-19 three-year-average economic growth rate exceeded 7 percent, a rate higher than the previous four decades.[6] Yet the economy, and much of Nepal's employment, **still relies heavily on agriculture. Tourism and foreign employment** also continue to play significant roles in the country's socio-economic development. Personal remittances, equivalent to 24.3 per cent of the country's GDP,[7] and an important component of national income, left the country particularly exposed during the COVID-19 pandemic, contributing to a steep increase in national debt.

Nepal's 2015 Constitution serves as an important instrument for long-term development. It envisions Nepal as an independent, advanced and socialism-oriented economy by ensuring good governance, inclusive development and prosperity, embracing a federal, democratic and republican system of governance. In the course of its implementation, the federal, provincial and local levels - all three tiers of government - have now become operational and actively progressing towards achieving decentralized socio-economic development across the country. Not least, the Constitution guarantees the fundamental rights of the people.

Nepal's commitment to championing the global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is clear. The country took a strategic decision to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into its national development framework at an early juncture. This was expedited by the creation of the SDG Status and Roadmap 2016-2030, an SDG Needs Assessment, Costing and Financing Strategy and Localisation Guidelines.[8] The 15th plan (2019/20-2023/24) fully featured the SDGs within its 10 national goals and placed considerable emphasis on the importance of productive partnerships needed to attain the country's development ambitions. The Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) and National Adaptation Plan (NAP) are also inextricably linked with the targets set in the SDG Roadmap

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[1] Preface, The Fifteenth Plan (Fiscal Year 2019/20 – 2023/24), Government of Nepal, National Planning Commission
[2] Preface, The Fifteenth Plan (Fiscal Year 2019/20 – 2023/24), Government of Nepal, National Planning Commission
[3] Preface, The Fifteenth Plan (Fiscal Year 2019/20 – 2023/24), Government of Nepal, National Planning Commission
[4] UNDP. 2022. Human Development Report 2021-22: Uncertain Times, Unsettled Lives: Shaping our Future in a Transforming World. New York.
[5] UNDP 2019.
[6] Khanal et al. 2012 and MOF 2019.
[7] World Bank, 2020 https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS?locations=NP
[8] Government of Nepal National Planning Commission, *Nepal: National Review of Sustainable Development Goals*, June 2020, 26541VNR, available at: 26541VNR_2020_Nepal_Report.pdf (un.org)26541VNR_2020_Nepal_Report.pdf (un.org)

and the 15th plan of Nepal. Nepal has articulated its aspirations in Vision 2100 and plans to graduate from a least developed country category by 2022 to a high middle income country by achieving the SDGs by 2030 and the 25-year vision to become a developed country by 2043. Nepal has been

reasonably successful to date in making progress towards the SDGs, however some areas require reinvigorated efforts to continue to build on otherwise positive momentum (Figure 1).[9]

Figure 1. Snapshot of SDG Progress, Nepal[10]

Looking ahead to 2030 and within the timeframe of this Cooperation Framework, Nepal's key challenges include **disparities in economic prosperity and the prevalence of multidimensional poverty**, which pose a particular impediment to SDG progress and point to many people being 'left behind'.[11] Vulnerabilities exist among various socio-economic, marginalized and ethnic groups. Nepal also faces demographic issues in terms of population growth, rapid urbanization and economic migration. A large share of its domestic labour market is informal, consisting of poor-quality employment,[12] within which significant inequalities persist for women. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated these challenges. Meanwhile social and gender discrimination are formidable issues,[13] including gender-based violence.[14]

Nepal is signatory to most major universal conventions, treaties and protocols. **It is now time to focus on their effective implementation to revitalize human-rights based legislation and associated aspects of service delivery.** More broadly, sustained investment is needed to ensure that the three tiers of governance evolve into a fully effective, gender responsive, inclusive, coherent, accountable, and transparent federated system capable of delivering public services of sufficient quality, efficiency and reach, such as in education, health and social security. Similarly, greater investments are needed

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[9] SDG Progress Report 2022: https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/profiles/nepal

[10] SDG Progress Report 2022: https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/profiles/nepal

[11] Government of Nepal National Planning Commission, *Nepal Multidimensional Poverty Index: Analysis Towards Action*, UNDP & UNICEF Report 2021, available at: https://www.undp.org/nepal/publications/nepal-multidimensional-poverty-index-2021?utm_source=EN&utm_medium=GSR&utm_content=US_UNDP_PaidSearch_Brand_English&utm_campaign=CENTRAL&c_src=CENTRAL&c_src2=GSR&gclid=CjwKCAjw2f-VBhAsEiwAO4lNeIc9mjGugpZalIyA-azQxs9gKsyN9Mt55MuN14qpZLxVBipCyXsh7hoCavwQAvD_BwE

[12] CBS 2018

[13] As expressed in the 15th plan

[14] National Women Commission's Initiatives in Responding to and Reducing Gender-Based Violence during Lockdown, Integrated Platform for Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Response (Sambodhan), March-July, August 2020, Accessed at: https://www.nwc.gov.np/Publication_file/5fa78a6eb289f_2020_Sep_18_Lockdown_Report_-_4_months.pdf

in resilient infrastructure and Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) to facilitate the complete connectivity of the nation, including for regional and global trade.

Finally, **ominous risks and vulnerabilities stem from the impacts of natural disasters and climate change** to which Nepal is one of the most exposed countries globally. For example, Nepal's graduation from LDC status was deferred by three years following the colossal losses incurred by the earthquake of April 2015. The warming of the Himalayas and consequent melting of glaciers are of grave concern. Hence, issues of sustainability, resilience and conservation are critically important to Nepal's development future.

In formulating this Cooperation Framework, the UNCT in Nepal facilitated an **extensive process of consultations with diverse stakeholders**,[15] which included a two-day visioning and strategic prioritization event in Kathmandu in early April 2022.[16] The UN also held consultations in every province[17] and with a number of specific populations.[18] These consultations were framed by key issues arising from the **UN Common Country Analysis (CCA)** and lessons learned from the preceding United Nations Development Assistance Framework (2018 – 2022). The CCA explored the underlying, structural and root causes of development challenges, which was further augmented by **UN commissioned research to investigate and better understand why some people are being 'left behind' in Nepal**. From these exercises it has been possible to construct a robust theory of change upon which the priorities, outcomes and focus areas for UN intervention in this Cooperation Framework are based.

Throughout the above process this Cooperation Framework has been guided by the following principles:

- A comprehensive **human rights-based approach** to development;
- A strong focus on **inclusion**, to **leaving no one behind** (LNOB) and **reaching the farthest first**;
- **Gender equality** and **women's empowerment**;
- **Sustainability** and **resilience;**
- **Accountability** and **transparency.**

Based on these principles, and arising from the above consultations and analysis, **three substantive themes** have been adopted across **each of the four priority areas and outcomes** of this Cooperation Framework. These are:

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[15] Different tiers of government, constitutional commissions, development partners, civil society, women's groups, marginalized and vulnerable communities (for example persons with disabilities, LGBTQI+, conflict affected groups etc), academia as well as representatives from trade unions and the private sector.

[16] The event hosted representatives from senior level government ministries, commissions and parliamentarians, leaders from development partners, civil society organizations, including think-tank/research/academia and community organizations, as well as from the private sector.

[17] Province 1 (27.06.2022); Madhesh Province (29.06.2022); Bagmati Province (07.07.2022); Gandaki Province (12.07.2022); Lumbinin Province (17.06.2022); Karnali Province (21.06.2022); Surudpaschim Province (06.07.2022).

[18] Farmers and rural poor/landless (29.07.2022); Survivors of gender-based violence (03.08.2022); Women engaged in sex work (03.08.2022); Conflict victims (02.08.2022); LGBTQ+ (02.08.2022); People living with HIV (PLHIV) and some members of Key Population (KP) groups (22.07.2022); Media stakeholders (11.08.2022); Outcome 1: Member based organizations, CSOs and private sector (11.08.2022); Migration (08.08.2022).
UN Youth Group: Youth-led organizations, women of reproductive age, persons with disabilities and LGBTIQA+ (30.06.2022); Organizations for Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) (04.08.2022); Civil Society Organizations (10.08.2022); Children's issues (03.08.2022).

1. A commitment to **inclusion** as the central over-arching theme, with special attention being paid to the participation and empowerment of at risk LNOB populations, the marginalized,[19] the poor, and women and youth;

2. Increased prominence of the joint issues of **sustainability and resilience** in order to reduce and mitigate Nepal's high vulnerability to natural disasters and climate risk and through which to accelerate transformation towards a clean and green economy;

3. **Federalization** as a timely priority for unlocking unrealized capabilities for development through institutional empowerment and partnerships across the three tiers of governance. Federalization and SDG localization have been incorporated into each priority area. The UN will be working with the three tiers of Government as laid out in the 2015 Constitution and the 2017 Unbundling Report.

In addition to these three key themes, **four priority areas** are identified within this Cooperation Framework, each with its own outcome statement around which the UN system in Nepal will coalesce its programming. These **four outcomes form the substantive content of this Cooperation Framework** and closely align with the priorities and objectives of the 15th plan, the second NDC and the NAP - (Box 1).

Priority 1. Sustainable, Resilient and Inclusive Economic Transformation. The UN will support the 15th Plan objective of inclusive and green growth, improved productivity, decent work and sustainable livelihoods, inclusive of the provision of a comprehensive system of social security, enabling a further shift to the formal economy and supporting a smooth graduation from LDC status.

Priority 2. Inclusive and Transformative Human Development. The UN commits to assisting the achievement of the national long-term goals of affordable and quality health care, food security, nutrition, water, sanitation and education services to all. Furthermore, the UN seeks to leverage social security provisions for achieving quality human capital and the full utilization of human potential, including critically, access to legal documentation, such as birth certificates, as a right and requisite for legal identity for all, empowerment and development.

Priority 3. Environmental Sustainability, Climate and Disaster Resilience. The UN will provide support for sound environment management and climate action to ensure environmental sustainability and resilience remain central to the national development agenda. This includes the national targets of the Climate Change Policy 2019, the Nationally Determined Contribution 2020, the National Adaptation Plan 2021, Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan on Climate Change 2021, Green, Resilient and Inclusive Development (GRID), all of which are set against the backdrop of Nepal's 15th Plan objective of a healthy and balanced environment, renewable energy, adaptation to climate change, disaster risk reduction/management and improvements in natural resource management.

Priority 4. Governance, Federalism, Participation and Inclusion. The UN aligns to the objectives of the 15th Plan for advancing a safe, civilized and just society, marked by inclusive, participatory, gender-responsive, accountable and improved coherence across the three tiers of governance, supported by a fully functioning, comprehensive democracy, rule of law system, transitional justice and women, peace and security for the achievement of the full spectrum of human rights.

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[19] See Boxes 7 & 8 in the main narrative section below for definitions used.

The Cooperation Framework also acknowledges the **complexity and inter-dependencies that exist across the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** and its implementation in Nepal. In this respect critical interlinkages are made between human rights, empowerment and the model of inclusive development through which no one is left behind. This begins with the right of legal identity at birth and stretches through a life-long continuum of rights that include access to information, food, health, education, water, sanitation and shelter, around which the SDGs are marshalled and through which inclusive, sustainable and resilient social and economic transformation is enabled.

In implementing this Cooperation Framework, **the UN will exercise its comparative advantages** to support the fulfilment of the national development vision and goals. The UN leads the international community in pursuit of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and is able to provide an unparalleled breadth and depth of support to the government, provincial authorities and development partners at all levels. The UN is well positioned to deliver its normative facilitation role in universal human rights-based treaties and conventions to which Nepal is party **to advance economic, social, environmental and cultural development based on principles of equality, inclusion, resilience and sustainability**.

The UN will draw on its global pool of expertise to enable **a smooth graduation from LDC status**. It will capitalize on the exchange of development best practice internationally through South-South and Triangular Cooperation mechanisms. Not least, the UN will work with populations left behind, or at risk of being left behind, within each of the four priority and 10 focus areas at the federal, provincial and local level. The UN is also well placed to co-create platforms and partnerships that support innovation with the private sector, civil society, women, young people, marginalized groups, sexual and gender minorities and people with disabilities. These endeavours help to **reinforce Nepal's position as a global pioneer at the forefront of learning about how to successfully implement the UN's sustainable development and leave no one behind agenda**.

Oversight of this Cooperation Framework will be conducted by a **Joint Steering Committee** (JSC) co-chaired by the Vice-Chair of the National Planning Commission and the UN Resident Coordinator (UNRC) who will exercise mutual accountability for the strategic direction, overall coordination and interaction between the Government of Nepal (GoN) partner entities and the UN system.

The UNCT, under the leadership of the UN RC, will be responsible for the overall effectiveness and implementation of the United Nations Development System (UNDS) contributions and results set out in this Cooperation Framework. The Cooperation Framework will be translated into an **Annual Joint Workplan (JWP) of the UNCT as the primary vehicle for ensuring collaborative implementation**. Under the leadership of the UNRC, **Results Groups** will be constituted for the purposes of progressing each of the four Cooperation Framework priority outcome areas.

Special attention **cross-cutting and thematic teams** will be formed on, for example, key issues, such as the SDGs; 'Leave No One Behind'; gender equality; legal identity; disability inclusion; protection against sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA); and monitoring and evaluation to ensure the integration of these priorities and functions throughout implementation.

Monitoring the implementation progress of the UNSDCF will be primarily based on the attached **Results Framework** (Annex 1) and will be led by the UNCT in close collaboration with relevant government agencies. Monitoring responsibility for each outcome area will primarily be led by each of the four dedicated Outcome Result Groups (ORG), chaired by heads of agencies. Each ORG will carry out joint monitoring with respect to its outcome area as set out in the JWP. The ORGs will prepare an annual implementation progress report for presentation and consultation with the UNCT and onwards

to the JSC. In addition to recurring developmental evaluation, a final **independent evaluation** of the UNSDCF will be conducted in the penultimate year of implementation.

Box 1. Cooperation Framework: Strategic Priorities, Outcome and Focus Areas

Priority	Outcome	Focus Areas	Measured by (abbreviated)
PRIORITY 1: Sustainable, Resilient and Inclusive Economic Transformation	**OUTCOME 1:** By 2027, more people, especially women, youth, the most marginalized and poor, increasingly benefit from and contribute to inclusive, resilient, and sustainable socio-economic transformation at federal, provincial, and local levels.	**UN Focus Area 1.1**: Green, inclusive and diversified growth.	Annual GDP growth/employed person
		UN Focus Area 1.2: Sustainable and decent livelihoods.	Informal employment/total employment social protection system coverage Women's ownership of property/ land/ house
PRIORITY 2: Inclusive and Transformative Human Development	**OUTCOME 2:** By 2027, more people, especially women, youth, children, and the most marginalized and poor, increasingly participate in and benefit from equitably improved quality social services at federal, provincial, and local levels.	**UN Focus Area 2.1**: Survive and Thrive. Women, men, youth, adolescents and children affordably enjoy better health, nutrition and WASH services, starting with the youngest and most vulnerable.	Multi-dimensional poverty Index Universal health coverage index Prevalence of stunting/wasting Prevalence of food insecurity Access to WASH services Adolescent Birthrate Maternal Mortality Rate
		UN Focus Area 2.2: Maximize Human Potential: Children, adolescents, youth and adults meaningfully participate in and benefit from educational services to fulfil their full potential.	Literacy and numeracy Basic and secondary education completion
		UN Focus Area 2.3: Social protection and vital identity registration system strengthened to close the human capital gap.	Births registered
		UN Focus Area 2.4: End gender-based violence and harmful practices.	Gender-based violence Early marriage Reproductive Health decisions
PRIORITY 3: Environmental Sustainability, Climate and Disaster Resilience	**OUTCOME 3:** By 2027, more people, especially women, youth, and the most marginalized and poor, increasingly benefit from and contribute to building an inclusive, sustainable, climate-resilient and green society and reduced impacts of disasters at federal, provincial, and local levels.	**UN Focus Area 3.1**: Promote a healthy, safe, inclusive, clean and green productive environment along with climate change mitigation.	GHG emissions Renewable energy Forest cover
		UN Focus Area 3.2: Strengthen climate change adaptation and resilience through the reduction of vulnerabilities, disaster risk reduction, preparedness and effective response and recovery.	Disaster loss

| PRIORITY 4:
Governance, Federalism, Participation and Inclusion | **OUTCOME 4:**
By 2027, more people, especially women, youth and the most marginalized and poor increasingly participate in and benefit from coordinated, inclusive, accessible, participatory, transparent, and gender-responsive governance, access to justice and human rights at federal, provincial, and local levels. | **UN Focus Area 4.1**: Strengthening institutions and normative, legal and policy frameworks from a human rights-based approach across the three tiers of governance. | Proportion of women and persons with disabilities in positions in federal, provincial and local institutions, public service, justice sector
PFM / budget execution
Rule of law index
Transparency |
| | | **UN Focus Area 4.2**: Strengthen participation, inclusion, and dialogue through outreach and partnerships at all levels. | Participation in decision making processes of public institutions |

Acronyms

ADB - Asian Development Bank
CBO - Community Based Organisations
CBS - Central Bureau of Statistics
CCA - Common Country Analysis
CCA - Common Country Analysis
CF - Cooperation Framework
CNI - Confederation of Nepalese Industries
CRVS - Civil Registration and Vital Statistics
CSE - Comprehensive Sexuality Education
CSO - Civil Society Organization
CTEVT - Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training
DFAT - Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)
DFTQC - Department of Food Technology and Quality Control
DP-NET - Disaster Preparedness Network Nepal
DWRF - Dalit Women Rights Forum
DWSSM - Department of Water Supply and Sewerage Management
EU - European Union
FAO - Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FCDO - Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
FDI - Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)
FEDO - Disabled Women's Federation
FMTC - Finance Management Training Centre
FNCCI - Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry
FWEAN - Federation of Woman Entrepreneurs' Associations of Nepal
GAFSP - The Global Agriculture and Food Security Program
GBV - Gender Based Violence
GCF - Green Climate Fund
GDP - Gross Domestic Product
GEF - Global Environment Facility
GESI - Gender Equality & Social Inclusion
GFFO - German Federal Foreign Office
GHG - Greenhouse Gas
GIZ - Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GLTN - Global Land Tool Network
GOJ - Government of Japan
GRID - Green, Resilient, Inclusive Development
HDI - Human Development Index
HMIS/NIS - Health and Nutritional Information Systems
ICIMOD - International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
ICT - Information, Communications & Technology
IDPG - International Development Partner Group
IFAD - International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO - International Labour Organization
IOM - International Organization for Migration
IPV - Intimate Partner Violence

ITC - International Trade Centre
JICA - Japan International Cooperation Agency
JSC - Joint Steering Committee
JWP - Joint Workplan (JWP)
KOICA - Korea International Cooperation Agency
LBTIQ+ - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, Asexual and Other Sexually or Gender Diverse
LDC - Least Developed Country
LNOB - Leave No One Behind
M&E - Monitoring and Evaluation
MEL - Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MoALD - Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development
MoCTCA - Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation
MoEST - Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
MoEWRI - Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation
MoF - Ministry of Finance
MoFA - Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoFAGA - Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration
MoFE - Ministry of Forest and Environment
MoHA - Ministry of Home Affairs
MoHP - Ministry of Health and Population
MoHP - Ministry of Health and Population
MoICS - Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies
MoICT - Ministry of Communication and Information Technology
MoLESS - Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security
MoLJPA - Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs
MoLMCPA - Ministry of Land Management, Cooperatives and Poverty Alleviation
MoLWCSC - Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizens
MOPIT - Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport
MoSD - Ministry of Social Development
MoUD - Ministry of Urban Development
MoWS - Ministry of Water Supply
MoYS - Ministry of Youth & Sports
MPI - Multidimensional Poverty Index
MSNP - Multi-Sector Nutrition Plan (MSNP)
NAP - National Adaptation Plan
NBI - National Business Initiative
NCD - Non-Communicable Disease
NDC - Nationally Determined Contribution
NDP - National Development Plan
NDRRMA - National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority
NEPC - Nepal Environment Protection Center
NGO - Non-Government Organization

NHRC - Nepal Health Research Council
NHSS - National Health Sector Strategy
NIWF - National Indigenous Women's Federation
NPC - National Planning Commission
NPR - Nepali Rupees
NRCS - Nepal Red Cross Society
NWC - National Women Commission
NYEF - Nepalese Young Entrepreneurs' Forum
PSEA - Protection Against Sexual Exploitation
ROK - Republic of Korea
SDC - Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDGs - Sustainable Development Goals
SEA - Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SSTC - South-South and Triangular Cooperation
TOC - Theory of Change
UN - United Nations
UN WOMEN - United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
UNAIDS - Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCDF - UN Capital Development Fund
UNCT - United Nations Country Team
UNDP - United Nations Development Programme
UNDS - United Nations Development System
UNEP - United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCAP - United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation,
UNFCCC - United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFPA - United Nations Populations Fund
UN-HABITAT - United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR - United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF - United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO - United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
UPR - Universal Periodic Review
UNODC - United Nations Organisation for Drugs and Crime
UNOPS - United Nations Office for Project Services
UNPRPD - United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
UNRC - UN Resident Coordinator
UNSDCF - United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
UNV - United Nations Volunteers
USAID - United States Agency for International Development
WASH - Water Sanitation & Hygiene
WB - World Bank
WFP - World Food Programme
WG - Working Group
WHO - World Health Organisation

CHAPTER 1: COUNTRY PROGRESS TOWARDS THE 2030 AGENDA

Country Context

Spanning several decades, Nepal has implemented 14 national plans to date. They have collectively yielded impressive overall development results in the country. Over that period, the percentage of people living in absolute poverty, and maternal and child mortality rates have declined significantly.[20] Improvements in nutrition and reductions in stunting have occurred. Life expectancy and school enrolment rates have increased, access to drinking water and sanitation has improved, and roads, communications, and air transport infrastructure have all expanded.[21]

Nepal is scheduled to graduate from LDC on 24 November 2026, after a five-year transitional period. A resolution on its graduation was adopted during the UN General Assembly on 24 November 2021. This is an important milestone for its socio-economic development, making Nepal the first and the only country considered for graduation without reaching the income criterion.[22]

Closely linked to its graduation, Nepal has achieved a progressively higher Human Development Index (HDI), reaching 0.602 in 2021-2022, exceeding the LDC average.[23] This is principally attributed to increases in mean years of schooling, expected years in schooling and life expectancy at birth. At the same time, Nepal has made substantive progress in reducing the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) from 30.1 percent[24] to 17.5[25] percent over the five year timeframe.[26] Meanwhile, the country's global gender gap index increased from 0.56 in 2007 to 0.69 in 2021, ranking the country 96th out of 146 countries.[27] In parallel, efforts have been made to adopt a policy involving the equitable distribution of development returns by increasing the involvement of socio-economically disadvantaged communities and areas in the process of development, including through the implementation of a system of social security.

Improvements in Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) networks have enabled Nepalis across the country to benefit from greater access to welfare and opportunities to engage in national activities. This has also led to new economic, trade and revenue prospects. The country has expanded electricity access to 93 percent of the population[28], mainly through extension of the national grid. Nearly 72 percent of the population enjoy reliable and uninterrupted access to electricity generated largely from hydropower, the surplus from which serves as an export and a source of revenue. At present, feasibility of interconnection with updated infrastructure is being studied and implemented to enhance cross border electricity trade. At the same time, Nepal remains vulnerable to climate and disaster risks, with a population that is largely reliant on agriculture, tourism and natural resources.

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[20] Preface, The Fifteenth Plan (Fiscal Year 2019/20 – 2023/24), Government of Nepal, National Planning Commission

[21] Preface, The Fifteenth Plan (Fiscal Year 2019/20 – 2023/24), Government of Nepal, National Planning Commission

[22] Nepal has met its human assets index (HAI) and economic and environmental vulnerability index (EVI) but so far failed to meet the gross national income (GNI). For more information: https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/wp-content/uploads/sites/45/CDP-PL-2022-8-5-Monitoring.pdf

[23] UNDP, 2022. Human Development Report 2021-22: Uncertain Times, Unsettled Lives: Shaping our Future in a Transforming World. New York..

[24] (NMICS 2014)

[25] (2019 NMICS)

[26] Government of Nepal, National Planning Commission, Central Bureau of Statistics, with OPHI, UNDP and UNICEF (2021) Nepal Multidimensional Poverty Index: Analysis Towards Action 2021, available at: https://npc.gov.np/images/category/MPI_Report_2021_for_web.pdf

[27] Global Gender Gap Report 2022, World Economic Forum, July 2022: https://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2022

[28] Nepal Electricity Authority: A Year in Review-Fiscal Year 2021-2022. file:///D:/DOCs/Downloads/Annual_Report_2021-22.pdf

For this reason, close attention to issues of sustainability, disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and environmental conservation are critically important to Nepal.[29]

In recent years Nepal's economy has shifted increasingly towards services and away from agriculture, which ensures that its economy is more resilient to environmental risks, including monsoons and climate impact. Foreign employment continues to play a significant role in the socio-economic development of the country with remittances being equivalent to over 24.3 percent of the country's GDP.[30] The pre-COVID-19 three fiscal year average economic growth rate exceeded 7 percent, a rate higher than the previous four decades.[31] Yet the economy, and much of Nepal's employment, still relies heavily on agriculture. Tourism and remittances from migrant workers, which are important components of national income, left the country particularly exposed during the COVID-19 pandemic, and contributed to a steep increase in national debt.

While the economy recovers from the pandemic, the challenge of job creation in the domestic market has had a negative effect on employment, compelling many to migrate for foreign employment, impacting women and youth the most. Inflation has doubled (from 3.6 per cent in 2022-2021 to 6.32 percent in 2021-2022) due to rising global commodity and energy prices. This has been partially offset by government subsidies, which have reduced the burden for low-income households. Averaging less than 1 percent of GDP per annum over the past decade,[32] there has been relatively low Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) entering Nepal,[33] which is below the assessed potential for the country.[34] Meanwhile the fall in foreign exchange reserves by 18.9 percent to $ 9.54 billion in mid-July 2022 from $ 11.75 billion the same time in 2021 poses a fiscal constraint[35]. A rising external trade deficit also has implications for, and places additional strain on, public finances. Looking ahead, LDC graduation will entail an attrition in the level of concessional aid.

In respect to Nepal's governance, the Constitution of Nepal , 2015 (the Constitution) serves as an important instrument for long-term development. It envisions Nepal as an independent, advanced and socialism-oriented economy by ensuring good governance, inclusive development and prosperity, through embracing the federal democratic republican system of governance. In the course of implementing the Constitution, the federal, provincial and local levels –all three tiers of government– have now become operational and are actively progressing towards achieving decentralized socio-economic development in the country. Not least, the Constitution guarantees 31 fundamental human rights, for example, the right to equality, rights against untouchability and discrimination, the right to social justice as well as economic and cultural rights, and the rights of women and Dalits.

Gaps and Challenges
Despite solid overall progress in human development, disparities in economic prosperity, and human and social development persist across Nepal and its population. Improvements in the quality, efficiency and reach of key public services are needed, such as in education, employment services,

[29] Preface, The Fifteenth Plan (Fiscal Year 2019/20 – 2023/24), Government of Nepal, National Planning Commission
[30] World Bank, 2020 https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS?locations=NP
[31] Khanal et al. 2012 and MOF 2019.
[32] https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.KLT.DINV.WD.GD.ZS?locations=NP
[33] net FDI inflow accounted for only 0.4 percent of GDP in Nepal in 2020, declining by 60 percent from 2017 when it was 0.7 percent of GDP:
[34] From Evidence to Policy: Supporting Nepal's Trade Integration Strategy, World Bank: https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2016/07/12/could-trade-and-fdi-be-the-key-to-unlocking-nepals-potential
[35] https://www.nrb.org.np/contents/uploads/2022/08/Current-Macroeconomic-and-Financial-Situation-English-Based-on-Annual-data-of-2021.22-2.pdf

health and social security. Vulnerabilities exist in human assets and among various socioeconomic, historically marginalized and ethnic groups. Nepal contends with high income gaps in both urban and rural areas, and a threat of entrenched poverty among the bottom income quartile of the population. Amid rapid urbanization, lack of institutional capacities of municipalities in urban planning, insufficient investment in infrastructure, environment and basic services to match urban growth has contributed to increasing urban slums and poverty.[36]

Similarly, while Nepal has made strong inroads into reducing poverty and hunger, around one in six persons remain multidimensionally poor, and rates of wasting and underweight children under 5 and maternal deaths remain high.[37] The prevalence of multidimensional poverty poses a particular challenge to SDG progress and highlights the fact that many are still being left behind.[38] On the face of it, this can, in part, be attributed to the complex geography, topography and climate within the country, which complicates access to health, welfare and educational facilities that would otherwise help address the symptoms of multidimensional poverty. Landlessness is both a consequence and a cause of poverty in Nepal.[39] Landlessness is mainly associated with households without registered ownership of land. The UNCT Nepal commissioned research into why people are at risk of being 'left behind' in Nepal, reveals a complex and nuanced picture (see box items 7-8 and Figure 2 of the 'Inclusion and Empowerment' sub-section below).[40]

The current production structure and factors contributing to growth also highlight vulnerabilities in the Nepali economy. Agriculture is still the main source of livelihoods, and is dominated by weather-dependent subsistence farming. Low overall levels of productivity are also problematic, especially given a large share of the labour market is informal, consisting mostly of poor-quality employment.[41] Within the labour market, significant inequalities persist for women. The female labour force participation rate is 26.3 percent compared to 53.8 percent for males. There is a mean monthly earnings gap between men and women of NPR 5,834 (approximately $ 46) in favour of men.[42] Estimates suggest that 1.4 million migrant workers[43] returned to Nepal during the COVID-19 crisis. This, combined with approximately 500,000 youth entering the labour force each year, contributes to domestic unemployment.[44]

The COVID-19 pandemic adversely affected particularly vulnerable segments of society, leading to higher income inequality and exposing pre-existing socio-economic marginalization and vulnerabilities, as well as those specific to the health sector. In addition, it has severely affected the

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[36] National Urban Development Strategy 2017
[37] Nepal has achieved impressive progress in reducing maternal mortality, from 850
per 100,000 live births in 1990, yet the MMR remains high at 258 per 100,000 live births in 2015: UNFPA Factsheet:
https://un.org.np/sites/default/files/doc_publication/2020-09/Factsheet%20maternal%20mortality_0.pdf
[38] Government of Nepal National Planning Commission, *Nepal Multidimensional Poverty Index: Analysis Towards Action*, UNDP & UNICEF Report 2021, available at: https://www.undp.org/nepal/publications/nepal-multidimensional-poverty-index-2021?utm_source=EN&utm_medium=GSR&utm_content=US_UNDP_PaidSearch_Brand_English&utm_campaign=CENTRAL&c_src=CENTRAL&c_src2=GSR&gclid=CjwKCAjw2f-VBhAsEiwAO4lNeIc9mjGugpZalIyA-azQxs9gKsyN9Mt55MuN14qpZLxVBipCyXsh7hoCavwQAvD_BwE
[39] Report of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, on his visit to Nepal, 29 November – 9 December 2021
[40] Why People get Left Behind in Nepal, UNRCO Nepal Commissioned Research Findings, 2022
[41] CBS 2018
[42] Nepal Labour force survey 2017/18
[43] Mapping of Reintegration Services in Nepal | IOM Publications Platform
[44] Mapping of Reintegration Services in Nepal | IOM Publications Platform

education sector, undermining learning potential in the short run and foreshadowing major human capital losses over the longer term.[45]

Social and gender forms of inequity continue to present challenges.[46] For example, 28 percent of men and 41 percent of women reported the loss of a job during the 2020 lockdown[47] and the number of women not engaged in paid work increased by 337 percent in 2020.[48] Women's unpaid care workload increased as a combined result of the lockdown to contain the spread of COVID-19 since family members stayed at home, migrant family members returned, school closures occurred and hospitals turned away non-COVID-19 patients.[49] Over the same timeframe, Nepal experienced increases in GBV,[50] termed a 'shadow pandemic'. This witnessed an increase in Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) including marital rape and domestic violence. Women from marginalized groups, including women in the entertainment sector, gender and sexual minorities, wives of migrant workers, displaced women and adolescent girls were among the most affected.[51]

Systematic investments in the institutional architecture of the three tiers of governance will be needed to evolve the fully effective, gender-responsive, inclusive, coherent, accountable, and transparent federated system envisioned in the Constitution. Gaps remain in implementing human rights-based legislation and associated aspects of service delivery.

National connectivity is also vital for political, social and economic progress and essential for Nepal given significant logistical costs stemming from the country being landlocked. One of the government's current priorities is to provide road accessibility to all district headquarters, including North-South corridors and links from its southern border (India) to its northern border (China). Road construction works on seven such corridors are in progress and seek to enhance the Nepali segments of the Asian Highway Network. There are also very dynamic dry port developments in the country, which could be supported by Nepal's accession to the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports. Further efforts to extend and electrify the national railway network, its cross-border connection to India, are underway and represent an important development along the Trans-Asian Railway Network.[52]

Finally, and critically, direct risks and vulnerabilities stem from the impacts of natural disasters and climate change to which Nepal is one of the most exposed countries globally. For example, Nepal's graduation from LDC status was deferred by the UN Committee for Development Policy in 2018 following the colossal losses incurred by the 2015 earthquake. The warming of the Himalayas and consequent melting of glaciers is further expected to pose threats to the lives and livelihoods of downstream communities in the Koshi, Gandaki and Karnali basins, and may, in the worst of situations,

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[45] NEPAL - Beyond Graduation: Productive Transformation and Prosperity, Government of Nepal, National Planning Commission and UNDP, National Human Development Report, 2020
[46] Fifteenth Plan
[47] Rapid Assessment of the socio-economic impact of COVID 19 in Nepal' by UNDP in 2020
[48] Rapid Gender Analysis (RGA) on COVID 19 Nepal. The RGA was jointly conducted under the leadership of MoWCSC along with UN WOMEN, Save the Children, with CARE Nepal.
[49] Rapid Gender Assessment: https://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20eseasia/docs/publications/2020/11/np-rapid-gender-analysis-on-covid-19-nepal-2020-en.pdf?la=en&vs=5043
[50] National Women Commission's Initiatives in Responding to and Reducing Gender-Based Violence during Lockdown, Integrated Platform for Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Response (Sambodhan), March-July, August 2020, Accessed at: https://www.nwc.gov.np/Publication_file/5fa78a6eb289f_2020_Sep_18_Lockdown_Report_-_4_months.pdf
[51] Ibid
[52] Nepal's Statement at the Fourth Ministerial Conference on Transport, Bangkok and online, December 2021, https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/d8files/event-documents/Item7_Nepal.pdf

exacerbate resource, migratory pressures and identity conflicts, with potential repercussions for state legitimacy.[53]

National Vision for Sustainable Development

Nepal took the strategic decision to integrate the SDGs into its national development framework at an early juncture. This was expedited by the creation of the SDG Status and Roadmap 2016-2030, the SDGs Needs Assessment, Costing and Financing Strategy, and the SDGs Localization Guidelines.[54] An updated Integrated National Financing Framework is also currently being formulated. These instruments have established workable targets and financing strategies to accelerate SDG implementation.

The current 15th Plan (2019/20-2023/24) incorporates the over-arching aspiration of a "Prosperous Nepal, Happy Nepali". The 15th Plan sets out 10 national goals, each contributing towards SDG progress:

1. Accessible and modern infrastructure and connectivity (SDG 6, SDG 7, SDG, 8, SDG 9);
2. Development and full utilization of human capital (SDG 2, SDG 3, SDG 4, SDG 5, SDG 8);
3. High and sustainable production and productivity (SDG 8, SDG 9, SDG 12);
4. High and equitable national income (SDG 1, SDG 8, SDG 10);
5. Well-being and decent standard of living (SDG 1, SDG 2, SDG 3);
6. Safe, civilized and just society (SDG 11, SDG 16);
7. Healthy and balanced environment (SDG 6, SDG 7, SDG 11, SDG 12, SDG 13, SDG 14, SDG 14)
8. Good governance, rule of law and access to justice (SDG 16);
9. Comprehensive democracy (SDG 16);
10. National unity, security, and human rights and dignity (SDG 1, SDG 11, SDG 16)

The 15th Plan also highlights an endeavour to create and utilize productive partnerships (SDG 17) to attain the country's development ambitions.

Nepal has a number of national level sector strategies, policies and plans that have adopted sustainable development principles. For example, the Agriculture Development Strategy (2015-2035) seeks to increase inclusivity in the agriculture sector (SDG 10). Along similar lines, the School Education Sector Plan (2012-2020) aims to reduce gender disparity in schooling (SDG 4 & 5). Nepal has also adopted Biomass Energy Strategy, 2017 and National Energy Efficiency Strategy, 2018 which support the implementation of SDG 7. The creation of the National Framework for Education 2030 and National Strategy for the Development of Education Statistics seeks to assist federal, provincial and local governments in their efforts to attain SDG 4. The GoN has endorsed a Gender Equality Policy (2021) with the aim to end GBV, promote a gender-responsive governance system, and advance women's economic security and rights (SDG 5, 10 and 16).

Other important provisions that support inclusive and sustainable human development in Nepal include the Multi-Stakeholder Sector Nutrition Plan; the National Health Sector Strategy (NHSS)

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[53] N. Pandey, L. Rüttinger and S. Wolfmaier, 2020. Climate-fragility risk brief: Nepal. Adelphi research GmbH, Alt-Moabit 91, 10559 Berlin, Germany.
[54] Government of Nepal National Planning Commission, *Nepal: National Review of Sustainable Development Goals*, June 2020, 26541VNR, available at: 26541VNR_2020_Nepal_Report.pdf (un.org)26541VNR_2020_Nepal_Report.pdf (un.org)

Implementation Plan (2016-2021);[55] National Early Childhood Development (2020-2030); the Prime Minister's Employment Programme; and the President's Women Empowerment Programme. The government is also leading a literacy campaign and is introducing a meal provision programme in areas where school enrolment or literacy is low. Hence, there is no shortage of demonstrable commitment in Nepal to the principle and resolve to implement the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, and to achieving the SDGs.

Nepal is a party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). In 2020, Nepal submitted a revised Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the UNFCCC Secretariat, committing to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045 while setting ambitious targets in energy, industrial processes, and product use, agriculture, forestry and other land use and waste sectors by 2030. The Ministry of Forests and Environment (MoFE) has updated and developed the National Climate Change Policy (2019) and the Local Adaptation Plan of Actions (LAPA) Framework (2019) to incorporate the emerging challenges posed by climate change and to fit with restructured governance systems.

Progress Towards the SDGs

In terms of practical progress, Nepal has been reasonably successful to date in making headway across the 17 SDGs and their respective indicators. Box 2 offers a snapshot based on SDGs that are 'on track' (three out of 17), 'moderately improving' (six out of 17), 'stalling' (four out of 17), or 'decreasing' (one out of 17). Insufficient data exist in three of 17. Annex 2 provides a more detailed breakdown by the various indicators associated with each SDG.

Box 1. Snapshot of SDG Progress[56]

In summary, across the 17 SDGs, the following highlights and issues reflect progress. Reductions in the prevalence of poverty (SDG 1) have been achieved, although progress has slowed. Steady gains have been achieved in reducing rates of underweight, and stunting. However, rates of wasting remain a challenge in children under the age of 5 (SDG 2). In recent years the government has increased spending on the human capital sectors of health and education (SDG 3 and SDG 4), resulting in steadily

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[55] National Health Sector Strategy (NHSS) Implementation Plan (2016-2021) for universal health coverage with four strategic pillars: equitable access, quality health services, health systems reform and a multi-sectoral approach.
[56] https://dashboards.sdgindex.org/profiles/nepal

reducing mortality rates (infant, maternal and child) (SDG 3), and at the same time increasing overall levels of secondary school enrolment (SDG 4). A drop in basic school enrolment occurred in 2020, most likely due to COVID-19. Enrolment patterns were consistent between female and male students and Nepal's gender parity index, indicating a slight disparity in favour of males.[57] In 2022, women made up 41 percent of local governments elected representatives. Meanwhile, the Constitution guarantees that 33 percent of national and provincial parliaments should be represented by women (SDG 5).[58]

Access to clean water and sanitation has improved significantly (SDG 6) and increasing numbers have gained access to electricity due to improved infrastructure and investments in hydropower as well as expansion of off-grid renewable energy solutions (SDG 7).[59] Nepal has benefitted from sound levels of economic growth in recent years and a rise in employment, industry and services (SDG 8).[60] Government efforts to support small and medium enterprises have led to a rise in entrepreneurship in industry and innovation (SDG 9). Nepal's Social Security schemes have been expanded to cover some of the most vulnerable groups, however, deeper challenges remain in reducing inequality (SDG 10).

Nepal is currently grappling with rapid and haphazard urbanization and its effects (SDG 11), including poor waste management practices and air pollution. Yet to its great credit, it has set ambitious targets to reduce the use of plastics (SDG 12).[61] The country has stepped up its efforts for climate action, as demonstrated by an expansion in national hydropower facilities (SDG 13).[62] Although measures have been taken to protect life on land, a pattern of environmental degradation and levels of pollution are of concern (SDG 15).

Within the domain of governance, improvements have been seen in the enforcement of justice while access for all to justice and the rule of law remains a challenge. In tandem, it is important that the continuous capacity development of judicial institutions proceeds, and that gaps in implementation of the legal framework, are addressed in accordance with the Constitution and international human rights instruments and protocols to which Nepal is party (SDG 16). As set out in the 15th Plan, the government is committed to productive partnerships at the federal, provincial and local levels with stakeholders from the private sector, civil society, trade associations and academia, and others (SDG 17).[63]

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[57] World Bank. (2022). Nepal. Data. Retrieved June 30, 2022, from https://data.worldbank.org/country/nepal
[58] Government of Nepal National Planning Commission, Nepal: National Review of Sustainable Development Goals, June 2020, 26541VNR, p. 22, available at: 26541VNR_2020_Nepal_R26541VNR_2020_Nepal_R https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099017504242214450/pdf/IDU075a55d0a0d7750405408d190a7d20347e865.pdfeport.pdf (un.org)
[59] BTI 2022 Nepal Country Report. BTI 2022. (2022). Retrieved July 1, 2022, from https://bti-project.org/en/reports/country-report/NPL
[60] World Bank. (2022).
[61] Government of Nepal National Planning Commission. (2020).
[62] World Bank Document. (2022). Nepal. Retrieved July 1, 2022 from https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099017504242214450/pdf/IDU075a55d0a0d7750405408d190a7d20347e865.pdf
[63] Government of Nepal National Planning Commission. (2020).

CHAPTER 2: UN DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM SUPPORT TO THE 2030 AGENDA

Consultations and Analysis Informing Cooperation Framework Priorities

The UNCT in Nepal facilitated an extensive process of consultations to inform the development of this Cooperation Framework. The overall objective of the consultations was to make the UNSDCF formulation process as inclusive and participatory as possible and to ensure the voices and priorities of diverse communities, provinces and different palikas were captured.

As a result, consultations engaged a diversity of stakeholders from different tiers of government, constitutional commissions, development partners, civil society, women's groups, marginalized and vulnerable communities (for example gender and sexual minorities, persons with disabilities, migrants, conflict affected victims), academia as well as representatives from trade unions and the private sector. The participatory process aimed to identify specific needs and issues in which the UN has the comparative advantage to be able to support the acceleration of inclusive and sustainable development, simultaneous to advancing effective implementation of federalism in Nepal.

Consultations were framed by key issues arising from the CCA conducted by the UNCT Nepal, priorities set out in Nepal's 15th Plan, and the preceding United Nations Development Assistance Framework (2018–2022). Specific to the CCA, consultations provided an opportunity to explore the underlying, structural and root causes of development challenges (outlined in the gaps and challenges section above). The CCA and consultations helped to construct a robust theory of change upon which the priorities, outcomes and focus areas for UN intervention contained in this UNSDCF are based.

At the national level, a two-day visioning and strategic prioritization retreat took place in Kathmandu in early April 2022. The event hosted senior representatives from government ministries, commissions and parliamentarians, leaders from development partners, civil society organizations, including think-tanks/research/academia and community organizations, as well as the private sector. The four priority areas, which now constitute the core of this Cooperation Framework were derived from that retreat, together with a strong consensus around the need for inclusion/LNOB, resilience and sustainability, and federalisation as three cross-cutting dimensions.

In addition to the national level consultations, the UNCT also held consultations at the provincial level and commissioned detailed research that engaged Nepal's farthest left behind and marginalized populations. A summary of these two exercises is outlined in Boxes 3 and 4 below.

Box 3. Provincial Consultations

Utilizing the UN system of provincial coordination focal point agencies, inclusive and wide-ranging consultations took place within each of Nepal's seven provinces between May and July 2022.

Provincial government representatives were consulted about progress, challenges and opportunities in their specific province. Consultations included representation from **women's groups**, women's rights activists and provincial offices of the National Human Rights Commission, representatives from WOREC Nepal; Maiti Nepal; Dalit Women Rights Forum (DWRF); the disabled women's federation; indigenous women with disabilities; the National Indigenous Women's Federation (NIWF); Dhimal Women's Association, and other ethnic groups' women's associations.

Private sector participants included the provincial chapters of FWEAN; FNCCI; CNI; NYEF; NBI; NCELL and Nepal Telecom, as well as provincial chapters of Federation of Handicraft Associations of Nepal and Federation of Cottage and Small Industries.

Provincial consultations included mayors/chairs and their deputies/vice chairs from local governments, the heads of local service providers and representatives from **traditionally marginalized and vulnerable groups** such as Raute, Haliya and Kamaiya, as well as from youth and children's clubs. The media were also present in a number of consultations, for example, the district chapter of the Federation of Nepali Journalists, and local community radio stations.

Summary of Key Issues Arising across all provincial consultations:

In the national **labour market** workers have witnessed decline in employment opportunities whilst the rural economy faces labour shortages. It is observed that unskilled youths migrate for hazardous labour in foreign labour markets. Hence, skills development programmes should create jobs and livelihood opportunities alongside support to returnees with reintegration programmes.

In order to improve **productive capacity** and make them competitive, support should be provided to micro, small and medium enterprises, especially to those led by women and historically marginalized groups such as Dalits' traditional occupation-based enterprises. Key areas include enhancing entrepreneurial capacity, acquiring technical 'know how,' ensuring access to digital platforms and finance, and linking them to global value chains.

Local infrastructure projects executed without proper environmental feasibility or planning are insufficiently resilient to landslides and floods in both hills and Tarai. In addition, marginalized and vulnerable groups experience the impact of natural disaster the greatest. In this context, community-based measures should be promoted to **reduce disaster risk and enhance resilience and response**.

Most participants expressed their concerns over declining quality of fundamental basic services such as **education and health**, especially those provided by public institutions. Differential access to education and health is contributing to **rising inequality**.

Most participants expressed disappointment and frustration at growing culture of complacency to **lack of implementation of laws and policies**. In their view, the federal government is not keen to formulate laws that can support the implementation of the several constitutional provisions. Examples included amendments in the civil service act and police administration act that are necessary to delegate power to province and local governments to mobilize human resources locally.

The **lack of coordination among three tiers of governments** occurs with insufficient downward accountability at all levels of government. Hence the need to institutionalize and strengthen accountability mechanisms to ensure a sustainable federal system of governance.

Most participants also advised UN agencies to implement **scalable projects** that can bring global best practice models and demonstrate development for replication across the country.

Box 4. People at Risk of Being 'Left Behind' - Consultations and UN Commissioned Research

Under the leadership of the UN RC's office, a qualitative survey was conducted to capture feedback from communities most at risk of being left behind in Nepal's development progress. This study is contributing to **a better understanding of the complexities surrounding people at greatest risk of being left behind**. Going forward, these insights should also help the UN, the government and development partners design sharper interventions with a greater focus on supporting these populations. The study adopted an innovative anthropological approach to ensure a better appreciation of community perspectives, taking into consideration the cultural and power dynamics in Nepal.

Being able to capture feedback from communities most at risk of being left behind should translate into supporting Nepal's progress towards the national development priorities and the SDGs. Such learning should also help **guide the efforts of development programmes in ensuring historically marginalized populations are more actively engaged and involved in decisions being made that affect their lives**. The summary of the key findings of the UNCT LNOB research can be found in Figure 2 below. The recommendations will be used to inform the implementation plan of the Cooperation Framework.

In addition, the UN research further complements the 'State of Social Inclusion in Nepal, Caste, Ethnicity and Gender' report of 2018, which clearly identified the groups being left furthest behind across a range of SDG indicators. They include: Tarai Dalit, Hill Dalit, Muslim and Tarai Janajati. That research also explored **factors of intersectionality** within and among these groups, which formed the majority of the study population, with the addition of persons with disabilities and LGBTQI+. The Kamalari, Kamaiya, Harawa, Charawa and Badi communities are particularly affected by bonded labour in the agriculture sector.

Supplementary to all the above, the UN also conducted series of **consultations during formulation of the UNSDCF with historically marginalized and vulnerable groups**, including the landless, Dalits, rural and urban poor, and slum dwellers. The discussions emphasized the need to highlight landlessness and caste-based discrimination as root causes of marginalization and exclusion in both the urban and rural settings. Targeting of smallholders; geographical targeting of the urban and rural poor; and demographic targeting for women, ex-bonded labourers, historically marginalized, inhabitants of informal settlements, and landless farmers, through innovative programming that provides needs-based and contextual/market appropriate capacity building and livelihood opportunities for capital formation. Discussion on urban poverty raised fundamental issues in defining the 'urban poor'. For example, data capture the gravity of issues for policy interventions as they tend to be deprived of basic human rights and regarded as negative externalities to cities.

UNSDCF Theory of Change

The Theory of Change (Box 5) underpinning this Cooperation Framework **sets out an inclusive, sustainable and resilient development pathway for Nepal**. It outlines a route through which Nepal recovers from the damaging impact of the COVID-19 pandemic; adjusts to the socio-economic, environmental and financial vulnerabilities to which it is exposed; successfully manages a smooth transition out of LDC status; makes progress towards its commitment to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions, implementing the UNFCCC provisions, and incrementally advances its federalization agenda across the three tiers of governance. In the process it realizes social, economic and environmental prosperity for an increasing number of people - especially from among the most marginalized and poor.

Box 5. UNSDCF Over-arching Theory of Change

For the above over-arching development outcome to be realized, Nepal will need to ensure that:

A **green, sustainable and competitive business environment is achieved**, accompanied by structural transformation toward higher skills/productivity sectors, benefiting from increased investment, stronger value chains, better access to markets and improved trade;

Inclusive and resilient economic growth occurs founded on decent jobs, sustainable enterprises and incomes that enable a transition from the informal to the formal sector in tandem with the provision of a comprehensive, integrated and sustainable social security system and labour market governance, and, that significantly reduces multi-dimensional poverty;

In the social sector, **higher quality education, health, nutrition, food, water and sanitation outcomes are attained**, enabling more people to be better equipped for living purposeful and fulfilling lives and are better able to contribute to the cultural, social and economic progress of their localities and the nation;

An advanced, disaster-resilient society that sustainably uses and manages clean, green, natural resources, landscapes and biodiversity in ways that facilitate progress towards Nepal's commitment to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by implementing the UNFCCC provisions and create additional economic opportunities and health benefits that promote human development for more people, while restoring the balance with nature;

Improved coordination of key functions across the three tiers of governance is accomplished, contributing greater efficiencies, effectiveness, coherence, transparency and accountability for the performance of public services and partnerships, and leading to accelerated localization and implementation of the SDGs;

Critical gaps in the legal framework and its transparent implementation are achieved in line with Nepal's constitution and universal norms, thereby empowering more people to exercise agency over their own lives by using their rights and access to legal documentation, opportunities, services, knowledge and assets to improve their living conditions and prospects;

A stronger and more deliberate emphasis is placed on women, young people, persons with disabilities, marginalized and vulnerable groups in all sectors and localities, through which discrimination and exposure to violence where it occurs is eliminated, where barriers to inclusion are better understood; in which policies, programmes and consultation spaces are more sensitively created; and through which increasing numbers of people are able to participate in and contribute to Nepal's economic, social, cultural and environmental wellbeing irrespective of their legal documentation status.

To achieve this objective requires an increasing number of people, with a focus on those farthest behind, being able to **contribute to and benefit equitably from the integrated political, social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable, inclusive, resilient development** *in accordance with the* 15th Plan, by means of the accelerated implementation of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs.

In addition to the overarching theory of change above, and grounded in the CCA, the UNCT has adapted and adopted the following **theory of change for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment** (Box 6).

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Box 6. UNSDCF Theory of Change for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Gender equality and the empowerment of women is a key area of focus across the four priority areas of this Cooperation Framework. The main thematic components of our **theory of change** are anchored in the **Beijing Platform for Action** and contextualized to our analysis and strategy.

For gender relations to be transformed in Nepal the **root causes and structural issues** that underpin them **must change**:

➢ Where **discriminatory social and legal norms and harmful practices** occur, these will need to be tackled and eliminated.
➢ Women and girls should see the **full range of human capabilities**, such as education, skills and knowledge, health, including sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, and have access to a wide range of assets, information, legal documentation, financing and resources, including land, decent work and equal pay to build women's economic and social security, on the same equal basis as men and boys.
➢ Women and girls should be free to lead lives that are **safe and free from violence including sexual exploitation and abuse** and harassment.
➢ Women should be able to **participate and have a real presence and voice** in the full range of elected and appointed partnerships, structures and forums – across the private, civil, academic and public spheres, and from local to national.

Without attention to these issues, and to the intersectional forms of structural inequalities among diverse groups of women and girls, **the root and structural causes of gender-based discrimination will remain unchanged**.

The Cooperation Framework priorities, UN focus areas and interventions below **have sought to highlight and address these challenges where they occur**.

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Cooperation Framework Core Principles

The development of this Cooperation Framework has been guided by the following principles:

- A comprehensive **human rights-based approach** to development
- Inclusion, **leaving no one behind** and reaching the farthest behind first
- **Gender equality** and **women's empowerment**
- **Sustainability** and **resilience**
- **Accountability** and **transparency**

In addition, based on these core principles, and arising from the consultations and analysis outlined above, **three substantive themes** have been adopted across each of the four priority areas and outcomes of this Cooperation Framework. These are:

4. A commitment to **inclusion** as the central overarching theme, with special attention being paid to the participation and empowerment of at risk LNOB populations, historically marginalized and vulnerable groups (Boxes 7 and 8), the poor, women and youth.

5. **Sustainability and resilience** feature prominently to accelerate Nepal's transformation to a clean and green economy while reducing the country's high vulnerability to natural disasters and climate risk.

6. **Federalization** is a particularly timely priority for unlocking unrealized capabilities and capacities for development through institutional empowerment and partnerships across the three tiers of governance. Hence, the federalisation and SDG localisation dimension has been incorporated into each priority area.

The centrality of these three substantive themes to the Cooperation Framework is summarized below.

Inclusion and Empowerment

Central to this Cooperation Framework is the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development principle of **'Leave No One Behind'**. For this reason, each outcome area of the UNSDCF refers specifically to the historically marginalized and poor. However, the overlapping reasons as to why people are, or are at the risk of being left behind in Nepal are a complex and challenging social, economic, cultural and political phenomenon. A summary of what we mean by Leave No One Behind and some short definitions of excluded and marginalized groups is provided in Box 7. Further research commissioned by the UNCT Nepal[64] to better understand this complexity reveals seven key contributing factors (summary in Figure 2). These factors will help to inform the detailed design of the implementation strategy of the UNSDCF.

Box 7. What do we mean by Leave No One Behind [65]?

Box 7. What do we mean by Leave No One Behind?

The central principle of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs is to **"Leave no one behind."** The SDGs demand that interventions engage 'the most difficult-to-reach groups first'. These often face not only poverty, but disadvantage and often discrimination, related to location, language, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, caste, ethnicity, or age. The National Planning Commission report on the SDGs notes: *"Nepal is marred by gender, social and geographical exclusion and inequality…and human development outcomes need to better target the delivery of development to the hardest to reach segments of society, those who have been excluded from development and those who have been overlooked."* In this context, the following definitions developed by the IDPG GESI WG of excluded and vulnerable groups have been proposed:

Excluded groups refers to those that have faced historical/structural discrimination based on their gender, caste, ethnicity, language or location that is transmitted from generation to generation and leads to social, cultural, economic, political and legal exclusion of these groups. These groups are not recognized as being of equal value and therefore not given equal access to resources and prevented from exercising their full human rights.

Vulnerable groups are defined based on other aspects of social identity or other physical or situational characteristics that in present-day Nepal are associated with exclusion and deprivation.

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[64] https://openinst.notion.site/Leave-No-One-Behind
[65] A Common Framework for Gender Equality and Social Inclusion | United Nations Development Programme https://www.undp.org/nepal/publications/common-framework-gender-equality-and-social-inclusion

The principle of **'intersectionality'** is also applied to identify and support those individuals/sub-groups that are most at risk of being left behind within these larger cohorts. Intersectionality is critical to understanding "social inclusion/exclusion." The idea of intersectionality is that each individual's identity has many layers, and each layer may confer either negative or positive status and may either block or open access to resources and power in a particular society.

Figure 2. Why people get left behind in Nepal[66]

The eight segments of the wheel read:

Intersecting barriers to meaningful participation. The people most left behind tend to be enmeshed by multiple exclusionary systems simultaneously. These different bases of exclusion often amplify each other to derail the participation of left behind people even in programs explicitly designed to include them.

Being told you're the problem: Those left behind are constantly told that 'they' are the problem. Community dynamics, public policies, and development interventions often pathologize the behaviours and identities of marginalized individuals, and such discourses have profound effects in both material and psychological terms.

Co-opted public institutions - access to public institutions is often intermediated by another individual, whose self-interests frequently become paramount. These intermediaries create artificial barriers and relationships of dependency that leave public systems inaccessible, expensive, or dangerous to Nepal's most left behind people.

Local access and remote dependencies - people most left behind often find their lives directed toward systems, resources, ideas, and opportunities that are located far away from them. As a consequence, their connections to centres of power are generally few and superficial, and decision makers the circumstances of their lives.

Made invisible in debates and discourses: Marginalized people are rarely taken into consideration during debates and decision making. Due to a lack of understanding about their circumstances, the actual problems they face remain unaddressed. Similarly, their experiences and contribution may not get adequate recognition.

Struggle of breaking through the vicious cycle of exclusion: The exclusion people face now is often the cause of the exclusion they will face in the future. People from marginalized groups have the least access to available interventions and support even though they are the ones who need them most.

Few benefits from public interventions - when public authorities implement new policies, systems and interventions, excluded people often experience the least benefit and the most harm. They rarely have access to decisions balancing costs and benefits, and even well-intentioned programs tend to leave them behind.

Underpinning the UN's approach in responding to the various forms of exclusion, inequity and vulnerability outlined above is **an inclusion and empowerment model founded on a human rights-based approach which provides the bedrock of this Cooperation Framework**. The human rights-based approach requires the development of holistic strategies that tackle the non-realization of human rights or rights' abuses, and the root causes and consequences of such situations, to prevent, respond and to uphold organizational accountability.[67] In this regard, the UN will focus its work on

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[66] https://openinst.notion.site/Leave-No-One-Behind
[67] For example, in the case of preventing sexual exploitation and abuse: https://www.un.org/preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/sites/www.un.org.preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/files/policy_on_integrating_a_human_rights-based_approach_to_un_efforts_to_prevent_and_respond_to_sea.pdf

areas identified in the analysis, contributing to strengthening institutions, laws and policy design, and **implementation from the perspective of both the duty bearer and empowerment of the rights holder**. The UN utilizes strong and effective partnerships with populations being left behind to co-create, learn and promote the exercise of 'agency' from among people, communities and institutions.

Within the framework of human rights, **Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse** (PSEA) is also among the top priorities of the UNCT Nepal, with the special focus on putting the victims first and ensuring senior management is held accountable for PSEA. While noting the disproportionate effects of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) on women, children, and vulnerable persons in Nepal, UNCT Nepal is committed to approaching its collective action on PSEA in order to safeguard beneficiaries/service recipients from SEA through this programme line. The UN Development system adopts a strategic focus on building systems to strengthen its internal structures, processes and accountabilities as well as providing support to governments and other partners and service providers in establishing efficient organizational capacities to prevent and respond to SEA.

Sustainability and Resilience

The CCA revealed that Nepal is among the highest ranked countries globally in terms of its systemic risk from climate change. Issues of **sustainability and resilience cut across all UNSDCF priorities and programmes across all provinces**. The UN will work with the public sector and partnerships to champion and drive sustainability as an engine of future growth. In addition, as outlined in priority three of this UNSDCF, 'Environmental Sustainability, Climate and Disaster Resilience', the UN will provide comprehensive assistance to Nepal in reducing, adapting and recovering from a wide range of often inter-related risks, including financial shocks, conflict, natural hazards, natural capital degradation and climate change impact.[68]

The UN also recognises the **relationship between hazards and poverty**, such that it is inevitably women, the poor and displaced populations that are worst affected when disaster strikes. This not only reverses hard won development gains, but contributes to rising inequality and exclusion, which impedes development. UN interventions pursued within the scope of this UNSDCF focus strongly on preparedness for risks and risk reduction of those vulnerable communities and localities assessed to be at greatest risk. When recovery efforts are implemented, they aim to empower, build back better, reduce disparities and leave no one behind.

The UN Nepal will collaborate with the international community to redouble its support to the country to accelerate implementation of the national '**Green, Resilient, Inclusive Development**' (GRID) Strategic Action Plan for Investment and Policy 2022-2030 and associated Development Policy Operation.

Federalization

The Constitution and the 15th Plan specifically set out the important role that local, provincial and federal governments will have to play in leading and coordinating the national development goals.[69] Based on the adopted roadmaps, provincial and local governments will formulate and implement their own periodic development plans. This will entail partnerships across all stakeholders at all levels,

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[68] For example: The World Migration Report 2022, IOM, noted that more people across the world are displaced due to climate change-induced disasters, reversing a historical trend. This has created a vulnerable group of population that is targeted for trafficking and other forms of exploitation. Women and children are primarily trafficked in the garb of employment opportunities, assuring safe habitats, among others. The World Migration Report 2022: https://worldmigrationreport.iom.int/wmr-2022-interactive/

[69] Preface, Fifteenth Plan 2019/20 – 2023/24

including the private sector, cooperatives, and non-government organizations, who will play a significant role in implementing the plan. Furthermore, the 15th Plan states that the "SDGs will be internalized and localized in the development programmes of the federal, provincial, and local levels as per the commitment of leaving no one behind in all dimensions of development."[70]

To accomplish this, the CCA and theory of change shows that further investment and assistance is needed to ensure **better coordination across core governance functions**. To advance this key government agenda, each of the four outcome areas will be working at all levels, strengthening federalism through a combination of policy development support, institutional and accountability strengthening and capacity building. Additionally, the Cooperation Framework dedicates priority area four on 'governance, federalism, participation and inclusion'. The aim of this priority is to achieve stronger coherence, integrity, accountability, and alignment in legal, policy, programming and budgetary matters, for example, in promoting green growth and climate resilience as a nationwide pursuit and in key development sectors.

Opportunities also exist to further strengthen provincial and local capacities and linkages that enable the reach of improved and equitable quality service delivery in the social sectors, with increasing impacts on marginalized and poorer people, based also on a stronger evidence base. Not least, in line with the central leave no one behind priority, opportunities exist to pursue innovative and empowering local approaches to inclusion and risk-resilient development through partnerships with marginalized groups, women and persons with disabilities. In line with the implementation strategy of this Cooperation Framework, important lessons and best practice will be generated for leaving no one behind from these interventions.

Cooperation Framework Priorities

Four priority areas, each providing an outcome statement, and 10 UN focus areas around which the UN will coalesce and collaborate its interventions **form the substantive content of this Cooperation Framework**. These priorities, outcomes and focus areas emerged through the extensive consultation process summarized above, which were further consolidated by follow up meetings with leading government counterparts, development partners and provincial authorities in May and July 2022. Box 9 captures the Cooperation Framework Strategic Priorities, Outcomes, UN Focus Areas and Indicators.

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[70] 15th plan, NPC.

Box 9. Cooperation Framework: Strategic Priorities, Outcome and Focus Areas, Results

Priority	Outcome	Focus Areas	Measured by (abbreviated)
PRIORITY 1: Sustainable, Resilient and Inclusive Economic Transformation	**OUTCOME 1:** By 2027, more people, especially women, youth, the most marginalized and poor, increasingly benefit from and contribute to inclusive, resilient, and sustainable socio-economic transformation at federal, provincial, and local levels.	**UN Focus Area 1.1**: Green, inclusive and diversified growth.	✓ Annual GDP growth/employed person
		UN Focus Area 1.2: Sustainable and decent livelihoods.	✓ Informal employment/total employment ✓ Social protection system coverage ✓ Women's ownership of property/ land/ house
PRIORITY 2: Inclusive and Transformative Human Development	**OUTCOME 2:** By 2027, more people, especially women, youth, children, and the most marginalized and poor, increasingly participate in and benefit from equitably improved quality social services at federal, provincial, and local levels.	**UN Focus Area 2.1**: Survive and Thrive. Women, men, youth, adolescents and children affordably enjoy better health, nutrition and WASH services, starting with the youngest and most vulnerable.	✓ Multi-dimensional poverty Index ✓ Universal health coverage index ✓ Prevalence of stunting/wasting ✓ Prevalence of food insecurity ✓ Access to WASH services ✓ Adolescent birthrate ✓ Maternal mortality rate
		UN Focus Area 2.2: Maximize Human Potential: Children, adolescents, youth and adults meaningfully participate in and benefit from educational services to fulfil their full potential.	✓ Literacy and numeracy ✓ Basic and secondary education completion
		UN Focus Area 2.3: Social protection and vital identity registration system strengthened to close the human capital gap.	✓ Births registered
		UN Focus Area 2.4: End gender-based violence and harmful practices.	✓ Gender-based violence ✓ Early marriage ✓ Reproductive Health Decisions
PRIORITY 3: Environmental Sustainability, Climate and Disaster Resilience	**OUTCOME 3:** By 2027, more people, especially women, youth, and the most marginalized and poor, increasingly benefit from and contribute to building an inclusive, sustainable, climate-resilient and green society and reduced impacts of disasters at federal, provincial, and local levels.	**UN Focus Area 3.1**: Promote a healthy, safe, inclusive, clean and green productive environment along with climate change mitigation.	✓ GHG emissions ✓ Renewable energy ✓ Forest cover
		UN Focus Area 3.2: Strengthen climate change adaptation and resilience through the reduction of vulnerabilities, disaster risk reduction, preparedness and effective response and recovery.	✓ Disaster loss
PRIORITY 4: Governance, Federalism, Participation and Inclusion	**OUTCOME 4:** By 2027, more people, especially women, youth and the most marginalized and poor increasingly participate in and benefit from coordinated, inclusive, accessible, participatory, transparent, and gender-responsive governance, access to justice and human rights at federal, provincial, and local levels.	**UN Focus Area 4.1:** Strengthening institutions and normative, legal and policy frameworks from a human rights-based approach across the three tiers of governance.	✓ Proportion of women and persons with disabilities in positions in national and local institutions ✓ PFM / budget execution ✓ Rule of law index ✓ Transparency
		UN Focus Area 4.2: Strengthen participation, inclusion, and dialogue through outreach and partnerships at all levels.	✓ Participation in decision making processes of public institutions

Alignment of UNSDCF and National Development Priorities

The priorities, outcomes and UN Focus Areas of this UNSDCF align closely with the priorities and objectives of the 15th Plan (Table 1).

Priority 1. Sustainable, Resilient and Inclusive Economic Transformation. The UN will support the 15th Plan objective of inclusive and green growth, improved productivity, decent work, sustainable livelihoods, and the provision of comprehensive, sustainable and productive social security systems, enabling a further shift to the formal economy and a smooth graduation from its LDC status.

Priority 2. Inclusive and Transformative Human Development. The UN commits to assisting the achievement of the national long-term goals of affordable and quality health care, food security, nutrition, water, sanitation and education services to all. Furthermore, the UN seeks to leverage social security provisions for achieving quality human capital and full utilization of human potential, including critically, access to legal documentation, such as birth certificates, as a right and requisite for legal identity, empowerment and development.

Priority 3. Environmental Sustainability, Climate and Disaster Resilience. The UN will provide support for sound environment management and climate action to ensure that environmental sustainability and resilience remain central to the national development agenda. This includes the national targets of the Climate Change Policy 2019, the Nationally Determined Contribution 2020; and the National Adaptation Plan 2021, all of which are set against the backdrop of the 15th Plan objective of a healthy and balanced environment, renewable energy, adaptation to climate change, disaster risk reduction/management and improvements in natural resource management.

Priority 4. Governance, Federalism, Participation and Inclusion. The UN aligns to the aim of the 15th Plan for advancing a safe, civilized and just society, marked by inclusive, participatory, gender-responsive, accountable and improved coherence across the three tiers of governance, supported by a comprehensive democracy, fully functioning rule of law system and the achievement of human rights.

Table 1. Close Alignment between the UNSDCF Priorities and the 15th Plan Long Term Goals

UNSDCF Priority	15th Plan - Long Term Goals
1. Sustainable, resilient and inclusive economic transformation	**Goal 1. Accessible and modern infrastructure and connectivity.** **Goal 3. High and sustainable production and productivity.** **Goal 4. High and equitable national income.** The 15th plan envisions achievement of these long-term goals, investing and promoting sustainable and employment-oriented economic growth; guaranteeing comprehensive, sustainable and productive social security and protection; investing and increasing in productivity; improving occupational health and safety of workers, productive capacity, value chains and market competitiveness; reducing poverty and socio-economic inequality; investing in and promoting digital technology and strengthening information technology and communication infrastructure; promoting modern agriculture technology, quality tourism services and entrepreneurship; implementing sustainable infrastructure development and expanding year-round irrigation; utilizing the skills and knowledge of migrants and diaspora in achieving SDGs and expanding the formal sector. It also envisions the creation of an enabling environment for businesses to achieve economic growth.
2. Inclusive and transformative human development	**Goal 2. Development and full utilization of human capital potential.** **Goal 5. Well-being and decent standard of living.** The 15th plan envisions achievement of long-term human development goals by ensuring affordable and quality health care and education services for all;

	strengthening basic public services; and achieving quality human capital and full utilization of human potential.
3. Environmental Sustainability, Climate and Disaster Resilience	**Goal 7. A healthy and balanced environment.** The 15th plan envisions achieving this long-term environmental sustainability goal by conserving and utilizing natural resources judiciously and improving climate resilience; increasing hydroelectricity production, promoting the use of clean and renewable energy, and promoting green economy; and encouraging modern, sustainable, and systematic urbanization, housing and settlement development; and well managed and regulated migration.
4. Governance, federalism, participation, and inclusion	**Goal 6. Safe, civilized and just society.** **Goal 8. Good governance and rule of law.** **Goal 9. Comprehensive democracy.** **Goal 10. National unity, security, and dignity.** The 15th plan envisions achieving long-term governance goals by strengthening national unity; ensuring good governance; institutionalizing the federal system of governance and fiscal federalism; and ensuring political commitment to constitutionalism, democracy, and development.

Interdependencies within the Cooperation Framework

The Cooperation Framework acknowledges the complexity and inter-dependencies that exist across the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its implementation in Nepal. These complex relationships were mapped into root causes, structural causes and effects in the CCA, which preceded and informed its formulation. In this respect, at the core of this Cooperation Framework **critical linkages are made between human rights, which are foundational for human dignity, empowerment, agency and social and economic development**. Hence, the model of inclusive and sustainable development being pursued in Nepal places human rights as the first point of principle and the primary entry point to ensure that no one is left behind. This begins with the right of legal identity and stretches through a life-long continuum of rights that include access to information, food, health, education, water, sanitation and shelter, around which the SDGs are marshalled.

The human rights-based approach thereby provides the essential connection between social development and high-quality decentralised service delivery, for example, in key sectors such as healthcare, education and social security. These services, for which an increasing number of the population, focusing on children, women, youth, the marginalized and poor, are able to benefit from and contribute to inclusive, sustainable and resilient economic transformation. The approach of the Cooperation Framework consciously and measurably seeks to **widen the participation of vulnerable and historically marginalized people within, platforms, partnerships, programmes and services** to improve their effectiveness across all three levels of governance.

The Cooperation Framework also recognizes the symbiotic relationship between ecology and economy, taking into account Nepal's high-risk exposure to the rapid onset of climate impact and the commensurate requirement for enhanced disaster resilience. Table 2 provides a summary matrix of some of the main relationships across the four priority areas, including attention to Leave No One Behind.

Table 2. Illustration of the main inter-relationships and areas for synergy across the four Cooperation Framework priority areas, including the centrality of 'Leave No One Behind'.

	Sustainable, Resilient and Inclusive Economic Transformation	Inclusive and Transformative Human Development	Environmental Sustainability, Climate and Disaster Resilience	Governance, Federalism, Participation and Inclusion	Leave No-One Behind
Sustainable, Resilient and Inclusive Economic Transformation		Better health and education are a principal source for driving economic transformation.	Greening Business - opportunities for growth and transition to a low carbon economy. More resilient infrastructure, institutions, communities and economy.	Public / private partnerships, e.g. in skills development and formalization of the labour market. Inclusive local economic development strategies.	Reduced informal sector, improved social security. Business and human rights. Improved conditions for economic migrants. More targeted economic opportunities for LNOB at risk populations.
Inclusive and Transformative Human Development	Improved health and education drive sustainable transformation and contribute to improved productivity, competitiveness and reduced poverty.		Greater awareness, greater resilience, ability to cope, plan, respond, use green technologies. Public health impacts of improved nutrition, food systems/security, environmental quality and reduced water, air, waste pollution.	Service standards and service delivery improvements. Legal empowerment of the poor and SDG linkages. Improved culture of inclusion and participation in partnerships, platforms and service design. Strengthened rule of law.	Strong links to ensuring LNOB and multi-dimensional poverty reduction integrates with health, education and basic services. Better designed and targeted interventions for left behind populations.
Environmental Sustainability, Climate and Disaster Resilience	Opportunities for green growth and de-carbonization of the economy. More resilient infrastructure, institutions and economic sectors.	Improved education and awareness of climate, disaster, sustainability and resilience. Public health impacts of improved nutrition, food systems/security, environmental quality and reduced water, air, waste pollution.		Policy coordination and coherence of climate change and DRR/resilience planning across all sectors / provinces. Accelerated implementation and improved data, analysis and evidenced-based policy / programming.	Reduced disaster and climate impact on marginalized and vulnerable communities and women. Upgrading urban slums and informal settlements through inclusive urban planning. Integrated humanitarian-development coordination.
Governance, Federalism, Participation and Inclusion	Enhanced public / private partnerships, e.g. in skills building, incremental formalization of the labour market, SME development, technology transfers (SSTC), ICT/digitization and local economic development strategies.	Improved service standards and service delivery. Human Rights and SDG linkages. Improved culture of inclusion and participation in partnerships, platforms and service design.	Policy coherence of climate change and DRR/resilience planning across all sectors / provinces. Accelerated implementation and improved data, analysis and evidenced-based policy / programming.		Sharper multi-dimensional poverty analysis and reduction. Stronger links between legal / policy implementation and LNOB impact. Decentralized commitment to LNOB. Digital solutions support sharper targeting of social security schemes for improved welfare.
Leave No-One Behind	Reduced informal sector. Improved social protection. Strengthened business and human rights. Targeted economic opportunities for women and LNOB at risk populations. Improved conditions and reduced risk for economic migrants.	Strong links to ensuring LNOB and multi-dimensional poverty reduction work integrates with health, education, and basic services. Refined services, programme for improved effectiveness.	Reduced disaster and climate impact on marginalized and vulnerable communities and women. Upgrading urban slums and informal settlements through inclusive urban planning. Integrated humanitarian-development coordination.	Sharper multi-dimensional poverty analysis and reduction. Stronger links between legal / policy implementation and LNOB impact. Empowered decentralized commitment to LNOB. Digital solutions enable sharper targeting of social security schemes for improved welfare.	

Linking the Cooperation Framework's Theory of Change to Development Results

Within the framework of these central themes, priorities, outcomes and focus areas, the theory of change has determined that concentrated efforts should be directed towards **addressing the structural and root causes** summarized in Boxes 5 and 6. As a result, the outcome statements for each priority area clearly set out the vision of a transition, by 2027, towards more inclusive, resilient, sustainable development, through which more people are increasingly able to contribute to, participate in and benefit from Nepal's development journey.

Within each outcome area the UN will provide a focussed range of measures aimed at strengthening institutions, laws, policies and service delivery across the three tiers of governance, and, simultaneously, opening pathways for the participation and empowerment of people and populations at greatest risk of being 'left behind'. In this regard, and important for **the centrality of Leave No One Behind** to this UNSDCF, many of the targets and indicators identified will increasingly include data disaggregated by gender, age, social group, geography, or caste/ethnicity, and some by disability.

The UNSDCF indicators of development progress have been carefully selected to chart the UN's contribution **to monitoring and measuring key changes in root and structural causes of Nepal's current challenges across the economic, social, environmental and governance pillars**. At the same time the UNSDCF has sought to identify results closely aligned to national priorities that also focus on the core areas of i) inclusion as the central over-arching theme, with special attention to LNOB populations; ii) Sustainability and Resilience; and; iii) Federalization. Table 3 provides a summary of key indicators per priority area, while Annex 1 provides the detailed UNSDCF results matrix, including indicators with disaggregated data.

For example, **indicators in priority area 1** for sustainable and inclusive economic transformation, charts not only progress in supporting the achievement of high rates of GDP growth per capita, they also serve to focus attention on the intention to impact the rates of multi-dimensional poverty experienced by a sizeable share of the population. Similarly, **in priority area 2**, whilst universal health coverage provides an important composite indicator covering a range of services for reproductive, maternal, new-born, child and adolescent health[71] interventions, which are important for ensuring the affordable, quality and equitable provision of health services. Other complementary indicators focus more deliberately on critical issues of accessible reproductive health, stunting, wasting and food insecurity, which are **very relevant to LNOB populations**.

Likewise, **indicators in priority areas three** include sectors, localities and vulnerable populations most at risk from natural hazards and climate change induced events. These populations include women and girls. **Priority area four** consist of measures to gauge progress on participation, inclusion and gender equality in decision-making structures, including across the three tiers of governance. The outcomes and UN focus areas set out in this Cooperation Framework as well as many of the targets, baselines and indicators within its Results Framework will also be adopted in individual UN entities national programmes and plans, as well as adjusted and contextualised within joint UN workplans, which include a provincial dimension (see implementation plan below).

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[71] (RMNCHA) Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health

UN Comparative Advantages

In implementing this Cooperation Framework, the UN will support Nepal in the fulfilment of its national development vision and goals. The UN leads the international community in pursuit of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and is able to **provide an unparalleled breadth and depth of support** to the government, provincial authorities and development partners at all levels. The UN is best placed to deliver its normative facilitation role in universal human rights-based treaties and conventions to which Nepal is party, to advance economic, social, environmental and cultural development based on principles of equality, inclusion, resilience and sustainability. The UN will support Nepal's smooth graduation from LDC status by leveraging its global network of development expertise and draw continuously on this pool to capitalize on the exchange of development best practise through South-South and triangular cooperation mechanisms.

A clear and prominent feature of this Cooperation Framework is that the UN and its agencies will work especially closely with populations left behind, or at risk of being left behind, within each of the four priority and 10 focus areas. The UN has the mandate and is well placed to support and partner with these groups nationally, provincially and locally. The UN is also well positioned to co-create platforms and partnerships that support innovation with the private sector, civil society, women, young people, sexual and gender minorities and persons with disabilities. These endeavours help to **reinforce Nepal's position as a global pioneer at the forefront of learning about how to successfully implement the UN's leaving no one behind agenda**. Finally, UN agencies will focus on delivering as One UN to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in full compliance with the UN Resolution 72/279 and other resolutions adopted for its enforcement.

PRIORITY AREA 1: SUSTAINABLE, RESILIENT, AND INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

OUTCOME 1: By 2027, more people, especially women, youth, the most marginalized and poor, increasingly benefit from, and contribute to, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable socio-economic transformation at federal, provincial, and local levels.

UN Contribution to Outcome 1

Based on the theory of change outlined in Box 10, the UN will focus on two areas in order to advance towards Outcome 1:

- **UN Focus Area 1.1:** Green, inclusive and diversified growth.
- **UN Focus Area 1.2:** Sustainable and decent livelihoods.

Box 10. Theory of change for sustainable, resilient, and inclusive economic transformation

If, a sustainable and competitive business environment is achieved, accompanied by structural transformation toward higher skills/productivity sectors, benefiting from increased investment, stronger value chains, better access to markets and improved trade;

And if, inclusive and resilient economic growth occurs founded on greener decent jobs, enterprises and incomes that enable a transition from the informal to the formal sector in tandem with the provision of a comprehensive, integrated and sustainable social security system;

THEN, this will provide the conditions necessary to affect a sustainable, resilient and inclusive economic transformation, which will in turn contribute significantly to a reduction in multi-dimensional poverty.

Outcome 1 alignment with the 15th Plan

Outcome 1 and the UN Focus areas above align directly with the 15th plan's priorities for:

1. High and sustainable production and productivity;
2. High and equitable national income.

The 15th Plan aims to achieve these long-term goals by:

- Creating an enabling environment for business to achieve its economic growth
- Investing and promoting sustainable and employment-oriented economic growth;
- Investing and increasing productivity, productive capacity, and market competitiveness;
- Reducing poverty and socio-economic inequality;
- Guaranteeing comprehensive, sustainable and productive social security;
- Investing in and promoting digital technology and strengthening information technology and communication infrastructure;
- Promoting quality tourism services and entrepreneurship;
- Expanding the formal sector; and
- Making foreign employment safe, dignified and systematic.

UN Focus Area 1.1: Green, inclusive and diversified growth

> **Snapshot of Interventions in UN Focus Area 1.1:**
>
> Through this focus area the UN will support green, inclusive and diversified growth by improving the business environment, productivity and competitiveness, and environmental sustainability of the economy (SDG 1, SDG 2, SDG 3, SDG 5, SDG 7, SDG 8, SDG 9, SDG 10, SDG 11, SDG 12, SDG 13).
>
> UN interventions will support Nepal's economic transformation towards a smooth transition from LDC status:
>
> - ✓ Green, inclusive and diversified growth.
> - ✓ Transition of jobs and enterprises from the informal to the formal sector.
> - ✓ Sustainable investment and development finance.
> - ✓ Improved business and investment climate through easing doing business.
> - ✓ Value chains.
> - ✓ Trade logistics, trade related infrastructure and market access.
> - ✓ Resilient and quality infrastructure.
> - ✓ Innovation, digitization, technology exchange.
> - ✓ Enhanced capacity for effective response to economic vulnerabilities
> - ✓ Private sector implementation of the SDGs.
> - ✓ Provincial economic development.
> - ✓ Enhancing domestic production and productive capacity.

The UN will support green, diversified and inclusive growth and sustainable, resilient investment policies and practices for a climate and shock resilient economy in line with the government's Green, Resilient, Inclusive Development (GRID) strategy. This will include technical assistance, policy guidance and facilitation of international best practice for green, resilient and productive infrastructure and industrial development, enhancing transport connectivity, and incentives for private sector investment in the green economy as a growth and innovation opportunity. A specific line of action will be through the promotion of green growth and the just transition to green jobs, policies, regulatory frameworks and practical guidance based on regional and global experience for reducing the greenhouse gas intensity of the economy.

By providing policy and technical assistance, the UN will support the development of a resilient, competitive and improved business environment, and risk informed business planning. This will also work to strengthen urban-rural partnerships to create employment at the local level with better access to domestic and international markets, increased participation in competitive international trade and a smooth graduation from LDC status.

The UN will support the government and the private sector with knowledge products, technical assistance, policy advice, and demonstration and promotion of best techniques and practices to accelerate Nepal's economic diversification and transformation. This will reduce Nepal's dependence on subsistence agriculture, and remittances – a key economic risk factor identified in the CCA—and support to tap into Nepal's potential sectors such as tourism and resilient infrastructure.

The UN will provide expertise to Nepal to strengthen strategic value chains, in the agriculture, cultural and creative industries, and in tourism, manufacturing and the service sectors, as well as other sectors

with high export potential. UN international platforms will be utilized for an exchange of knowhow on innovation, digital transformation, e-commerce and technology.

The UN will provide support to relevant authorities and partnerships at the national and provincial levels to accelerate the transition of jobs and enterprises from the informal sector to the formal economy, through analysis, knowledge products and policy assistance. This includes international financial institutions and private sector at the national, provincial and local levels to facilitate improved access to development services, technology, finance and, where appropriate, FDI. In this regard, the UN will also support sub-national authorities with economic development strategies and partnerships with the private sector. This will help accelerate private sector led contributions to SDG implementation and localization.

The UN will provide technical expertise to Nepal on enhancing its transport connectivity by facilitating its active participation in the regional institutional framework for international freight transport, including the Asian Highway Network, the Trans-Asian Railway Network and Dry Ports of international importance.

Prospective Partnerships Required for UN Focus Area 1.1
Government / national and sub-national partners: MoLESS, MoICS, MoALD, MoF, MoHA, MoFAGA, MoLMCPA, MoICT, MoCTCA, MoFA, MoFE, MoEST, MoCSC, MoLWCSC, MoHP, NPC, CTEVT, MoUD, municipal and provincial governments & agencies, Nepali embassies in receiving countries.
Development Partners: EU, USAID, FCDO, GIZ, SDC, GAFSP, GCF, GEF, Adaptation fund, NAMA facility, International financial institutions, World Bank, ADB.
Collaborating UN agencies: ESCAP, FAO, IFAD, ILO, IOM, ITC, UN Women, UNCDF, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNIDO, UNODC, UNOPS, WFP, WHO.

Snapshot of Interventions in UN Focus Area 1.2:

Through this Focus Area the UN will promote economic inclusion by supporting access to land, decent livelihoods, income and job opportunities, and social security (SDG 1, SDG 3, SDG 5, SDG 8, SDG 10).

Interventions will support labour market inclusion, productivity gains and Nepal's 'decent work for all' agenda:

- ✓ Shift towards higher productivity, future-proof, demand driven skills and jobs.
- ✓ Sustainable livelihoods.
- ✓ Labour market inclusion for most marginalized groups including returnee migrants.
- ✓ Access to land.
- ✓ Comprehensive, integrated, and sustainable social security.
- ✓ Safe working conditions for all.
- ✓ Entrepreneurship development

UN Focus Area 1.2: Sustainable and decent livelihoods

In this focus area, the UN will support the implementation of Nepal's decent work agenda. This will include technical advice across a range of related areas including enhancing labour productivity, expanding sustainable livelihood and entrepreneurship opportunities, occupational safety and health, family-friendly work arrangements and care infrastructure for the reduction and redistribution of unpaid work services, improved skills development, volunteering opportunities, skill-matching, on-the-job training, apprenticeships and mentorships.

In line with the government's GRID strategy, and ensuring no one is left behind, the UN will bring a strong raft of measures and tailored interventions that support labour market inclusion and safety for women, youth, persons with disabilities and marginalized groups to facilitate their economic inclusion and empowerment. This will include working with development partners to provide specially designed initiatives and direct support to these populations across Nepal's seven provinces. Interventions will thereby enable the marginalized and poor to access skills, resources, entrepreneurship opportunities and platforms needed to obtain a foothold in the labour market.

The UN will work with the government, private sector, workers and employers' organizations, and civil society to expand access to comprehensive, sustainable and productive social security in line with the goal of the 15th Plan, particularly for women, persons with disabilities, vulnerable groups and workers in the informal economy, including refugees. This is due to the fact that social security plays an important role in ensuring that economic growth is inclusive. Hence, the improved income security and resilience of households, allows them to invest more, maintain productive assets and access essential services and goods. At the same time, investments in social security boost aggregated domestic demand, acting as a macroeconomic stabilizer, while creating economic multiplier effects at local and national levels, promoting community level investments and social cohesion.

Straddling Outcome One and Outcome Two of this Cooperation Framework, UN joint work in this regard will focus on advancing comprehensive social security policy solutions through technical advice, dialogue and partnerships, decentralization, coordination, and the monitoring of operations and services. The UN will support evidence generation to inform the progress of the national social security system and its schemes, and in the process assist systems strengthening, including the development and integration of management and information systems through digital solutions. Tailored UN initiatives will provide capacity development and awareness raising, enhanced public financial management and transparency, and support the establishment of sustainable financing strategies and mechanisms for improved sector functioning.

The UN will continue to champion issues of protection for all people from the worst forms of labour, including human trafficking and exploitation, and advocate for and support the safety of all, particularly migrant workers, ensuring access to decent employment opportunities and new labour destinations through enhanced international cooperation and assistance to facilitate their effective integration into Nepal's labour market.

Prospective Partnerships Required for UN Focus Area 1.2
Government / national and sub-national Partners: MoLESS, MoICS, MoALD, MoF, MoFAGA, MoLMCPA, MoICT, MoCTCA, MoEST, MoLWCSC, MoHA, MoSD, MoFA, MoLCSC, MoFA, MoHA, MOWCSC, NPC, CTEVT, municipal governments and provincial agencies, Nepali embassies in receiving countries.
Development partners: EU, World Bank, ADB, USAID, FCDO, GIZ, SDC, GAFSP, GCF, GEF, Adaptation fund, NAMA facility, International financial institutions.
Collaborating UN agencies: ESCAP, FAO, IFAD, ILO, IOM, ITC, UN Women, UNCDF, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNODC, UNV, WFP, WHO.

PRIORITY AREA 2: INCLUSIVE AND TRANSFORMATIVE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

OUTCOME 2: By 2027, more people, especially women, youth, children, and the most marginalized and poor, increasingly participate in, and benefit, from equitably improved quality social services at federal, provincial, and local levels.

UN Contribution to Outcome 2

Based on the theory of change described in Box 11, the UN will focus on four areas in pursuit of Outcome 2:

- **UN Focus Area 2.1:** Survive and Thrive. Women, men, youth, adolescents and children affordably enjoy better health, nutrition and WASH services, starting with the youngest and most vulnerable.
- **UN Focus Area 2.2:** Maximize Human Potential: Children, adolescents, youth and adults meaningfully participate in and benefit from educational services to fulfil their full potential.
- **UN focus Area 2.3:** Social protection and vital identity registration system strengthened to close the human capital gap.
- **UN Focus Area 2.4:** End GBV and harmful practices

Box 11. Theory of change for inclusive and transformative human development

IF, in Nepal's social sector, higher quality education, health (including sexual and reproductive health), hygiene, nutrition, food, water, sanitation and social protection, outcomes are attained;

And if more marginalized and poor people, children and child workers, women, youth, adolescents and persons with disabilities are able to fulfil the full range of human capabilities by gaining equal access to a wide range of the above services, alongside assets, information, legal identity documentation, financing and resources, including land;

And if root causes of discriminatory social and legal norms, GBV and harmful practices are tackled when and where they occur;

And if women and girls are free to lead lives that are safe and free from violence;

And if women are able to fully participate and have real presence and voice in the full range of partnerships, structures and forums - across the private, civil, academic and public spheres, and from local to national;

THEN more people will be empowered and better equipped for living purposeful and fulfilling lives and be better able to contribute to the cultural, political, social, economic and environmental progress of their communities and provinces, and to the nation.

Outcome 2 alignment with the 15th Plan

Outcome Two and the UN focus areas above align directly with the 15th Plan's priorities for:

1. Development and full utilization of human capital potential;
2. Well-being and decent standard of living;

The 15th Plan envisions achievement of long-term human development goals by:

- Ensuring affordable and quality health care and education services to all.
- CRVS and identity services.
- Achieving quality human capital and full utilization of human potential.
- Elimination of child labour by 2025.[72]
- Eradicating forced labour, human trafficking and child labour in line with UN targets

UN Focus Area 2.1: Survive and thrive. Women, men, youth, adolescents and children affordably enjoy better health, nutrition and WASH services, starting with the youngest and most vulnerable.

> **Snapshot of Interventions in UN Focus Area 2.1:**
>
> In this focus area the UN will support women, men, youth, children and adolescents affordably to enjoy better health, food, nutrition and WASH, starting with the youngest and most vulnerable (SDG 2, SDG 3, SDG 5, SDG 6, SDG 10).
>
> Interventions will seek to strengthen health, nutrition and WASH:
>
> ✓ Federal and provincial healthcare systems.
> ✓ Reproductive, maternal, new-born, child and adolescent health and nutrition.
> ✓ Communicable and non-communicable diseases.
> ✓ Multi-Sector Nutrition Plan and its implementation.
> ✓ Food security and food system transformation.
> ✓ Costed sector and municipal WASH plans and their implementation.
> ✓ Comprehensive social security and healthcare insurance (linked with outcome 1).
> ✓ Improved data, analysis and evidence-based planning.
> ✓ Increased focus on Leave No One Behind groups, for example, the poor, marginalized, women, children, persons with disabilities.

The UN will continue to provide comprehensive institutional strengthening, capacity building and technical support for Nepal's healthcare systems and service delivery for improved population health and nutrition outcomes. This will include assistance at national, provincial and local levels to ensure efficient coordination and resource allocation. Support will be provided for a range of healthcare systems and services, within the spectrum of primary healthcare. This includes sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, adolescent health and nutrition, including TB, GBV response interventions, across communicable and non-communicable diseases.[73]

The UN will partner with the government, service providers and stakeholders to support the management of non-communicable disease control embracing healthy lifestyles, occupational safety and health at work, and strategies to increase awareness, reduce stigma and improve the delivery of mental health and psychosocial well-being services, promoting nurturing care in the first golden thousand days and ensuring access to all services for all people.[74]

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[72] As outlined in the National Masterplan on elimination of child labour (2018-2028)
[73] This will include supporting roll out of the Nepal Safe Motherhood and Newborn Health Roadmap 2018.
[74] Mindful of the particular needs of persons with disabilities, people living with or affected by HIV, people who use drugs and incarcerated persons, for example, among other populations.

The UN will provide technical assistance for health and nutritional information systems, including maternal and perinatal death surveillance and response.[75] This will include interventions that strengthen nutrition and food security/food systems transformation as defined in the National Pathways identified by the government. This will incorporate the prevention and treatment of malnutrition and direct support for the Multi-Sector Nutrition Plan and its implementation at all levels. Parallel efforts will be made to improve surveillance through which to inform programme design, implementation, monitoring and improved accountabilities.

To support the achievement of national goals and the SDGs on Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH), the UN will provide comprehensive and coordinated support for the WASH sector, particularly to the most disadvantaged and those living in humanitarian contexts, having access to and using gender responsive, inclusive, equitable, accessible, safely managed and climate resilient WASH services. National and local capacities will be built for integrated water resource management for future development on water supply sources, quality and its usage. This will include strategic support to government to develop an improved enabling environment through strengthened legislative frameworks, system strengthening, enhanced sector coordination and institutional capacities to deliver WASH services both in communities and institutions, including schools and health care facilities. This will include interventions to strengthen WASH planning at federal, provincial, and municipal levels and budgeting modalities to improve resource allocations and targeting according to need.

The UN will support healthcare, nutrition, and social protection systems and services with improved data quality, data disaggregation and data management to ensure women, youth, children, persons with disabilities, the most marginalized and poor gain improved access and benefits.

Prospective Partnerships Required for UN Focus Area 2.1
Government / national and sub-national partners: MoWCSC, MoWS, MoEST, NHRC, MoHP, MoLESS, FEB, FWS, MoFAGA, MoYS, MoICS, MoALD, MoFE, MoEWRI, MOHA, MoSD, NPC, DFTQC, FMTC, NHRC, provincial and local governments, National Women's Commission
Development Partners: FCDO, ADB, World Bank, Finnish Embassy, JICA, USAID, KOICA, GIZ, Global Fund, GAFSP, GCF, GEF EU.
Collaborating UN agencies: FAO, ILO, IOM, UN Habitat, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, WFP, WHO.

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[75] (MPDSR)

UN Focus Area 2.2: Maximize human potential: Children, adolescents, youth and adults meaningfully participate in and benefit from educational services to fulfil their full potential.

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Snapshot of Interventions in UN Focus Area 2.2:

In this Focus Area the UN will support children, adolescents, youth and adults to meaningfully participate in and benefit from accessing public services that fulfil their potential (SDG 2, SDG 4, SDG 5, SDG 6, SDG 8, SDG 10, SDG 16).

UN interventions aim to improve Nepal's education system and key services to achieve better outcomes:
- ✓ Educational institutions and systems at federal and provincial levels.
- ✓ Learning recovery from the COVID-19.
- ✓ Nurturing care and early learning opportunities.
- ✓ Enrolment, retention and the prevention of school drops-outs.
- ✓ Water, sanitation and nutrition within educational settings.

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The UN will partner with government and service providers to improve delivery of learning outcomes. This includes comprehensive and coordinated UN support for the education sector, including technical assistance for institutional and education systems strengthening, including strengthening the Education Management Information System. The UN will help facilitate alignment and coordination between development partners and government programmes, with a particular focus on strengthening equity and inclusion. Constitutionally basic education is compulsory and free, and secondary education is free – for the implementation of this provision the Compulsory and Free Education Act 2075 and regulations 2077 have been introduced.

Assistance to the education sector will target learning recovery from the impact of COVID-19, and support to help address the learning crisis, particularly in the early grades of school. It incorporates improvements to nurturing care, particularly early learning opportunities and parenting education, as well as the transition to basic education. It also includes Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) to build awareness of gender norms, encourage equitable relationships and empower young people to make informed decisions about their general health, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing. The UN will provide technical assistance for improved enrolment and retention in schools, and the fostering of pathways and flexible linkages between formal, Technical and Vocation Education and Training (TVET) and non-formal education, including the prevention of school drops-outs and out of school children/youth. The literate Nepal campaign has been implemented with the objective of making out-of-school children and communities deprived of learning opportunities literate.

Institutional WASH and school health and nutrition remain important areas of support provided by the UN, including the coordination of inputs, for example, in water and sanitation in public spaces and school feeding, especially where this requires cross-sectoral working with health and protection services.

The UN will provide technical expertise to harness the benefits of the demographic dividend, including building the capacities of young people in relation to their health, education and skills development, to succeed in the workplace. This will include support for a youth-friendly policy environment and empowering young people to engage with policy dialogue to participate in shaping their future. To these ends, the UN will meaningfully engage with and undertake capacity building of young people and adolescents -- educators and youth facilitators -- through activity-based learning, with a focus on life-skills, responsible citizenship, global goals, peace, integrity and crime prevention.

Prospective Partnerships Required for UN Focus Area 2.2
Government / national and sub-national Partners: MoWCSC, MoEST, NHRC, MoHP, MoYS, MoWS, MoHA, MoFAGA, MoLJPA, CTEVT, MOWS, NWC, provincial and local governments, National Child Rights Council, Department of National ID and Civil Registration, universities, schools and civil society.
Development Partners: FCDO, USAID DFAT, GIZ, JICA, WB, Norway.
Collaborating UN Agencies: ILO, IOM, UN Women, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, WFP, WHO.

UN Focus Area 2.3: Social protection and vital identity registration system strengthened to close the human capital gap

> **Snapshot of Interventions in UN Focus Area 2.3:**
>
> In this focus area the UN will support children, adolescents, youth and adults to meaningfully benefit from access to services that provide for their legal empowerment and dignity (SDG 1 and SDG 16, with implications for SDG 2, SDG 3, SDG 4, SDG 5, SDG 8, SDG 10).
>
> Specific interventions will work on:
>
> ✓ Health insurance and social security schemes (integral to UN Focus Area 1.2 and 2.1 above)
> ✓ Civil Registration and Vital Statistics
> ✓ Support coordination between various social security programmes and their effective implementation.

The UN will work with the government, the private sector and civil society to expand access to comprehensive, sustainable and productive social security and protection in line with the goal of the 15th plan (and integral to UN focus areas 1.2 and 2.1 above). Technical assistance will be provided to increase financial protection and attain universal health insurance coverage ensuring reduced financial hardship associated with health service utilization. Existing social security measures will be leveraged to promote improved linkages for better nutrition and the removal of barriers to access healthcare services. Health insurance coverage will be promoted among the population to reduce out-of-pocket expenditure on health care. Allied to this, school feeding will be coordinated alongside inputs for water and sanitation measures in public spaces. Cross-sectoral working between health and protection services will be facilitated. Efforts will be made to support the increased coverage of human capital /development focused contributory social protection schemes, like child grants, disability grants, AMMA programme and provincial social protection programmes like 'Beti Bachao' and 'Beti Padhao' in Province 2, 6 and 7. These measures will help to address exclusion.

Within this focus area the UN will promote the continued scale-up of birth registration and vital events service provision. Civil Registration and Vital Statistics outreach will be encouraged to ensure timely issuance of legal identity documents (civil registration from birth to death).

Prospective Partnerships Required for UN Focus Area 2.3
Government / national and sub-national partners: MoHA, MoFAGA, MoLJPA, MoWCSC, MoHA, NHRC, National Child Rights Council, Department of National ID and Civil Registration, MoFAGA, MoHP, MoLESS
International development partners: Government of Sweden, EU, Norway.
Collaborating UN agencies: ILO, UNICEF, UNDP, UNHCR, UN Women, UNFPA, WHO, IOM, WFP.

UN Focus Area 2.4: End GBV and harmful practices

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Snapshot of Interventions in UN Focus Area 2.4:

In this focus area the UN will help Nepalis evolve from a number of harmful and discriminatory traditional, social and cultural practices to those that permit all people, especially those historically most marginalized to enjoy equal rights and opportunities to maximize their potential for themselves, their families and their country (SDG 4, SDG 5, SDG 8, SDG 16).

UN interventions will support Nepal to end GBV and harmful practices and promote human rights and equality in line with the Constitution:

- ✓ Eliminating discrimination, addressing inequalities and providing equal rights and opportunities.
- ✓ Tackling GBV in all spheres, including at the work place, and ending harmful practices such as child marriage.
- ✓ Eliminating forced labour and child labour.
- ✓ Empowering women, girls and marginalized populations.

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Using a human-rights based approach the UN will work with the government, the private sector, civil society and community representatives at all levels to eliminate inequitable and harmful practices where they occur. In this regard, the UN will work with partners to promote non-discrimination and equality, prevent and eliminate violence and harassment in all forms and spaces, including workplaces, against the most vulnerable, particularly women, children, and adolescents. The UN will support at risk and affected populations and will assist access to timely, resilient, equitable, gender, age and disability sensitive information and interventions that align with the internationally agreed 'Essential Services Package for Women and Girls Subject to Violence'.

The UN will promote the mainstream empowerment of girls and women and challenge discriminatory social norms. This includes improving women's, girls' and adolescents' agency, voice and choice towards positive gender norms and socialization, and more equitable parenting/household and economic roles, including boys/men engagement.

The UN will prioritize the strategy for implementation to combat GBV, sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, including in humanitarian settings and the workplace. Working with partners, strong efforts will be made to ensure at-risk and affected populations have timely access to culturally, socially appropriate, gender- and age-sensitive information and interventions and services that prevent and respond to violence, harassment, exploitation, abuse, neglect where it occurs, for example, through support for more effective criminal justice systems.

Similarly, the UN will continue to advocate strongly to end harmful practices, including child marriage, which affects adolescent girls and boys, including among the most marginalized, so that every young person's potential is fulfilled. This will enable their experience of healthier, safer and more empowered life transitions, including making choices about their education as well as sexual and reproductive health and rights.

In line with international norms, the UN will continue to work towards the elimination of child labour. This will be achieved by enhancing national capacities and support for the implementation of the National Plan of Action on Elimination of Child Labour in partnership with other relevant actors and to

provide technical support to the government and relevant partners for the proper implementation of the rehabilitation support to freed Haruwa-Charuwa, Kamaiya and Haliyas and provide technical assistance to the government to make child labour free municipalities. Elimination of forced labour provides freedom for people and workers to choose an occupation and their right to engage in work of their choice.

The UN will provide technical assistance for the implementation of the rehabilitation package for Haruwa-Charuwas and support for the ratification of the Forced Labour Protocol, 2014[76] and support the victims of forced labour to improve their livelihoods.

Prospective Partnerships Required for UN Focus Area 2.4
Government / national and sub-national Partners: MoWCSC, MoEST, MoEWRI, MoLESS, MoYS, MoFAGA, MoALD, MoMCP, MoLMCPA, MoHP, NWC, NHRC, provincial and local governments
Development partners: ROK, Norway, Finland, SDC
Collaborating UN agencies: FAO, ILO, IOM, UN Habitat, UN Women, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP, WHO, UNHCR

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[76] ILO Forced Labor Protocol, 2014

PRIORITY AREA 3: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY, CLIMATE AND DISASTER RESILIENCE

OUTCOME 3: By 2027, more people, especially women, youth, and the most marginalised and poor, increasingly benefit from and contribute to building an inclusive, sustainable, climate-resilient and green society and reduced impacts of disasters at federal, provincial, and local levels.

UN Contribution to Outcome 3

Based on the theory of change (Box 12) the UN will focus on two interconnected areas in order to contribute to the achievement of Outcome 3:

- **UN Focus Area 3.1**: Promote a healthy, safe, inclusive, clean and green productive environment along with climate change mitigation.
- **UN Focus Area 3.2**: Strengthen climate change adaptation and resilience through the reduction of vulnerabilities, disaster risk reduction, preparedness and effective response and recovery.

Box 12. Theory of change for environmental sustainability, climate and disaster resilience

IF, Nepal can advance a disaster-resilient society that sustainably uses and manages clean, green, natural resources, in accordance with internationally agreed frameworks such as the UNFCCC and action plans;

And if legal and regulatory frameworks* and safeguards are in place at the federal, provincial and local levels to enable the implementation of relevant, risk-informed development plans, policies, programmes, investments and infrastructure;

And if communities, organizations, and society at large, collaborate effectively in understanding their respective roles, change behaviours and participle in the restoration, management and conservation of natural resources;

And if Nepal can strengthen the capacities and resilience of critical actors and systems to address the needs of populations impacted by natural disasters and climate change through a gender-response and inclusion lens;

THEN, the sustainable management of natural resources and increased capacity to adapt to climate change, make progress towards Nepal's commitment to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions and disaster risks will result.

*For example, National Adaptation Plan (NAP) and Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) on climate change

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Outcome 3 alignment with the 15th Plan

Outcome 3 and the related UN focus areas align directly with the 15th plan's priorities for:

1. A healthy and balanced environment.

The 15th Plan envisions achieving this long-term environment sustainability goal by:

- Conserving and utilizing natural resources judiciously and improving climate resilience;
- Increasing hydroelectricity production, promoting use of clean and renewable energy, and promoting green economy;

- Encouraging modern, sustainable, and planned urbanization, housing and settlement development;
- Pursuit of Nepal's Nationally Determined Contribution, National Adaptation Plan, and Disaster Risk Reduction/Management (Strategic Action Plan 2018-2030).

UN Focus Area 3.1: Promote a healthy, safe, inclusive, clean and green productive environment along with climate change mitigation

> **Snapshot of Interventions in UN Focus Area 3.1:**
>
> Through this focus area, the UN will help Nepal accelerate climate action and sustainable natural resource management (SDG 6, SDG 7, SDG 11, SDG 12, SDG 13, SDG 14, SDG 15).
>
> To support the Government of Nepal to enforce the UNFCCC, UN interventions will work on:
>
> ✓ Clean energy production and efficient use for improved access and productive end-uses.
> ✓ Clean energy transition particularly in clean cooking, electric transport and adoption of clean technologies in industry sector.
> ✓ Deployment of renewable energy solutions for universal electricity access in Nepal, particularly in the last mile electrification.
> ✓ Sustainable natural resource management (including plantations and agro-forestry), bio-diversity conservation.
> ✓ Environmental health, waste management and air and water pollution control.
> ✓ Sustainable rural and urban development, through risk-informed planning, enhanced transportation safety.
> ✓ Climate resilient and integrated systems to ensure equitable and safe access to water, sanitation and hygiene services.
> ✓ Sustainable risk sensitive and tenure responsive urban and rural land-use management.

At the request of the government, the UN will continue to provide cutting edge policy support to three tiers of government and stakeholders in this focus area to promote a safe, inclusive, healthy, clean, green, productive and sustainable environment within a strengthened framework for addressing the triple man-made planetary crises of climate change, loss of nature and pollution (and waste) in line with national commitments and global best practice policies, strategies, techniques and management practices.

The UN will provide technical assistance to support the generation, transmission and sustainable use, and increasingly universally affordable access, to clean energy, technologies and services. The UN will also provide technical assistance to support the development of integrated, environmentally sustainable and socially inclusive urban public transportation systems in Nepal, including through accelerating its transition to electric mobility.

Through integrated water resource management, a systems-based approach to water security will be promoted, with support for the coordination of efforts on water conservation and use. This approach will pursue conflict resolution related to access to water resources and will bring together decision-makers across various sectors that impact water resources, to devise and implement efficient, equitable and sustainable plans that reflects the most effective and efficient utilization of this precious resource amongst the competing priorities. The UN will establish and strengthen early warning systems for anticipatory action to help improve disaster risk preparedness and response through greater access to information.

Central to the work of the UN in this focus area is support for regulatory, policy, institutional and financing frameworks which enable a robust approach to natural resource management, climate change adaptation and environmental and biodiversity conservation. This includes a territorial/land-use planning approach for sustainable urban and rural development and guided urbanisation, restoration of forest and agro-systems, preventing and responding to wildlife and forest crimes alongside the conservation of nature and ecosystems. Inclusive, tenure and risk-sensitive land-use and water use/water basin/landscape management planning will be supported at national, provincial and local levels.

The UN will partner with the government, private sector and utility companies to reduce hazardous levels of air pollution, chemical safety, waste management and pollution control (including functional and multi-sectoral regulatory provisions). Key sectors identified for UN support in order to effect greenhouse gas reduction include promotion of clean energy, transportation, smart agriculture, energy efficient housing, and manufacturing. The UN will also support the government of Nepal and relevant stakeholders in accessing and benefiting from climate finance opportunities at the global level and within certain sectors.

The UN will support in areas of environmental health. These include understanding and mitigating the effects of climate change on public health and climate-sensitive diseases, concerns on indoor and ambient air pollution, healthcare waste management, chemical safety, antimicrobial resistance, and the 'One Health' approach, with related infection prevention and control measures. The UN will partner with the Government at all levels, with CSOs and the private sector to promote initiatives and campaigns for healthy lifestyles and safe cities, as well as WASH-mitigated water-borne diseases.

The UN will deepen its collaboration, planning and implementation with provincial and local authorities in all of the above areas in line with support to implementation of federalism, supporting inclusive and sustainable development and SDG localisation.

Prospective Partnerships Required for UN Focus Area 3.1
Government / national and sub-national partners: MoICS, MoHP, MoFE, MoTICS, MoFAGA, MoEWRI, WEC, AEPCMOPIT, MoUD, MoFAGA, MoWCSC, MoWS, MoLMCPA, MoALD, MoI, Nepal Academy of Science and Technology, provincial govt, local govt, finance sector partners, for example, Nepal Investment Bank Limited.
Development partners: GCF, JOA, WB, ADB, USAID, EU, FCDO, Finland, Norway, BMGF (Gates Foundation), GEF, GLTN, ROK, GOJ, bilateral and multilateral development partners, Adaptation fund, financial institutions.
Collaborating UN agencies: ESCAP, FAO, ILO, IOM, UN Habitat, UN Women, UNCDF, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNODC, UNOPS, WFP, WHO.

UN Focus Area 3.2: Strengthen climate change adaptation and resilience through the reduction of vulnerabilities, disaster risk reduction, preparedness and effective response and recovery.

Snapshot of Interventions in UN Focus Area 3.2:

Through this focus area, the UN will assist Nepal to mitigate major risks and strengthen its preparation for and resilience to disasters at all levels (SDG 2, SDG 11).

UN interventions will particularly work on:

- Climate change adaptation.
- Climate smart agriculture.
- Research, technology and data analytics (including disaggregated data) to inform evidence-based policies and risk-informed multi-sectoral planning.
- Community-based adaptation, ecosystem and nature-based solutions, and disaster risk reduction.
- Nature-based solutions and provision of climate services.
- Climate finance governance and innovative/green financing.
- Green, resilient, inclusive and productive infrastructure development.
- Preparing nationwide hazard risk mapping, strengthening search and rescue capacity, developing multi-hazard early warning system, and promoting disaster risk financing.
- Strengthen institutional capacity for comprehensive and integrated disaster risk management at federal, provincial and local levels.
- Disaster preparedness, planning, reduction, response and recovery.
- Research, technology, disaggregated data for evidence-based policies.
- Integrating climate change and disaster risk management programmes.

The UN will collaborate with the government, the private sector and civil society at all levels to support comprehensive and integrated multi-hazard resilience strengthening, disaster preparedness, anticipatory harmonized action, response and recovery. This incorporates capacity building to strengthen climate and shock-responsive/resilient systems. Key sectors will be prioritized, including agriculture/nutrition/food systems, health, education, transportation, protection. Mechanisms that improve coordination and synergies between sectors and all tiers of government will be identified and assisted.

To ensure environmental sustainability, and resilience to climate and disaster risks, a strong emphasis will be placed on UN support for capacity building, education, research and technology, utilizing disaggregated data to support sustainable development through evidence-based policies and risk-informed multi-sectoral planning at all three tiers of government, including municipalities. In this regard, the UN will dedicate additional support to assist provinces, prioritized districts that are at greatest risk, to formulate and adopt community-based adaptation and disaster risk reduction strategies. This will extend to include support for the mobilization of volunteer networks, women and youth-led organizations as first responders to disasters. Nature-based solutions will be pursued linked to locally led adaptation measures integrated with local and indigenous knowledge systems. These measures, informed by climate systems and services will combine to strengthen resilience to hazards and climate change.

The UN will support national and local partners with financing tools including insurance, disaster-risk and climate financing to protect the most vulnerable communities from the impacts of climate change. South-South and triangular cooperation modalities will also be utilized by the UN system to ensure that Nepal contributes to, and benefits from, international platforms as and when convened in pursuit of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.

Working with the government and the private sector, the UN will support climate smart, resilient agricultural and livelihood practices that promote nature-positive production for inclusive nutrition and food systems (see also Focus Area 2.1) that are capable of leveraging and harnessing local and indigenous knowledge, skills and technology. Additional focus will be placed on food system transformation, safety, quality and the use of organic fertilizer, underpinned by improved accuracy of agricultural statistics. Agricultural land management and tenure protection will also be supported.

Links between environmental risk, resilience and the health and protection sectors will be strengthened, in particular for decision-making, risk communications and community engagement in respect to readiness and response for disasters, road fatalities and public health emergencies. The UN will support an enabling environment for the promotion and expansion of climate induced risk sharing models/modelling, vulnerability mapping and rapid disaster impact assessments in line with international and national regulations, plans and services.[77]

The UN will promote private investments by engaging with the private sector to support rural and urban communities test and scale up innovative options for climate resilient WASH infrastructure and low carbon technologies. The UN will partner with all development, humanitarian and emergency actors to support resource mobilization, appeals and coordination of funds for disaster and other crises, ensuring the readiness and response of agencies on the ground. In addition, loan and insurance services will be strengthened.

Prospective Partnerships Required for UN Focus Area 3.2
Government / national and sub-national partners: DFTQC, MoHP, MoALD, MoLMCPA, MoFE, MoWCSC, NDRRMA, MoHA, MoFAGA, MoEWRI, WEC, CBS, NPC, MoEST, MoPIT, MoUD, MoCTCA, MoICS, MoLMAC (Provinces), Nepal Police, Department of Hydrology and Meteorology, Nepal Academy of Science and Technology, Provincial Governments, local governments (Palikas), DWSSM, provincial DMA, Nepal Army.
Development partners: GCF, GEF, bilateral and multilateral development partners, Adaptation fund, international financial institutions, ROK, GLTN, FCDO, DFAT, ICIMOD, EU, USAID, ADB, WB and KOICA, GoC, RNE), GFFO, NRCS, DP-NET, GOJ, ICIMOD.
Collaborating UN agencies: ESCAP, FAO, IOM, UN Women, UNCDF, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNICEF, UNOPS, UNV, WFP, WHO.

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[77] These Include international health regulations, the National Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance, implementation of 'One Health' approach related activities, and improving occupational safety for frontline health and social workers, and more generally work towards more resilient health and social services.

PRIORITY AREA 4: GOVERNANCE, FEDERALISM, PARTICIPATION & INCLUSION

OUTCOME 4: By 2027, more people, especially women, youth and the most marginalized and poor increasingly participate in and benefit from coordinated, inclusive, accessible, participatory, transparent, and gender-responsive governance, access to justice and human rights at federal, provincial, and local levels.

UN Contribution to Outcome 4

Based on the theory of change (Box 13), the UN will focus on two areas in order to meaningfully advance towards Outcome 4:

- **UN Focus Area 4.1:** Strengthening institutions and normative, legal and policy frameworks from a human rights-based approach across the three tiers of governance.
- **UN Focus Area 4.2:** Strengthen participation, inclusion, and dialogue through outreach and partnerships at all levels.

Box 13. Theory of change for governance, federalism, participation and inclusion

IF, critical gaps related to structural inequalities, the legal framework and its implementation are addressed in line with Nepal's Constitution, universal norms and Universal Periodic Review recommendations through access to rights, legal documentation, opportunities, services, knowledge and assets;

And if, improved capacities, systems, partnerships and coordination of key functions across the three tiers of governance are achieved alongside improvements in the efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and accountability of public services;

And if, the information, opportunity, and consultative space is available for quality discussions, to better understand barriers to inclusion, agree on roles and responsibilities, sharpen targeted programmes, legal provisions and investments;

And if, a stronger and more deliberate emphasis is placed on women, young people, persons with disabilities, and vulnerable groups in all sectors and localities, through which discrimination and exposure to violence is eliminated where it occurs;

THEN, the coherence and quality of governance and service delivery will be improved, with additional resources leveraged for accelerated localization and implementation of the SDGs, and more people will be empowered to exercise agency over their own lives, improve their living conditions and prospects, thereby enabling more people to be better able to participate in and contribute to Nepal's political, economic, social, cultural and environmental well-being.

*UPR - Universal Periodic Review

Outcome 4 alignment with the 15th Plan

Outcome 4 and the UN Focus areas align directly with the 15th plan's priorities for

1. A safe, civilized, informed, inclusive and just society;
2. Good governance and rule of law;
3. Comprehensive democracy;
4. National unity, security, and dignity.

The 15th plan sets out the achievement of long-term governance goals by:

- Strengthening national unity;
- Ensuring good governance;
- Institutionalizing federal system of governance and fiscal federalism, and;
- Ensuring political commitment to constitutionalism, democracy, and development.

UN Focus Area 4.1: Strengthening institutions and normative, legal and policy frameworks from a human rights-based approach across the three tiers of governance.

Snapshot of Interventions in UN Focus Area 4.1:

In this focus area, the UN will help Nepal to advance human rights, good governance, the rule of law and the federalization agenda (SDG 16).

Interventions will specifically support:

- Coordination, coherence and efficiency across Nepal's three tiers of governance.
- Strengthening national human rights institutions to better fulfil the mandates of human rights.
- Access to justice through strengthening systems for the implementation of laws and policies.
- Legal empowerment of all, in particular women, children, persons with disabilities, LGBTIQ+, other marginalized and excluded groups as the Constitution of Nepal 2015.

- Promotion of social dialogue with workers, employers, governments and communities.
- Evidence, data generation and data management, including civil registration and vital statistics.
- Physical and digital accessibility to information and services (accessible infrastructure and internet/web design to enable the diverse group of persons with disabilities, senior citizens and all vulnerable groups).
- Enhanced capacity of elected representatives and civil servants at federal, provincial, and local level through capacity development and empowerment programme.
- Enhanced integrity and accountability.

At the request of the Government of Nepal (federal, provincial, local), pursuing ongoing initiatives with, for example, the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs (MoLJPA), the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA), the Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration (MoFAGA), and other sectoral ministries, the UN will support the drafting and implementation of laws, by-laws, policies, and frameworks with the aim of ensuring greater coordination, inclusion, participation, transparency and gender-responsiveness across federal, provincial, and local governments. The UN will support laws and policies in accordance with the Constitution, international normative obligations, Universal Periodic Review recommendations and commitments that promote and protect human rights. The UN will work with the three tiers of governance to enable planning, budgeting, procurement, investments and programming are more co-ordinated, inclusive and gender responsive.

Access to justice and the rule of law will be enhanced through strengthened formal and informal justice sector institutions. The UN will continue to collaborate with the government and human rights institutions for the legal empowerment of all, in particular women, children, marginalized and excluded groups.

The UN will also work with the government and relevant partners from a human rights perspective to ensure that by 2027 all eligible persons in Nepal are in receipt of vital event registration documentation necessary for every individual to enjoy their basic human rights and access public services, including social protection schemes and many forms of targeted development and other assistance through inclusion in the National Development Plan.

Across all sectors, UN interventions will strengthen capacities for Inclusive data collection, disaggregation, analysis, and utilization at all levels. The UN will increase demand for disaggregated data by strengthening data literacy and understanding of intersecting inequalities among key stakeholders, and will promote greater engagement between data users and producers to enable integration of data demands, standards and quality assurance and the efficient use of resources.

The UN will provide technical support to use of new data sources to generate disaggregated data, such as big data and geospatial data to identify populations that are furthest behind including those without legal identity.

The UN will provide expertise to support relevant authorities and partnerships at the national and sub-national levels for population projections and analysis at provincial levels, to accelerate the transition of the social and economic implications of demographic shifts on sustainable development and integration of demographic data from the informal sector to the formal economy, through analysis, knowledge products and projections into period plans and sectoral policies and plans.

Prospective Partnerships Required for UN Focus Area 4.1
Government / national and sub-national partners: MoLJPA, MoWCSC MoCIT,MoALD, MoFE, MoLJPA, MoF, MoHA, MoLMCPA, MoLESS, MoE, MoHP, MoFAGA, MoWS, Federal Parliament, Provincial Assemblies, Local Governments, Provincial Ministries of Social Development, Nepal Police, National Women Commission, National Human Rights Commission and other constitutional commissions, National Child Rights Council, Central Child Justice Committee, The Office of the Attorney General, National Judicial Academy, Nepal Bar Association, NPC, Provincial Policy and Planning Commission, NIC, CIAA, CBS, Department of National ID and Civil Registration, CSOs, product alliances.
Development partners: Finland, Sweden, EU, Norway, UNPRPD, SDC, RNE, FCDO, USAid, DFAT, ADB, GLTN, WBGlobal Fund for Early Child Marriage
Collaborating UN agencies: FAO, ILO, IOM, UN Habitat, UN Women, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, UNOPS, WFP, WHO.

Snapshot of Interventions in UN Focus Area 4.2:

Through this focus area the UN will support governance systems at all levels to become more participatory, inclusive, accessible and transparent (SDG 16, SDG 17).

UN interventions will specifically include:

- Engagement strategies and partnerships at all levels.
- SDG awareness and localization.
- Participation, empowerment and leadership of women, youth, persons with disabilities, LGBTIQ+, other marginalized and excluded groups as per the Constitution of Nepal 2015.
- Improved understanding and design of policies and programmes for LNOB at risk populations at the federal, provincial and local levels.
- Inclusive and accessible service delivery system at all levels.
- Civic engagement with CBO, CBS, OPD and media engagement.

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partnerships at all levels.

The UN will work with the government at all levels and with civil society to promote civic engagement, voice and volunteerism. It will foster leadership (individual and collective) of all, in particular women, youth, children, persons with disabilities, LGBTIQ+, and other marginalized and excluded groups as per the Constitution of Nepal 2015. This will promote more inclusive, participatory, transparent, and gender-transformative governance at all levels.

The UN will help to facilitate a range of partnerships with a diversity of development partners across the three tiers of governance. Prominent among these will be media and public/private partnerships and platforms to continue to build a powerful constituency for sustainable and inclusive development and for SDG implementation. With mass communication, knowledge production and dissemination predominantly conducted through digital medium, due attention will be given to internet governance as well as issues of hate speech, "fake news" and disinformation. In parallel, the UN will strengthen its collaboration and partnerships with provincial and local authorities and actors, which is fundamental for supporting and further advancing Nepal's Constitution and federalization agenda. Critically for implementation of this UNSDCF, with its strong emphasis on inclusion, partnerships with Leave No One Behind groups will be pursued, for example, with human rights and women's organisations, organisations of persons with disabilities, LGBTIQ+, youth associations, and the representatives of associations reflecting Nepal's marginalized populations.

Prospective Partnerships Required for UN Focus Area 4.2
Government / national and sub-national partners: MoFAGA, MoHA, MoYS, MoALD, MoFE, MoCIT, MOWCSC, MoLESS, Election Commission, National Women Commission, Provincial and Local Governments, Language Commission, Indigenous Nationalities Commission, National Youth Council, National Human Rights Commission, NIC, CIAA.
Developmentpartners: Finland, EU, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, FCDO, SDC.
Collaborating UN agencies: ILO, IOM, UN Women, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, UNV, WHO, FAO.

CHAPTER 3: COOPERATION FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Cooperation Framework Governance

The NPC is the primary government counterpart for the joint coordination, implementation and monitoring of this Cooperation Framework. A Joint Steering Committee (JSC), co-chaired by the Vice Chair of the NPC and the UN RC, will be responsible for strategic oversight and direction, ensuring overall coordination and interaction between GoN partner entities and the UNDS.

Implementation Strategy

The UNCT Nepal, under the leadership of the UNRC, will be responsible for the overall effectiveness and implementation of the UNDS contributions and results set out in this Cooperation Framework. The Cooperation Framework will be translated into an annual joint workplan of the UNCT Nepal as the primary vehicle for ensuring collaborative implementation.

The UN global theory of change for achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[78] depends on UNDS in Nepal effectively functioning "as one system". To these ends, the UNCT Nepal intends to implement the UNSDCF 'as one system' in the same way that has characterised the preceding stages of the CCA and UNSDCF formulation of thinking, analysing, consulting and designing 'as one UN'.

As a result, ongoing development evaluation and learning about 'what works and why' will continuously inform the evolution and rollout of the framework.

Outcome Results Groups

Under the leadership of the UN RC, ORGs will be constituted for the implementation and monitoring of the four Cooperation Framework priority outcome areas. For the purpose of implementation, each ORG will contribute to annual joint workplan for each priority, formulated to ensure close inter-agency and partner collaboration on UN focus areas and interventions, monitoring and reporting to the UNCT Nepal and JSC.

Thematic Groups

Special cross-cutting and thematic teams will be formed, for example, on key issues, such as 'Leave No One Behind', gender equality, legal identity, disability inclusion, PSEA, monitoring and evaluation. to ensure the integration of these priorities and functions across Cooperation Framework implementation.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

Monitoring the implementation and progress of this UNSDCF will be primarily based on the attached Results Framework (Annex 1) and will be led by the UNCT Nepal in close collaboration with the relevant government agencies.

The result framework is based on nationally established SDG indicators, baselines and targets relying on official government data. All baselines are sourced from the latest government reports and/or available data from selected national SDG indicators in consultation with line ministries.

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[78] A "Theory of Change" for the UN Development System to Function "As a System" for Relevance, Strategic Positioning and Results Summary Paper Version 1.0 26 January 2016.

A multi-year costed Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Plan will be prepared for the Cooperation Framework implementation period. In operationalizing the MEL plan, the UN Nepal will make maximum use of national data and information systems. The UN Nepal will partner with line ministries, the National Statistics Office, NPC and provincial authorities to strengthen the SDG data ecosystem and fill data gaps, including for the purposes of collation, analysis, monitoring and reporting.

Disaggregated data, broken down by geography, gender, socio-economic status, persons with disabilities and by groups at greatest risk of being left behind will be pursued and tracked regularly to improve analysis, evidence-based integrated policymaking and programme implementation. The UN Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Working Group will develop a methodological note, which will outline the minimum and desired standards for the disaggregation of data including by gender, caste/ethnicity, age and disability.

Monitoring responsibility for each outcome area will primarily be led by each of the four dedicated ORGs. Each results group will carry out joint monitoring with respect to its outcome area as set out in the joint workplans.

The M&E Working Group, comprising the monitoring and evaluation focal points of each UN agency, coordinated by the UN RC's Office, will provide technical support for the implementation and monitoring of all results. This will include data quality assurance, oversight, and reporting to the respective ORGs and UNCT Nepal for evidence-based progress reporting. UN agencies will act as custodians for their respective national SDG indicators reported under each outcome. This strengthens accountability and assists the conveners of the ORGs to coordinate and compile reporting on an annual basis.

The UNCT Nepal, in collaboration with the government and implementing partners, will undertake periodic reviews of the UNSDCF to measure overall progress towards planned results, monitor risks, identify key points of learning, opportunities and challenges, and reflect on experience to inform decisions and adjustments. For this purpose, via the UNCT Nepal, the ORGs will prepare an annual implementation progress report for presentation and consultation with the JSC.

At any time during its five-year implementation, the Cooperation Framework can be reviewed and adjusted according to Nepal's evolving development landscape and priorities, as agreed upon by the government and the UN.

The attainment of SDG targets depends significantly on results-based monitoring and evaluation. In this regard, the UN Nepal, working closely with the government and key partners at all levels, will seek to foster a culture of learning and mutual accountability. Emerging new approaches and methodologies will be shared with developmental partners that contribute to strengthening the learning cycle through participatory evaluation.

To further advance the UN reform process in Nepal, individual UN agencies will continue to improve harmonized review and reporting requirements of their own individual programmes and seek synergies in monitoring areas within which they are jointly invested, such as the UN focus areas. These reviews will generate shared knowledge and lessons learned throughout UNSDCF implementation.

The evaluation of the Cooperation Framework constitutes an integral part of accountability to the people and GoN for its results and contributions. Hence, a final independent evaluation of the UNSDCF will be conducted in the penultimate year of UNSDCF implementation, 2026, which will largely be based on ongoing developmental evaluations that continuously provides lessons to 'what works and

why.' The evaluation will be commissioned by the UNCT in close consultation with the government. The evaluation will be independently conducted following the UN Evaluation Group standards and norms. The evaluation process will ensure an inclusive and participatory approach involving all stakeholders, and with a strong emphasis on 'LNOB'. It will include sectoral ministries and divisions, provincial authorities, development partners, the private sector, civil society, academia, and others. Individual UN agencies' country programme/document evaluations will be assessed as to their contribution to the Cooperation Framework, and these evaluation findings will also inform the final evaluation of the Cooperation Framework.

Annexes

Annex 1. UNSDCF Result Matrix

Priority Area 1: SUSTAINABLE, RESILIENT, AND INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

Outcome 1: By 2027, more people, especially women, youth, the most marginalized and poor, increasingly benefit from and contribute to inclusive, resilient, and sustainable socio-economic transformation at federal, provincial, and local levels.

National Priorities: Outcome 1 and the UN Focus areas below align directly with the 15th plan's priorities for:

1. High and sustainable production and productivity; and

2. High and equitable national income.

The 15th plan aims to achieve these long-term goals by: i) Creating an enabling environment for business to achieve its economic growth; ii) Investing and promoting sustainable and employment-oriented economic growth; iii) Investing and increasing in productivity, productive capacity, and market competitiveness; iv) Reducing poverty and socio-economic inequality; v) Guaranteeing comprehensive, sustainable and productive social security; vi) Investing in and promoting digital technology and strengthening information technology and communication infrastructure; vii) Promoting quality tourism services and entrepreneurship; viii) Expanding the formal sector; and ix) Making foreign employment safe, dignified and systematic.

UN Focus Area 1.1: Green, inclusive and diversified growth.

Key partners:

Government / national and sub-national partners: MoLESS, MoICS, MoALD, MoF, MoHA, MoFAGA, MoLMCPA, MoICT, MoCTCA, MoFA, MoFE, MoEST, MoYS, MoWCSC, MoHP, NPC, CTEVT, MoUD, provincial and local governments and agencies, Nepali embassies in receiving countries.

Development partners: EU, USAID, FCDO, GIZ, SDC, GAFSP, GCF, GEF, Adaptation fund, NAMA facility, International financial institutions, World Bank, ADB.

Collaborating UN agencies: ESCAP, FAO, IFAD, ILO, IOM, ITC, UN Women, UNCDF, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNIDO, UNODC, UNOPS, WFP, WHO.

SDGs: SDG 1, SDG 2, SDG 3, SDG 5, SDG 7, SDG 8, SDG 9, SDG 10, SDG 11, SDG 12, SDG 13, SDG 17

Indicator	Baseline	Targets	MOV	Remarks
Annual growth (change) rate of real GDP per capita (SDG 8.2.1)	2.6* (2020/2021)	5.4 (2025)	National Accounts, Central Bureau of Statistics, Government of Nepal	*Preliminary * Target is adapted from the SDG Status and Roadmap 2016 – 2030

UN Focus Area 1.2: Sustainable and decent livelihoods.

Key partners:

Government / national and sub-national partners: MoLESS, MoICS, MoALD, MoF, MoFAGA, MoLMCPA, MoICT, MoCTCA, MoEST, MoWCSC, MoHA, MoFA, MoFA, MoHA, NPC, CTEVT, provincial and local governments and Agencies, Nepali embassies in receiving countries.

Development partners: EU, World Bank, ADB, USAID, FCDO, GIZ, SDC, KOICA, JICA, GAFSP, GCF, GEF, Adaptation fund, NAMA facility, International financial institutions.

Collaborating UN agencies: ESCAP, FAO, IFAD, ILO, IOM, ITC, UN Women, UNCDF, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNODC, UNV, WFP, WHO.

SDGs: SDG 1, SDG 3, SDG 5, SDG 8, SDG 10, SDG 17

Indicator	Baseline	Targets	MOV	Remarks/information
Proportion of informal employment in total employment (SDG 8.3.1)	62.2% (2017/18)	30% (2025)	Nepal Labour Force Survey, Central Bureau of Statistics, Government of Nepal	The SDG Status and Roadmap 2016 – 2030 sets target of 54% in 2019, target of 42% in 2022, target of 30 in 2025 and target 10% in 2030

Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems (SDG 1.3.1)	42 (2019)	56 (2025)	Nepal Multiple Cluster Indicator Survey	The SDG Status and Roadmap 2016 – 2030 sets target of 41.7 in 2022, target of 56 in 2025 and target 80 in 2030
Women's ownership of property–land and house (SDG 5.a.2)	26 (2016)	35.3 (2025)	National Planning Commission/CBS	

Priority Area 2: INCLUSIVE AND TRANSFORMATIVE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Outcome 2: By 2027, more people, especially women, youth, children, and the most marginalized and poor, increasingly participate in and benefit from equitably improved quality social services at federal, provincial, and local levels.

National Priorities: Outcome 2 and the UN Focus areas below align directly with the 15th plan's priorities for:
Goal 2. Development and full utilization of human capital potential.
Goal 5. Well-being and decent standard of living.
The 15th plan envisions to achieve long-term human development goals by ensuring affordable and quality health care and education services for all; strengthening basic public services; and achieving quality human capital and full utilization of human potential.

UN Focus Area 2.1: Survive and Thrive. Women, men, youth, adolescents, and children affordably enjoy better health, nutrition and WASH services, starting with the youngest and most vulnerable.

Key partners:
Government / national and sub-national partners: MoWCSC, MoWS, MoEST, NHRC, MoHP (inc. FWD), MoLESS, FEB, FWS, MoFAGA, MoYS, MoICS, MoALD, MoFE, MoEWRI, MOHA, NPC, DFTQC, FMTC, NHRC, provincial and local governments, National Women's Commission
Development partners: FCDO, ADB, World Bank, Finnish Embassy, JICA, USAID, KOICA, GIZ, Global Fund, GAFSP, GCF, GEF EU,
Collaborating UN agencies: FAO, ILO, IOM, UN Habitat, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, WFP, WHO.

SDGs: SDG 2, SDG 3, SDG 5, SDG 10, SDG 17

Indicator	Baseline	Targets	MOV	Remarks/information
Population under the multi-dimensional poverty (SDG 1.2.2)	17.4 (2019)	11.5 % (2023/24)	Nepal Multidimensional Poverty Report, National Planning Commission	The 15th plan's long-term goals and targets; Baseline source: NMPI 2019; Target value for 2029/30 is 6;
Universal health coverage (UHC) sub-index for reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health (SDG 3.8.1)	77.5 (2019)	87.5 (202%)	WHO Universal Health Coverage Report	
Prevalence of stunting, wasting among children under five years of age (SDG 2.2.1 & 2.2.2)	Stunting: 31.5 (2019) Wasting: 12 (2019)	Stunting: 20 (2025) Wasting: <5 (2025)	Nepal Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (NMICS) 2019	<u>Stunting:</u> Target value set 28.6 & 15 respectively for 2022 & 2030 in the SDG Roadmap 2016-2030 <u>Wasting: Target value set 7 & 4 respectively for 2022 & 2030 in SDG Roadmap 2016-2030</u>
Global Food Security Index (score)	53.7 (2021)	75 (2025)	Global Food Security Index website	Target value set in SDG Roadmap: 66, 75 and90 for 2022, 2025 and 2030

Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population based on Food Insecurity Experience Scale (SDG 2.1.2)	37.8 (2021)	25.35 (2027)	FAO Stat, NLSS	Baseline data (3-year average from 2019 to 2021) taken from FAOSTAT Target taken with an assumption that there will be a reduction by 25%. No target value is provided in the SDG roadmap
a. Population using safe drinking water at source (without E. coli) b. Household with access to piped water supply c. At least basic water supply coverage	a. 25% (2019) b. 51.6 % (2019) c. 95% (2019)	a. 65 % (2025) b. 76.5 % (2025) c. 95% (2025)	NMICS Thematic Studies	Baseline is taken from MICS 2019 and target value taken from SDG Roadmap. These indicators also adapted from SDG 6.1.1 "Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services
Adolescent birth rate (per 1,000 women aged 15-19 years)	63 (2019)	38 (2026)	NMICS	Baseline value is from MICS, 2019
Maternal Mortality Ratio per 100,000 live births	239 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births (2016)	150 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births (2025)	NDHS	Baseline value is from DHS, 2016.

UN Focus Area 2.2: Maximize Human Potential: Children, adolescents, youth and adults meaningfully participate in and benefit from educational services to fulfil their full potential.

Key partners:

Government/national and sub-national partners MoWCSC, MoEST, NHRC, MoHP, MoYS, MoWS, MoHA, MoFAGA, MoLJPA, CTEVT, MOWS, NWC, Provincial and Local Governments, National Child Rights Council, Department of National ID and Civil Registration, Universities, schools and civil society.`

International development partners: FCDO, USAID DFAT, GIZ, JICA, WB, Norway.

Collaborating UN agencies: ILO, IOM, UN Women, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, WFP, WHO.

SDGs: SDG 2, SDG 4, SDG 5, SDG 6, SDG 8, SDG 10, SDG 16, SDG 17

Indicator	Baseline	Targets	MOV	Remarks/information
Percentage of children who demonstrate foundational reading skills and foundational numeracy skills	Reading: 39.2% (2019) Numeracy: 36.8% (2019)	Reading: 50% (2025) Numeracy: 50% (2025)	NMICS	Baseline is taken from MICS 2019 (FOUNDATIONAL LEARNING SKILLS) and target adjusted in house.
Proportion of children completing (a) basic education; and (b) a full course of 12 years of schooling (secondary)	Basic: 73.1% (2019) Secondary: 27.3% (2019)	Basic: 78% (2025) Secondary: 30% (2025)	NMICS	Significantly scaled down the targets based on a quick analysis of education indicators over the past 30 years which shows that completion rates have tended to increase by around 0.5% per year

UN Focus Area 2.3: Social protection and vital identity registration system strengthened to close the human capital gap.

Key partners:

Government/national and sub-national partners: MoHA, MoFAGA, MoLJPA, MoWCSC, MoHA, NHRC, National Child Rights Council, Department of National ID and Civil Registration, MoFAGA, MoHP, Provincial and Local Governments

International development partners: Government of Sweden, EU, Norway.

Collaborating UN agencies: ILO, UNICEF, UNDP, UNHCR, UN Women, UNFPA, WHO, IOM.

SDGs: SDG 1 and SDG 16, SDG 17, with implications for SDG 2, SDG 3, SDG 4, SDG 5, SDG 8, SDG 10.

Indicator	Baseline	Targets	MOV	Remarks/information
Proportion of children age 0-17 years whose births have been registered with a civil authority (SDG 16.9.1)	77.2% (2019)	86.9 (2025	NMICS	Target value set in SDG Roadmap: 79 & 100 for 2022 & 2030

UN Focus Area 2.4: End gender-based violence and harmful practices.

Government/national and sub-national partners: MoWCSC, MoEST, MoLESS, MoYS, MoFAGA, MoALD, MoMCP, MoLMCPA, MoHP, NWC, NHRC, Provincial and Local Governments

Development partners: ROK, Norway, Finland, SDC, GLTN.

Collaborating UN agencies: FAO, ILO, IOM, UN Habitat, UN Women, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP, WHO, UNHCR.

SDGs: SDG 4, SDG 5, SDG 8, SDG 16, SDG 17

Indicator	Baseline	Targets	MOV	Remarks/Information
Percentage of women and men age 15-49 who agree that a husband is justified in hitting or beating his wife for at least one specified reason.	Women: 29.4% (2019) Men: 29.5% (2019)	Women: 14.4% (2026) Men: 14.5% (2026)	NMICS in 2024 and NDHS in 2026	Baseline values are from the NMICS 2019.
Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual, or psychological violence by a current or	13.5% (2016)	4.9% (2026)	NDHS in 2026	Baseline value is from the NDHS 2016.

former intimate partner in the previous 12 months				
Percentage of women and men age 20-24 who were first married or in union before age 18	Women: 32.8% (2019) Men: 9.0% (2019)	Women: 26.1% (2026) Men: 6.4% (2026)	NMICS in 2024 and NDHS in 2026	Baseline values are from the NMICS 2019.
Proportion of women aged 15-49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care	47.7% (2016)	59.9% (2026)	NDHS in 2026	Baseline value is from the NDHS 2016.

Priority Area 3: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY, CLIMATE AND DISASTER RESILIENCE

Outcome 3: By 2027, more people, especially women, youth, children, and the most marginalised and poor, increasingly benefit from and contribute to building an inclusive, sustainable, climate-resilient and green society and reduced impacts of disasters at federal, provincial, and local levels.

National Priorities: Outcome 3 and the UN Focus areas below align directly with the 15th plan's priorities for:

Goal 7. A healthy and balanced environment.

The 15th plan envisions achieving this long-term environment sustainability goal by conserving and utilizing natural resources judiciously and improving climate resilience; increasing hydroelectricity production, promoting the use of clean and renewable energy, and promoting green economy; and encouraging modern, sustainable, and systematic urbanization, housing and settlement development.

UN Focus Area 3.1: Promote a healthy, safe, inclusive, clean and green productive environment along with climate change mitigation

Key partners:

Government/national and sub-national partners: MoICS, MoHP, MoFE, MOHA, MoFAGA, NPC, MoEWRI, AEPC, MOPIT, MoUD, MoWCSC, MoWS, MoLMCPA, MoALD, MoICS, provincial and local governments, private sectors/finance sector partners, for example, hydropower companies, Insurance companies and Banks among others

Development partners: JOA, WB, ADB, USAID, EU, FCDO, Finland, Norway, BMGF (Gates Foundation), CBOs and Private Sector, GLTN, ROK, GOJ, bilateral and multilateral development partners, vertical funds (GCF, GEF, Adaptation fund) financial institutions.

Collaborating UN agencies: ESCAP, FAO, ILO, IOM, UN Habitat, UN Women, UNCDF, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNODC, UNOPS, WFP, WHO.

SDGs: SDG 6, SDG 7, SDG 11, SDG 12, SDG 13, SDG 14, SDG 15, SDG 17

Indicator	Baseline	Targets	MOV	Remarks/information
Net GHG emissions (CO2-eq) per capita	31,998.91 Gg (2011)	1,774 Gg (2025)	National Communication to the UNFCCC prepared by Government of Nepal	Baseline and target taken from second revised NDC 2020
Ratio of renewable energy in total energy consumption (%) (15th plan long term goals and target indicators of Happiness – Healthy and balanced environment) (SDG 7.2.1)	5% (2019) *	15% (2025)	Management Information System, CBS	Target value set for 2030: 15% in the second NDC
Total area of the country under forest cover (%): Nationally Determined Contribution (2nd NDC), Area of wetlands (ha), area of degraded lands (ha)	Maintain 40% of the total area of the country under forest cover (2016- First NDC)	Maintain 45% of the total area of the country under forest cover by 2030	National Communication and Forestry Report Prepared by Govt. Of Nepal	Reports published by Forest Research and Training Center

Target set under 2nd NDC for 2030 is 45% of the total area under forest cover (including other wooded land limited to less than 4%) |

UN Focus Area 3.2: Strengthen climate change adaptation and resilience through the reduced vulnerabilities and disaster risks, preparedness and effective response and recovery.

Key partners:

Government/national and sub-national partners: DFTQC, MoHP, MoALD, MoLMCPA, MoFE, MoWCSC, MoEWRI, NDRRMA, MoHA, MoFAGA, CBS, NPC, MoST, MOPIT, MoUD, MoCTCA, MoICS, Ministry of Land Management, Agriculture & Cooperatives (Provinces), Nepal Police, Provincial MoIAL, Local Governments (Palikas), DWSSM, Provincial DMA, Nepal Army, Nepal Armed Police Force, and Nepal Police

Development partners: GCF, GEF, bilateral and multilateral development partners, Adaptation fund, financial institutions, ROK, GLTN, FCDO, DFAT, ICIMOD, EU, External Development Partner and Health Cluster partner agencies, USAID, ADB, WB and KOICA, GoC, RNE), GFFO, GOJ,

Collaborating UN agencies: ESCAP, FAO, IOM, UN Women, UNCDF, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, UNICEF, UNOPS, UNV, WFP, WHO.

SDGs: SDG 2, SDG 11, SDG 13, SDG 17

Indicator	Baseline	Targets	MOV	Remarks/information
Reduction in annual loss of human life (deaths and missing persons) and directly affected persons attributed	1.6 (2019)	1 (2024)	DRR (Bipad) Portal/NDRRMA	This indicator on DRR is taken from the NDP & and Disaster Management, 2nd NDC/NAP

to disasters per 100,000 populations (SDG 13.1.1)				

Priority Area 4: GOVERNANCE, FEDERALISM, PARTICIPATION AND INCLUSION

Outcome 4: By 2027, more people, especially women, youth, and the most marginalized and poor increasingly participate in and benefit from coordinated, inclusive, accessible, participatory, transparent, and gender-responsive governance, access to justice and human rights at federal, provincial, and local levels.

National Priorities: Outcome 4 and the UN Focus areas below align directly with the 15th plan's priorities for:

Goal 6. Safe, civilized and just society.

Goal 8. Good governance and rule of law.

Goal 9. Comprehensive democracy.

Goal 10. National unity, security, and dignity.

The 15th plan envisions achieving long-term governance goals by strengthening national unity; ensuring good governance; institutionalizing the federal system of governance and fiscal federalism; and ensuring political commitment to constitutionalism, democracy, and development.

UN Focus Area 4.1: Strengthening institutions and normative, legal and policy frameworks from a human rights-based approach across the three tiers of governance.

Key partners:

Government/national and sub-national partners: MoLJPA, MoWCSC MoCIT,MoALD, MoFE, MoF, MoHA, MoLMCPA, MoLESS, MoE, MoHP, MoFAGA, MoWS, NPC, OPMCM, Federal Parliament, Provincial Assemblies, Local Governments, Provincial Ministries of Social Development, Nepal Police, National Women Commission, National Child Rights Council, National Human Rights Commission, National Dalit Commission, all other constitutional commissions, Central Child Justice Committee, The Office of the Attorney General, National Judicial Academy, Nepal Bar Association, NPC, Provincial Policy and Planning Commission, NIC, CBS, Department of National ID and Civil Registration, CSOs, Product Alliances.

Development partners: Finland, Sweden, EU, Norway, UNPRPD, SDC, FCDO, USAid, DFAT, ADB, GLTN, WB, UN Agencies, Save the Children, Global Fund for Early Child Marriage

Collaborating UN agencies: FAO, ILO, IOM, UN Habitat, UN Women, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, UNOPS, WFP, WHO.

SDGs: SDG 5, SDG 10, SDG 16, SDG 17

Indicator	Baseline	Targets	MOV	Remarks/information
Proportion of positions in national and local institutions, including (a) the legislatures (federal and provincial); (b) public service	Federal parliament: Male: 66.17% (221) Female: 33.83% (113)	Federal parliament: Male: TBD Female: 36.5% by 2025	Analysis of the available data	The data as per the 20 November 2022 election.

(Federal level); and (c) judiciary (SDG 16.7.1)	Other: 0 % Persons with Disability: 0 % Provincial Parliament Male: 63.64% (350) Female: 36.36% (200) Other: 0 % Persons with Disability: 0.36% (2) Judiciary: **Court** Male: 370 (92.96%) Female: 28 (7.04%) Judicial administration: Male: 336 (82.96%) Female: 69 (17.04%) Public Service: TBD Federal level: Officer level: TBD Undersecretary level: TBD Joint Secretary: TBD Secretary: TBD	Other: TBD Persons with Disability: TBD Provincial assembly Male: TBD Female: TBD Other: TBD Persons with Disability: TBD Judiciary **Court** Male: TBC Female: TBC Judicial administration: Male: TBC Female: TBC Federal level: Officer level: TBD Undersecretary level: TBD Joint Secretary: TBD Secretary: TBD	National Judicial Service Commission Public Service Commission, Kitab Khana Data	

Primary government expenditures (federal and provincial) as a proportion of original approved budget, by sector or by budget codes including GRB or similar (SDG 16.6.1)	77.9 (2019)	88.7 (2025)	MIS/Annual Report, Ministry of Finance	
Rule of law index (15th Plan indicator 8.1.1)	Index Score: 0.52 (2021)	Index score: 0.65 (2027)	Rule of Law Index (World Justice Project Report)	The assumption is that there will be improvement by at least 25%
Transparency, accountability, and corruption in public (score out of 6)	2.5 (2020)	4 (2025)	CPIA	Baseline taken from CPIA Target taken from SDG status and roadmap

UN Focus Area 4.2: Strengthen participation, inclusion, and dialogue through outreach and partnerships at all levels.

Key partners: Government/national and sub-national partners: MoFAGA, MoHA, MoYS, MoCIT, MOWCSC, MoLESS, Election Commission, National Women Commission, Provincial and Local Governments, Language Commission, Indigenous Nationalities Commission, National Youth Council, National Human Rights Commission, NIC.

Development partners: Finland, EU, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, FCDO, RNE, SDC, Save the Children, CSOs, national NGOs.

Collaborating UN agencies: ILO, IOM, UN Women, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNODC, UNV, WHO.

SDGs: SDG 16, SDG 17

Indicator	Baseline	Targets	MOV	Remarks/information
Proportion of population who believe there are sufficient opportunities to participate in the decision-making processes of public institutions (SDG 16.7.2)	TBD after baseline survey	TBD after baseline survey	Survey report to be carried out by UNDP and UN Women in coordination with Government	

NEPAL

Performance by Indicator

SDG1 – No Poverty	Value	Year	Rating	Trend
Poverty headcount ratio at $1.90/day (%)	7.0	2021	🟡	↗
Poverty headcount ratio at $3.20/day (%)	33.4	2021	🔴	→

SDG2 – Zero Hunger	Value	Year	Rating	Trend
Prevalence of undernourishment (%)	6.1	2018	🟢	↑
Prevalence of stunting in children under 5 years of age (%)	36.0	2016	🔴	→
Prevalence of wasting in children under 5 years of age (%)	9.6	2016	🔴	→
Prevalence of obesity, BMI ≥ 30 (% of adult population)	4.1	2016	🟢	↑
Human Trophic Level (best 2–3 worst)	2.1	2017	🟢	↑
Cereal yield (tonnes per hectare of harvested land)	2.9	2018	🟢	↑
Sustainable Nitrogen Management Index (best 0–1.41 worst)	0.7	2015	🔴	↓
Exports of hazardous pesticides (tonnes per million population)	NA	NA	⚪	⚪

SDG3 – Good Health and Well-Being	Value	Year	Rating	Trend
Maternal mortality rate (per 100,000 live births)	186	2017	🔴	↑
Neonatal mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	19.8	2019	🔴	↗
Mortality rate, under-5 (per 1,000 live births)	30.8	2019	🟡	↑
Incidence of tuberculosis (per 100,000 population)	238.0	2019	🔴	→
New HIV infections (per 1,000 uninfected population)	0.0	2019	🟢	↑
Age-standardized death rate due to cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, or chronic respiratory disease in adults aged 30–70 years (%)	21.8	2016	🟡	↗
Age-standardized death rate attributable to household air pollution and ambient air pollution (per 100,000 population)	194	2016	🔴	⚪
Traffic deaths (per 100,000 population)	16.3	2019	🔴	→
Life expectancy at birth (years)	70.9	2019	🔴	↗
Adolescent fertility rate (births per 1,000 females aged 15 to 19)	64.4	2018	🔴	↗
Births attended by skilled health personnel (%)	58.0	2017	🔴	→
Surviving infants who received 2 WHO-recommended vaccines (%)	92	2019	🟢	↑
Universal health coverage (UHC) index of service coverage (worst 0–100 best)	48	2017	🔴	→
Subjective well-being (average ladder score, worst 0–10 best)	5.4	2019	🟠	↑

SDG4 – Quality Education	Value	Year	Rating	Trend
Net primary enrollment rate (%)	96.3	2019	🟡	↓
Lower secondary completion rate (%)	99.5	2019	🟢	↑
Literacy rate (% of population aged 15 to 24)	92.4	2018	🟡	⚪

SDG5 – Gender Equality	Value	Year	Rating	Trend
Demand for family planning satisfied by modern methods (% of females aged 15 to 49)	61.9	2019	🟠	→
Ratio of female-to-male mean years of education received (%)	74.1	2019	🔴	↑
Ratio of female-to-male labor force participation rate (%)	97.4	2019	🟢	↑
Seats held by women in national parliament (%)	32.7	2020	🟡	↗

SDG6 – Clean Water and Sanitation	Value	Year	Rating	Trend
Population using at least basic drinking water services (%)	88.8	2017	🟠	↗
Population using at least basic sanitation services (%)	62.1	2017	🔴	↑
Freshwater withdrawal (% of available freshwater resources)	8.3	2015	🟢	⚪
Anthropogenic wastewater that receives treatment (%)	0.0	2018	🔴	⚪
Scarce water consumption embodied in imports (m³/capita)	1.6	2013	🟢	↑

SDG7 – Affordable and Clean Energy	Value	Year	Rating	Trend
Population with access to electricity (%)	93.9	2018	🟡	↑
Population with access to clean fuels and technology for cooking (%)	27.6	2016	🔴	→
CO$_2$ emissions from fuel combustion for electricity and heating per total electricity output (MtCO$_2$/TWh)	2.3	2018	🔴	→

SDG8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth	Value	Year	Rating	Trend
Adjusted GDP growth (%)	2.6	2019	🟢	⚪
Victims of modern slavery (per 1,000 population)	6.0	2018	🟡	⚪
Adults with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider (% of population aged 15 or over)	45.4	2017	🔴	↑
Unemployment rate (% of total labor force)	4.4	2020	🟢	↑
Fundamental labor rights are effectively guaranteed (worst 0–1 best)	0.6	2020	🟡	↑
Fatal work-related accidents embodied in imports (per 100,000 population)	0.1	2015	🟢	↑

SDG9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	Value	Year	Rating	Trend
Population using the internet (%)	34.0	2019	🔴	↗
Mobile broadband subscriptions (per 100 population)	47.5	2018	🔴	↑
Logistics Performance Index: Quality of trade and transport-related infrastructure (worst 1–5 best)	2.2	2018	🔴	↓
The Times Higher Education Universities Ranking: Average score of top 3 universities (worst 0–100 best)	27.6	2021	🟡	⚪
Scientific and technical journal articles (per 1,000 population)	0.0	2018	🔴	→
Expenditure on research and development (% of GDP)	0.3	2010	🔴	⚪

SDG10 – Reduced Inequalities	Value	Year	Rating	Trend
Gini coefficient adjusted for top income	33.4	2010	🟡	⚪
Palma ratio	1.3	2018	🔴	⚪

SDG11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities	Value	Year	Rating	Trend
Proportion of urban population living in slums (%)	49.3	2018	🔴	→
Annual mean concentration of particulate matter of less than 2.5 microns in diameter (PM2.5) (µg/m³)	95.7	2019	🔴	↓
Access to improved water source, piped (% of urban population)	55.3	2017	🔴	↓
Satisfaction with public transport (%)	71	2019	🟡	↑

SDG12 – Responsible Consumption and Production	Value	Year	Rating	Trend
Municipal solid waste (kg/capita/day)	0.8	2016	🟢	⚪
Electronic waste (kg/capita)	0.9	2019	🟢	⚪
Production-based SO$_2$ emissions (kg/capita)	5.4	2012	🟢	⚪
SO$_2$ emissions embodied in imports (kg/capita)	0.5	2012	🟢	⚪
Production-based nitrogen emissions (kg/capita)	10.0	2010	🟢	⚪
Nitrogen emissions embodied in imports (kg/capita)	0.4	2010	🟢	⚪

SDG13 – Climate Action	Value	Year	Rating	Trend
CO$_2$ emissions from fossil fuel combustion and cement production (tCO$_2$/capita)	0.5	2019	🟢	↑
CO$_2$ emissions embodied in imports (tCO$_2$/capita)	0.1	2015	🟢	↑
CO$_2$ emissions embodied in fossil fuel exports (kg/capita)	0.0	2017	🟢	⚪

SDG14 – Life Below Water	Value	Year	Rating	Trend
Mean area that is protected in marine sites important to biodiversity (%)	NA	NA	⚪	⚪
Ocean Health Index: Clean Waters score (worst 0–100 best)	NA	NA	⚪	⚪
Fish caught from overexploited or collapsed stocks (% of total catch)	NA	NA	⚪	⚪
Fish caught by trawling or dredging (%)	NA	NA	⚪	⚪
Fish caught that are then discarded (%)	NA	NA	⚪	⚪
Marine biodiversity threats embodied in imports (per million population)	0.0	2018	🟢	⚪

SDG15 – Life on Land	Value	Year	Rating	Trend
Mean area that is protected in terrestrial sites important to biodiversity (%)	50.7	2019	🔴	→
Mean area that is protected in freshwater sites important to biodiversity (%)	32.4	2019	🔴	→
Red List Index of species survival (worst 0–1 best)	0.8	2020	🟠	↓
Permanent deforestation (% of forest area, 5-year average)	0.0	2018	🟢	⚪
Terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity threats embodied in imports (per million population)	0.0	2018	🟢	⚪

SDG16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions	Value	Year	Rating	Trend
Homicides (per 100,000 population)	2.3	2016	🟢	⚪
Unsentenced detainees (% of prison population)	NA	NA	⚪	⚪
Population who feel safe walking alone at night in the city or area where they live (%)	57	2019	🔴	↓
Property Rights (worst 1–7 best)	4.0	2020	🟡	↓
Birth registrations with civil authority (% of children under age 5)	56.2	2019	🔴	⚪
Corruption Perception Index (worst 0–100 best)	33	2020	🔴	↗
Children involved in child labor (% of population aged 5 to 14)	19.0	2014	🔴	⚪
Exports of major conventional weapons (TIV constant million USD per 100,000 population)	0.0	2019	🟢	⚪
Press Freedom Index (best 0–100 worst)	35.1	2020	🟡	↓
Access to and affordability of justice (worst 0–1 best)	0.5	2020	🔴	↗

SDG17 – Partnerships for the Goals	Value	Year	Rating	Trend
Government spending on health and education (% of GDP)	6.6	2018	🔴	↑
For high-income and all OECD DAC countries: International concessional public finance, including official development assistance (% of GNI)	NA	NA	⚪	⚪
Other countries: Government revenue excluding grants (% of GDP)	22.9	2017	🟠	⚪
Corporate Tax Haven Score (best 0–100 worst)	0.0	2019	🟢	⚪
Statistical Performance Index (worst 0–100 best)	53.6	2019	🟠	↗

Annex 3. Legal Annex

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

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

   a. **With the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP),** a basic agreement to govern UNDP's assistance to the country, which was signed by the Government and UNDP (the "Standard Basic Assistance Agreement" or "SBAA") on 23 of February 1984. This Cooperation Framework, together with a joint results group work plan specifying UNDP programme activities further to this Cooperation Framework (which shall form part of this Cooperation Framework and is incorporated herein by reference), constitute together a "project document" as referred to in the SBAA. The implementing partner and UNDP will sign a project agreement containing the specific arrangements for each project further to the relevant project document.

   b. **With the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF),** a Basic Cooperation Agreement (BCA) concluded between the Government and UNICEF on 21 February 1996.

   c. **With the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR),** an Agreement Between His Majesty's Government of Nepal and The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Regarding Establishment of UNHCR's Branch Office on 27 August 1989, as extended by letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of His Majesty's Government of Nepal on 1 September 1998.

   d. **With the World Food Programme (WFP),** a Basic Agreement concerning assistance from the World Food Programme, which was signed by the Government and WFP on 30 August 1967.

   e. **With the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA),** an agreement concluded by an exchange of letters, which entered into force on 12 February 2014, pursuant to which the standard basic assistance agreement between the Government and the United Nations Development Programme shall mutatis mutandis apply to UNFPA in the country.

   f. **With the International Labour Organization (ILO),** the Specialized Agencies Convention, to which the Government acceded on 23 February 1954, and its Annex 1 relating to the ILO, which the Government accepted on 11 September 1996, as well as the Agreement concerning technical assistance concluded between the Government and the ILO, alongside other UN System Organizations, on 14 February 1963;

   g. **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 23 February 1984, shall be applied, mutatis mutandis, to UNIDO present project in the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal.

   h. **With the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO),** an Agreement through the exchange of letters between the Government of Nepal and FAO for the establishment of the FAO Representation in Nepal signed by FAO on 10 February 1977 and by the Government of Nepal on 24 February 1977.

   i. **With the World Health Organization (WHO),** a Basic Agreement for the Provision of Technical Advisory Assistance signed by the Government and WHO on 10 May 1954.

   j. **With the International Organization for Migration (IOM),** the "Cooperation Agreement Between the Government of Nepal and the International Organization for Migration" concluded between the Government and IOM on 3 September 2007.

   k. *With the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)* through the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) and the UNEA's approval of UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy 2022-25 and related Programmes of Work (PoWs).

   l. **With the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).** UNAIDS is a joint and co-sponsored programme of the United Nations system established by ECOSOC resolutions 1994/24 and 1995/2. The World Health Organization (WHO) is one of its co-sponsoring organizations and provides administration to it. Consequently, UNAIDS is covered under the terms and conditions of the 1947 Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies through the World Health Organization.

   m. **With the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)** the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement (SBAA) between the Government of Nepal and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), entered into force on 23 February 1984, was extended to apply mutatis mutandis to UN Women, its premises, property, assets as well as to its personnel in Nepal through an exchange of letters between UN Women and the Government of Nepal on 9 December 2014.

   n. **With the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat),** the Memorandum of Understanding was signed on 6 December 2020 between the Government and UN-Habitat.

   o. **With the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO),** an agreement on the establishment of a UNESCO Office in the Kingdom of Nepal concluded between the Government and UNESCO on 5 August 1997.

p. **With the** International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)**, t**he Host Country Agreement between the Government and IFAD which entered into force on 29 August 2014.

q. **With the United Nations Organization for Drugs and Crime (UNODC)**, a Standard Basic Assistance Agreement signed by UNDP and the Government on 23 of February 1984 applies, mutatis mutandis, to UNODC.

r. **With the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)**, a Standard Basic Assistance Agreement signed by UNDP and the Government on 23 of February 1984 applies, mutatis mutandis, to UNCDF.

s. **With the International Trade Centre (ITC):**

   i. A letter of agreement between ITC and the Ministry of Commerce and Supplies, Government of Nepal, dated 20 November 2013 and expiring on 18 June 2016, in which Nepal recognised that ITC is a joint subsidiary organ of the World Trade Organisation and the United Nations, and enjoys privileges and immunities under the Convention on Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 13 February 1946; and

   ii. The Government of Nepal is in receipt of a Host Country Agreement signed by the Executive Director of the ITC on 11 May 2021, in which ITC, acknowledging that as a subsidiary organ of the United Nations, ITC enjoys privileges and immunities by the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 13 February 1946.

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

4. Without prejudice to the above, the Government shall:

   i. apply to each UN System Organization and its property, funds, assets, officials and experts on mission the provisions of the General Convention and/or the Specialized Agencies Convention; and

   ii. accord to each UN System Organization, its officials and other persons performing services on behalf of that UN System Organization, the privileges, immunities and facilities set out in the UN Agreement applicable to such UN System Organization.

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

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

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

8. Nothing in or relating to this Cooperation Framework shall be deemed:

   i. a waiver, express or implied, of the privileges and immunities of any UN System Organization; or

   ii. the acceptance by any UN System Organization of the jurisdiction of the courts of any country over disputes arising from this Cooperation Framework, whether under the General Convention or the Specialized Agencies Convention, the UN Agreements, or otherwise, and no provisions of this Cooperation Framework shall be interpreted or applied in a manner, or to an extent, that is inconsistent with such privileges and immunities.