



UNITED NATIONS
NORTH MACEDONIA



Republic of North Macedonia
Government of the Republic of North Macedonia

2021–2025 THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA
AND THE UNITED NATIONS

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION FRAMEWORK



CREDITS

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Cover photo: Stone bridge, Skopje, North Macedonia

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Declaration of commitment

The Government of the Republic of North Macedonia and the United Nations (UN) have committed to continue working together towards a prosperous, inclusive and resilient North Macedonia with an aim to accomplish the UN Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

The UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (SDCF) will guide the work of the UN system in the country between 2021 and 2025. It builds on past cooperation between the UN and the Government and forms a foundation for close partnership between national and international partners for the achievement of national development priorities framed around Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the country's human rights commitments. Implementing SDCF will help all people of North Macedonia live longer, healthier, more prosperously and securely.

In signing hereafter, on October 26, 2020 in Skopje, the participating partners endorse the SDCF and underscore their joint commitment towards the achievement of its results.



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Republic of North Macedonia

Government of the Republic of North Macedonia

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Executive summary

The 2021–2025 United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (SDCF) is a key strategic document guiding the work of the UN System in the Republic of North Macedonia, developed in close partnership with the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia and other stakeholders.

SDCF succeeds the 2016–2020 Partnership for Sustainable Development (PSD) and is aligned with the country's national development priorities, its international human rights and gender equality commitments and Agenda 2030. Recognising that EU membership is a key national priority, SDCF strives to ensure full alignment with the EU accession process.

North Macedonia is an upper middle-income and high-human development country. Following a politically challenging decade, the country has recently embarked on an ambitious reform agenda to boost the economy, reform its governance institutions and enhance realisation of human rights.

Challenges, however, persist. The considerable positive gains in poverty reduction and inclusion achieved in the previous years are now under threat by the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, the public narrative is still influenced by prejudices, negative stereotypes, gender bias and social norms, preventing more effective social cohesion, resilience and prosperity in the country.

The country is not spared of the demographic challenges of today – ageing population, declining birth rates, high emigration – making the human capital one of the key constraints for accelerated economic development. In addition, the country is still to build a sustainable economy driven by job-rich and green growth, high productivity, and competitiveness.

Despite some recent progress in implementing reforms, corruption and insufficient governance at both central and local levels, persist, making it a challenge to fully comply with international norms and standards, including when dealing with refugees, asylum seekers, migrants and stateless persons. As result the level of confidence in the institutions, particularly in the judiciary, in spite of the recent advances continues to be low and subdues the reform enthusiasm among the broader population.

Health, education and social services require qualitative improvement. Lack of accurate and disaggregated data, including due to the long obsolete census, hampers evidence-based decision-making and quality policy proposals adjusted to the needs of most marginalized and most vulnerable groups.


Climate change and other environmental issues need a more decisive attention, given the levels of pollution in the country and the exposure to natural hazards.

In close partnership with the Government and other stakeholders, the UN has committed to four corresponding outcomes that will contribute to three strategic priorities to address the identified key development challenges of North Macedonia:

This is done by providing technical assistance, capacity development, leveraging partnerships and resources, social mobilisation, brokering knowledge, and piloting and scaling up innovations.

UN engagement is guided by the overarching principle of leaving no one behind (LNOB); by human rights-based approach; gender equality and women's empowerment; resilience; sustainability and accountability.

Table 1: SDCF strategic priorities and outcomes

SDGs	STRATEGIC PRIORITY	OUTCOMES BY 2025	
PROSPERITY & PEOPLE	Sustained and inclusive economic and social development	(1) The living standard of all people in North Macedonia is improved through equal access to decent work and productive employment generated by an inclusive and innovative business ecosystem	
		(2) People in North Macedonia have universal access to rights-based quality social services – healthcare, education, and necessary social and child protection – rooted in systems resilient to emergencies.	
PLANET	Climate action, natural resources and disaster risk management	(3) People in North Macedonia benefit from ambitious climate action, sustainably managed natural resources and well-preserved biodiversity through good environmental governance and disaster resilient communities	
PEACE	Transparent and accountable democratic governance	(4) People in North Macedonia benefit from improved rule of law; evidence-based, anticipatory and gender-responsive policies; greater social cohesion; and effective service delivery by transparent, accountable and responsive institutions	

It is based on evidence, which requires strengthened statistical capacity, better collection of disaggregated data, and improved coordination and information sharing at all levels required for sound policy development and implementation.

UN has committed to work jointly with national and local governments, civil society, private sector, international partners and all other stakeholders.

SDCF is executed under the overall coordination of the UN in North Macedonia – represented by the UN Resident Coordinator (RC) – and the Government of North Macedonia – represented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). Individual UN entities work in coordination with their respective government counterparts. The legal relationship between the UN and the Government is governed by the SDCF legal annex.

SDCF is an instrument of mutual accountability that promotes national ownership; it is operationalized through Joint Workplans (JWPs) and reviewed annually to assess progress by the Joint UN–Government Steering Committee (JSC), its highest decision-making and oversight body.

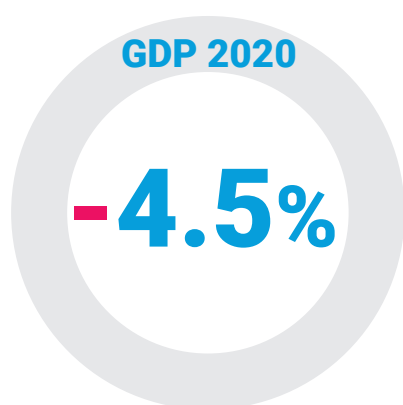
SDCF is regularly monitored and will be evaluated in its penultimate year.



1

**COUNTRY
PROGRESS
TOWARDS
2030 AGENDA³**

1.1 Country context



The Republic of North Macedonia is an upper middle-income and high-human development country. It is a member of NATO and on the path to start EU accession negotiations, with a predominantly stable economy, but performing below its full potential, largely due to non-economic reasons. Due to COVID-19, the country's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) declined by 4.5 percent in 2020.

The country has been ageing fast and is likely to face significant labour force challenges due to the shrinking youth population, low birth rates and heavy emigration, as well as the mismatch between the education system and the market needs. Nearly one-fourth of GDP is spent on health, education and social protection, but the outcomes are not commensurate. Climate change has led to frequent and intense flooding and damage to life and livelihoods. Degradation of natural resources, poor air quality and inadequate waste management are other areas of concern.

The Republic of North Macedonia has ratified major human rights treaties, but the rights of women and girls, children, some ethnic communities, in particular Roma, persons with disabilities and refugees are more likely to be compromised. These groups are also more often victims of social prejudices and negative stereotypes, which affects social cohesion.

1.2 National vision for sustainable development



North Macedonia endorsed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, which was followed by a politically sensitive period, during which it prioritized resolving neighbourly issues that impeded its Euro-Atlantic accession process, most notably the change of its constitutional name. Consequently, nationalization of SDGs has been slower than desired and not yet completed.

³ This section is based on the 2020 North Macedonia Common Country Analysis (CCA) that can be accessed [here](#).

⁴ <https://www.sobranie.mk/downloaddocument.aspx?id=52f0cf40-d7cd-4329-90ed-ae20515d787&t=docx>

⁵ <https://finance.gov.mk/en/node/4832>

⁶ https://www.sep.gov.mk/en/content/?id=13#.XttidZ4zY_U

The country would benefit from giving new impetus to the national development strategy based on a wide national consensus on the priorities and targets to be achieved at long-term level. The 2009-2020 National Strategy for Sustainable Development, which was updated to extend its validity until 2030, was developed prior to the formulation of SDGs in 2015. It consequently does not address all aspects and the integrated approach of the Agenda 2030. There is a set of strategic documents, which together constitute the development pathway, most importantly the 2020-2024 Government Programme⁴, the 2020-2022 Economic Reform Programme⁵ and the 2020-2029 Strategy for Regional Development adopted by end-2020. In addition, the National Plan for Adoption of Acquis (NPAA), is a comprehensive long-term document that defines the dynamic of the adoption of the EU Acquis Communautaire, strategic guidelines, policies, reforms, structures, resources and deadlines to be realized for the country to fulfil the requirements for EU membership.⁶

The following strategic directions were extracted from the existing Government programme (2020)

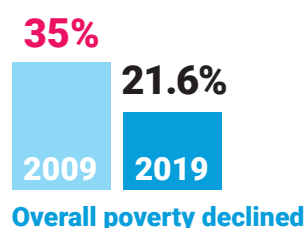


EU accession policies broadly converge with the SDG framework, with two thirds of the accession agenda aligned.⁷ Further integrating EU accession process with the SDG framework presents an opportunity to accelerate sustainable development and to identify additional areas of UN leverage, such as health and mainstreaming LNOB within the EU-driven reforms.

⁷In 2019, a Rapid Integrated Assessment (RIA) was carried out to tag the national development documents to specific SDGs and their targets and looked at the EU acquis alignment with SDGs. About 65 per cent of the global SDG targets (109 of 169 targets), have a strong link with the chapters of Acquis Communautaire. Chapter 27 (Environment), 23 (Justice and Human Rights) and 17 (Employment and Social Policy) represent the greatest drivers of SDG progress. Source: The European Pathways of the Republic of North Macedonia: Achieving Fast, More Inclusive Sustainable Growth, Government of North Macedonia-EU-UNDP, February 2020

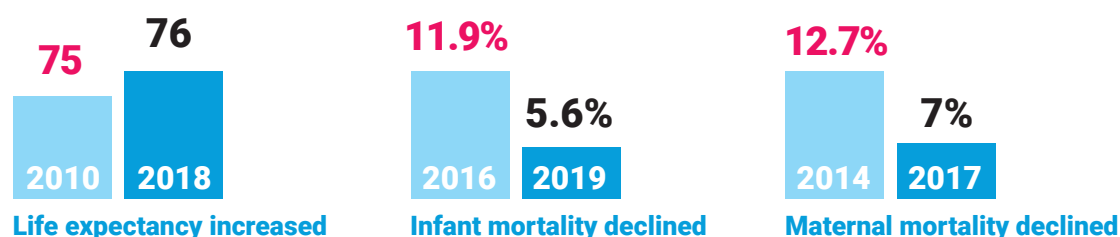
1.3 Progress towards the SDGs

The process of SDGs mainstreaming commenced in 2016 with the integration of the SDG framework in some of the national development strategies. The National Council for Sustainable Development, a high-level advisory and oversight mechanism for advancing the national sustainable development agenda, headed by the Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) for Economic Affairs, was established in 2012. In 2020, the country has finalized its first Voluntary National Review (VNR), which sets the baseline for more effective planning for sustainable development. The work on the national SDGs indicators framework has started and the process of nationalization of SDGs agenda is expected to be finalized in due time.



If assessed against the global targets, North Macedonia has made good progress under the “People” SDG category. Overall poverty levels have declined from 35 percent (2009) to 21.6 percent (2019) but remain high in rural areas and in multi-children households. Poverty reduction has been accompanied by improved living conditions: housing, access to drinking water and sanitation, electricity, education and health, although quality of services remains problematic.

Inequality has also declined, benefiting the poorest quintiles; the incomes of bottom 40 percent grew by over 39 percent compared to overall income growth of 22.3 percent between 2007 and 2017. With the deinstitutionalization process, all children under the age of 18 in the care institutions have been or are planned to be resettled to community homes. But vulnerable categories of women and girls, ethnic communities, persons with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons (LGBTI), youth not in employment, education or training (NEET), and older persons continue to face exclusion and discrimination in various forms. Early marriage persists: 7.5 percent (nationally) and 45.1 percent (Roma settlements) of girls get married before the age of 18, and 0.3 percent (nationally) and 15.5 percent (Roma settlements) get married before the age of 15. COVID-19 has exacerbated poverty with disparate impact on vulnerable groups.



Modern contraceptive prevalence rate is 14 for the general population, but 8.6 for Roma. In 2019, the adolescent birth rate was 29 per 1,000 women aged 15-19, but almost four times higher among Roma. The Government adopted national commitments for achieving the goals of the Program of Action of the ICPD by 2030. Health insurance coverage is universal, but the high out-of-pocket expenses make it difficult for poorer households to access full benefits. High level of non-communicable diseases, accounting for 87 percent of life years lost, is a major health challenge. On top of this, skilled medical personnel, including doctors, specialists, nurses and midwives, have been intensively prone to emigration, which poses an increasing risk for the public health system.

Table 2: Drivers of inequalities and factors of discrimination that lead to certain population segments being left furthest behind

Drivers of inequalities	Factors of discrimination	Groups left furthest behind
Structure and performance of economy of labour force	Sex, age or disability	Youth NEET
Governance institutions	Geographical location or fragile ecology	Women & girls from ethnic communities, rural areas, women and girls with disabilities, older women
Social infrastructure	Vulnerability to climatic shocks & natural hazards	Roma community
Climate change and natural resource management	Impact of governance (laws, policies)	Children from ethnic communities & those at risk
	Socio-economic status	People with disabilities
	Social norms, prejudice and stereotypes	Refugees, asylum seekers, migrants, IDPs, stateless
		LGBTI
		People in rural areas / small farmers
		Older persons



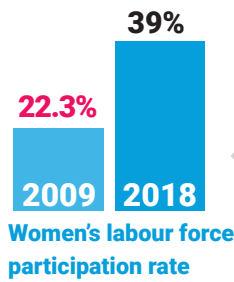
Overall, the quality of education does not meet international standards and is not sufficiently aligned with market needs. Despite the attained universal enrolment, international student assessment reviews show that significant number of young people are functionally illiterate, with low skills in maths and science.



State-funded pensions have had the strongest positive impact on poverty decline, while benefits from social protection, active labour measures, remittances and subsidies have been somewhat less important. Following the reform of the social protection system in 2019 and the introduction of the new guaranteed minimum assistance, social transfers for beneficiary households have significantly increased, which is a positive development.



Human capital has been continuously depleting. The country is ageing fast, with rising dependency ratio, in line with the overall European trend, and it is likely to face significant labour force challenges due to the shrinking youth population, low birth rates, heavy emigration and the skills mismatch.



Under “Prosperity” axis, the country achieved significant decline in unemployment rates mainly due to the active employment measures put in place through the Operational Plan for Employment, but also the decrease of active population due to rapid emigration. Overall, women,⁸ youth, persons with disabilities and certain ethnic communities are more likely to be out of labour force, unemployed or in precarious employment, including affected by persistent gender pay gap. Unemployment tends to be long-term in nature, with more than half of the unemployed looking for a job for over four years. COVID-19 is likely to force migrants to return to the country and worsen the unemployment situation, but also provide opportunities for their re-engagement in the development of the country.



Key economic concerns relate to high informal economy, skills mismatch and low productivity and competitiveness. North Macedonia is a small economy strongly integrated with the EU and Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) markets. Through its pro-FDI policies, it has managed to attract high foreign investments in export-led high-value products, increasing and diversifying its export, however the spill-over effects to the domestic economy are limited due to the scarce backward linkages of foreign direct investment (FDI)-led firms with domestic industry.



Its economy has been predominantly stable at macro-level, but performing below its full potential, largely due to non-economic reasons such as inconsistent legal framework for businesses resulting with lack of effective law enforcement, as well as corruption, inefficient administrative service and political uncertainties. This slows down the economic reform and prevents a more pronounced and sustained growth, despite some recent efforts to define a consistent economic model that prioritizes technological upgrade, innovation and propulsive industries.



The greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions have declined, making a positive contribution to goals under the “Planet” category. However, the country is highly vulnerable to natural hazards, such as earthquakes, and other climate-induced hazards, including floods, heat waves and forest fires. At the Paris climate summit in December 2015, the Government committed to reducing the CO₂ emissions from fossil fuels combustion by 30 percent by 2030, that is, by 36 percent at a higher level of ambition, compared to the business as usual scenario. The CO₂ emissions from fossil fuels combustion account for almost 80 percent of the total GHG emissions in the country with a dominant share of the following sectors: energy supply, buildings and transport. The energy policy and legislation are now fully aligned with the EU Energy Community, prioritising energy efficiency and renewable energy; however, coal still accounts for 60 percent of the electricity production. Air pollution in urban areas, pollution of water bodies, improper waste management, climate change impact and loss of biodiversity and land degradation are among the key environmental challenges in the country.

The 2019 Sustainable Development Report ranked North Macedonia 70 of 162 countries with an index score of 69.4, which is slightly below the Eastern Europe and Central Asia regional average score of 70.4.



⁸ Women's labour force participation rate in 2019 was low, at only 54.8 percent compared to 77.3 percent for men.



Positive attainment of the goals mentioned above, do not compare well with somewhat weaker performance in rule of law and justice, thus making achievement of goals under “Peace” a matter of concern. Most of the legal framework for the protection of human rights and gender equality, pending re-adoption of the procedurally challenged Anti-discrimination Law, is congruent with the European standards, however implementation remains a challenge in some areas. As a result, infringement of rights of women, Roma, LGBTI persons and persons with disabilities are common and discrimination against them through hate speech or outright violence is not adequately addressed by enforcement agencies. The underlying inter-ethnic tensions appear to persist, thus calling for promotion of social cohesion through community engagement. The climate for media freedom and freedom of expression have, however, significantly improved as a result of legislative amendments and clear political will of the Government. The Government has also strengthened the regulatory framework to tackle corruption and ensure the impartiality and efficiency of the judiciary.

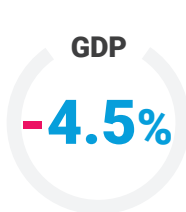


Under “Partnerships”, the country has earned global praise for resolving the name dispute with Greece and working on improving relations with Bulgaria, which led to the unblocking of its Euro-Atlantic integration processes. North Macedonia is now a member of NATO and is on the path to start EU accession negotiations. Domestic resource base, the single biggest source of SDG financing, can be enhanced with innovative approaches. Furthermore, efficiency of public spending and improved statistical capacity to monitor SDGs could be further improved.



The most severe impact will be on the already vulnerable segments of the population. Those employed in informal sectors, self-employed or in part-time jobs are especially vulnerable. Women face decline in labour force participation and heightened domestic violence, women and men from ethnic communities are vulnerable due to congested living conditions, children suffer from disruption in studies, an people with disabilities and older persons are most impacted by the containment measures as an obstacle to seeking help and medical care. COVID-19 is creating significant hardship for small farmers, affecting their health, access to markets for products, inputs for production and seasonal workers for harvest and processing, which is compounded by their limited resources, low income and climate change impacts.

COVID-19 has had a serious and long-term impact on the economy, society and vulnerable groups. North Macedonia – and its regional Western Balkans neighbours – has entered a period of recession: GDP contracted more than 4.5 percent in 2020, and unemployment and poverty were also affected, though mitigated with anti-crisis measures. Remittances, which traditionally offset balance of payments deficit in the country, dropped in 2020 and reduced support for families left behind. Most affected sectors included the leather, textile, automotive, electricity equipment, retail and hospitality industries, while ICT and agroculture remained stable. All this may have significantly impacted the development trajectory of the country towards the 2030 Agenda and threatens to undo the recent SDG gains at the time when the Government’s fiscal capacity has been gradually reducing.



GDP contracted more than 4.5% in 2020



Unemployment and poverty were affected by COVID-19



Since February 2020, UN in North Macedonia has provided enhanced support to the Government and the people in North Macedonia with addressing the health and socio-economic impact of COVID-19 pandemic in the country. Moving forward, the long-term support under the SDCF will continue to focus efforts on those left behind and most affected by the pandemic by mainstreaming LNOB under each outcome and building resilience in all its programmatic interventions. COVID-19 also offers opportunities to building back better, innovate and digitalise services. These can positively contribute to efficiency, resilience and transparency.

1.4 Gaps and challenges

The country needs to address several gaps and challenges to accelerate progress towards SDGs. An absence of a formulated national development strategy and challenges to build political consensus around strategic issues have in the past disrupted the development trajectory. Most policies confine themselves to a very short political period of four years or less, thus seriously jeopardising any continuity of reforms. Policymaking is driven by EU accession, and the recent publication of the first Voluntary National Review shows renewed commitment to the SDGs.

As a result, the SDG mainstreaming process has been protracted and the national machinery set up to monitor SDGs is facing challenges. There are no agreed complete set of national SDG indicators. No costing of SDGs has been done and no SDG finance assessment carried out to guide planning and budgeting. The national ownership of SDG agenda thus appears somewhat weak. As a result, it is difficult to monitor the SDGs progress.

These issues are further exacerbated by insufficient institutional capacities for policy planning and implementation. Public administration, a key arm of the Government responsible for service provision and one of the major areas of reform, is yet to demonstrate stronger accountability and responsiveness towards citizens. With some recent progress on transparency and consultation, efforts need to continue to ensure inclusive and gender-responsive decision-making. Slow pace of final resolutions on high-corruption cases maintains the low trust and confidence in institutions and cements the perception of political patronage, nepotism and clientelism with a misplaced sense of loyalty to political leaders rather than the Constitution.

Challenges in evidence-based policymaking can hamper acceleration of progress towards SDGs. Evidence-based policy making requires strong, disaggregated data bases, strengthened analytical capabilities and monitoring and evaluation skills, among others, to examine the impact of policies on certain population groups. Lack of reliable demographic data disaggregated by sex, ethnicity, disability status, migration pattern etc. is an impediment in policy making for vulnerable population groups who may be left behind or face enhanced risks of being left behind.

The capacity of private sector, particularly domestic private sector, is limited by its size and scale, low productivity and lack of technological innovation, among others. As such, it has not been an important partner for achieving SDGs. Global experience suggests that private sector stands to gain from partnering with UN in terms of enhanced reputation, profitability, brand advantage and socially responsible image building. This can be a win-win solution and add pace to achieving SDGs.

Another major impediment for building an inclusive LNOB society that “cares for all” is insufficient social cohesion and trust, despite positive developments in recent years. Societal attitudes and norms towards different ethnic communities, LGBTI persons, refugees and persons with disabilities have at times been unfavourable to building cohesion. For a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic society like North Macedonia, social cohesion should be both a goal and an instrument in contributing to the achievement of inclusive and sustainable growth.

Sustainable development is by nature a long-term process that requires continuity and consistency of reforms. Political parties and the society as a whole must, therefore, work together to build consensus around key development priorities and targets, harnessing the most effective approaches to reach them.

The background of the page is a photograph of an ancient archaeological site. It features a large, intricate mosaic floor with various designs, including a prominent circular medallion with a face and floral patterns. Several classical stone columns with papyrus capitals are visible, some standing and some partially ruined. The walls are made of rough-hewn stone blocks. A large, semi-transparent blue number '2' is overlaid on the left side of the image.

2

**UN DEVELOPMENT
SYSTEM SUPPORT
FOR THE
2030 AGENDA**

2.1 Theory of change

VISION

Prosperous, inclusive and resilient North Macedonia by 2030



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

Sustained & inclusive economic and social development
(Prosperity and People)

Outcome 1: By 2025, the living standard of all people in North Macedonia is improved through equal access to decent work and productive employment generated by an inclusive and innovative business ecosystem

Outcome 2: By 2025, people in North Macedonia have universal access to rights-based quality social services - healthcare, education, and necessary social and child protection - rooted in systems resilient to emergencies

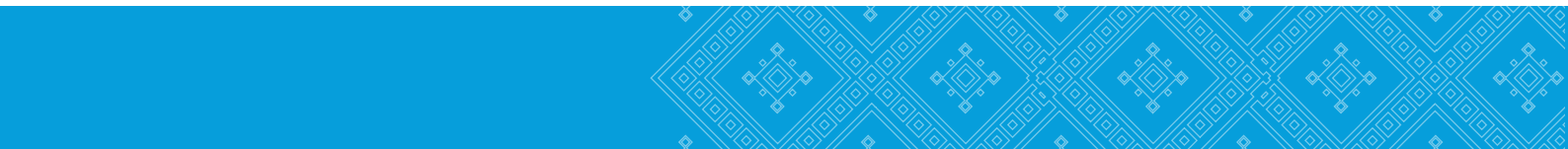
If there is an enabling business environment, stronger backward linkages of domestic industry with FDI –led firms, availability of market-driven skills, investment in green and circular economy, suitable conditions for labour force participation by women and other vulnerable groups. Improved competitiveness and productivity of domestic industry, and creation of green and decent jobs then it will contribute to the achievement of the outcome of improved employment and living standards.

If the health system is strengthened to provide affordable and quality health services, if it is resilient enough in response to epidemics / pandemics and other emergencies, if NCDs are controlled, there is improved and equitable access to quality education with long-term learning outcomes, skills education is geared towards market needs, social protection is improved in coverage, efficiency and targeting and is fiscally sustainable, if population dynamics (migration, birth rates and ageing) are well-managed and if these results are inclusive of the vulnerable groups leaving no one behind then the outcome will be achieved.

Outputs: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 and 1.5

Outputs: 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4

If there are interventions that support productivity and entrepreneurship; employment activation services including skills; innovations in business labour standards, agricultural productivity; and it NGDs are addressed, primary healthcare is strengthened, early learning is improved; if social protection covers vulnerable groups; number of women and children facing violence goes down; if environmental education is mainstreamed; forests and protected areas are effectively managed; air pollution related



If there is sustainable and inclusive economic and social development, if there is ambitious climate action, sustainable natural resource management and disaster risk management, if there is transparent and accountable democratic governance, than the above impact will be achieved.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

Climate action, natural resources & disaster risk management (*Planet*)

Outcome 3: By 2025, people in North Macedonia benefit from ambitious climate action, sustainably managed natural resources and well-preserved biodiversity through good environmental governance and disaster resilient communities

If the country achieves EU-compliant greenhouse gas reduction, implements climate-sensitive sector policies, creates public awareness about climate change and environmental issues, builds capacities for addressing multidimensional risks of climate change, epidemics and natural and man-made hazards, if communities are resilient to disasters through risk reduction, preparedness and response following a preventive approach, if the natural resources are managed in a sustainable manner, biodiversity is conserved, if energy intensity is reduced and energy efficiency is improved, if there is regional cooperation in terms of information sharing and collective action, and there is sustainable production and consumption then the people in North Macedonia, particularly the vulnerable ones, will benefit from these actions and the outcome will be achieved.

Outputs: 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

Transparent & accountable democratic governance (*Peace and Partnership*)

Outcome 4: By 2025, people in North Macedonia benefit from improved rule of law; evidence-based, anticipatory and gender-responsive policies; greater social cohesion; and effective service delivery by transparent, accountable and responsive institutions

If the judicial system is reformed to make it more independent and accessible, public administration is more non-partisan and merit-based, decision-making is transparent, participatory and evidence-based, accountability of governance institutions to people is strengthened at all levels, implementation mechanisms for human rights obligations improved, if women's rights are protected and promoted, local governments are empowered with capacity and resources, service delivery is people-centred, statistical systems are improved to generate disaggregated data, social cohesion and trust-building are strengthened, anti-corruption policies and measures are strictly implemented. If there is greater civic engagement and freedom for media and civil society and anticipatory governance capabilities are developed then there will also be improvements in other outcomes and the vision of a prosperous, inclusive and resilient North Macedonia will be achieved.

Outputs: 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5

(continued) mortality is reduced; if civil servants are trained to prevent and respond to disaster-linked displacement; environmental legislation is enforced; if human rights violations are effectively addressed; local governments have the resources and capacities; census is conducted; if credibility and impartiality of governance institutions is improved; anti-corruption measures are implemented; services are digitized and if all other planned activities as per Results Framework are implemented, **then the above outputs will be achieved.**



For accelerated, inclusive and sustainable growth, the following changes need to be pursued:

- › Building a robust, formal, competitive, innovative, inclusive and resilient low-carbon economy, at par with the European peers, resulting in accelerated and job-rich growth.
- › Decisively addressing exclusion and inequalities, with focus on advancing gender equality and women's empowerment and addressing the needs of vulnerable groups and marginalized groups.
- › Increasing the quantity and quality of jobs for women and men and managing migrations, especially of skilled labour force, by fighting informal economy and creating decent employment opportunities for all and promoting gender equality and human rights at work.
- › Investing in human capital through improved quality of education (including technical and vocational education and training, lifelong learning and the recognition of prior learning), and accessibility and acceptability of quality healthcare.
- › Improving the design and delivery of basic services to make them more efficient, fiscally sustainable accessible and potentially productive.
- › Improving governance through decisive action against corruption, independent and effective judiciary, better policy coherence, more efficient administration to plan and deliver services and consultation with civil society.
- › Addressing climate change by mitigation and adaptation actions; improving environmental governance and management of natural and cultural resources; and improving preparedness and building resilience to natural or human-induced shocks and disasters.
- › Promoting social cohesion and trust building with active engagement of women, youth and marginalized and excluded groups.
- › Ensuring compliance with international norms and standards related to refugees, asylum seekers, migrants and other people on the move and stateless persons.
- › Ensure ownership of the SDG agenda by integrating SDG framework within the EU accession framework, including building on the set of indicators common to EU chapters and SDGs.
- › Promoting evidence-based policymaking and monitoring by addressing data gaps, most notably by building capacity to conduct population census (last held in 2002) to collect disaggregated data.
- › Multi-stakeholder partnerships by observing a whole-of-society approach and whole-of-government approach, by supporting alliances with a variety of actors, including government institutions, civil society, private sector, local communities and academia.



These required changes may be undermined by weak institutional capacities and rule of law, and partisan governance; slow economic growth; inequitous health, education and social protection outcomes; climate-induced disasters and unsustainable natural resource management; and gender stereotypes, social prejudices and norms, and the resulting behaviour.



The EU accession offers a distinct opportunity for enhanced collaboration between the UN and EU on issues of mutual interest such as legislative harmonisation, institutional transformation and capacity building for the implementation of EU acquis. Regional cooperation can be strengthened by taking advantage of the EU connectivity agenda and the EU Western Balkans Strategy to reinforce cooperation in climate change, disaster risk information sharing, natural resource management, cross-border trade, migration, situation of asylum seekers and refugees, minority rights, digitalization and crime. UN in North Macedonia may collaborate with other focused structures promoting regional connectivity, including the Regional Cooperation Council and the Regional Youth Cooperation Office.

2.2. SDCF strategic priorities



Based on the shared vision and following a strategic prioritization process conducted in consultation with the Government and other stakeholders,⁹ the SDCF outlines three strategic priorities to contribute to the achievement of SDGs in North Macedonia in 2021-2025:

- 1 Sustained and inclusive economic and social development
- 2 Climate action, natural resources and disaster risks management
- 3 Transparent and accountable democratic governance

Through addressing these priorities, the UN is committed to collectively support its vision, i.e. that **the people of North Macedonia achieve, by 2030, equality and prosperity in all opportunities for equitable growth; that gender equality and human rights are respected; and that communities work together peacefully.**

UN is committed to actively support partners in their ambitions for transformative change, whereby public institutions in North Macedonia are accountable and competent, economy is competitive and with climate-neutral systems. The UN will do that by way of being an inclusive, people-centred organization that utilizes collective strengths in brokering global knowledge, innovation and agile change with forward looking ambitions and collaborative leadership.

These key priorities take into consideration the UN entities' comparative advantages – normative mandates, positioning and technical capacity – and are based on lessons learned and the evaluation¹⁰ of earlier engagement of UN Development System in the country.

SDCF strategic priorities take into consideration the assumptions for development change, associated risks and contextual findings identified in the 2020 CCA. Therefore, **gender equality, inclusion of marginalised and excluded groups and the centrality of LNOB principle cut across all thematic areas and serve as the key unifying criterion for the identification and implementation of programmatic interventions by the UN entities in the country.**

Promotion of equality is core to sustainable development. As long as inequalities persist, including through non-income manifestations, sustainable development cannot be achieved. It is thus important that no one is left behind and that LNOB principle is central to SDCF. Because of this, the **SDCF collectively focuses on these vulnerable groups:**

- › adolescent and youth, especially girls;
- › youth NEET;
- › women and girls from ethnic communities, women of reproductive age; elderly, with focus on specific vulnerabilities of elderly women due to their gender;
- › women and men farmers, especially small farmers;
- › persons with disabilities, with focus on specific vulnerabilities of women and girls with disability due to their gender; Roma community, especially Roma women and girls;
- › rural women and girls;
- › women single parents and women-headed households;
- › unemployed individuals and families with low income;

⁹After having validated 2020 CCA – an independent, collective, integrated, forward-looking and evidence-based analysis of the country context – a participatory strategic prioritisation of the development challenges and opportunities was undertaken based on the UN value proposition, the guiding principles and the evaluation of the 2016-2020 PSD, in a two-stage iterative process. The priorities and outcomes were identified with the National Sector Working Groups composed of the Government, UN system entities, civil society, the private sector, academia and international partners, and validated with the extended JSC that included the Ministries' State Secretaries. Due to COVID-19 restriction, consultations were done predominantly virtually, and the timeline was adjusted for 2020 elections (15 July 2020). A series of surveys were conducted to understand people's priorities for the future and push factors driving emigration. A development partners' perception survey was carried out to gauge the UN comparative advantage comprising the UN mandate, and capacity and positioning in different thematic areas. The full SDCF document was consulted with all relevant stakeholders, including the Government, civil society, the private sector, academia, donors and representatives of the groups left behind. Six workshops attended by over 200 participants were held in early September 2020 and the draft SDCF was available for public review on the UN website for two weeks. Feedback received was incorporated in the final version of the document.

¹⁰Some of the lessons learned are: the Results Groups should play a more important role in strengthening inter-agency technical cooperation and also with the Government counterparts; there should be more cross-sectoral perspectives in programming; small pilots should be strategically introduced and potential to scale up better utilized; and UN should communicate and advocate more effectively on its work and to bring about behavioural change.

- > homeless persons;
- > population in slums or other informal settlements;
- > persons working in grey informal sectors;
- > temporary workers, on-call workers, informal workers;
- > refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless persons;
- > displaced persons;
- > victims of and vulnerable to trafficking, and vulnerable returnees;
- > children, especially those in correctional institutions, with disabilities, from poor households, those affected by adverse experiences, such as physical and psychological abuse and physical and emotional neglect;
- > persons with substance use disorders;
- > families at risk of poverty;
- > people from areas prone to landslides, flooding and droughts;
- > people living in urban and industrial areas facing air pollution;
- > communities dependent on climate and food and nutrition vulnerable ecosystems.



Social norms, values and behaviours are the root causes for all development challenges, but they are difficult to change over medium-term. Programmes, policy and legislative changes can influence attitudes over a longer period. As such, this cannot be a separate thematic priority, but are an important factor for consideration across all UN programmes.



Integration of EU accession and SDG agendas to ensure coherence and maximize opportunities. North Macedonia is in the process of EU accession and has been carrying out economic, social and governance reforms. SDG agenda is well-aligned with the EU accession and national priorities. Integrating EU accession with the SDG framework is an opportunity to accelerate sustainable development. The UN in North Macedonia will leverage convergence with EU reforms in key areas, including implementation of LNOB, where UN has a distinct normative and operational advantage.



Addressing data shortcomings identified during the CCA process, notably the availability of reliable and accurate disaggregated data to support the well-informed and evidence-based policymaking. SDCF thus supports strengthening of statistical capacity for collection, analysis, dissemination of disaggregated data; improving their exchange among various entities and increasing their utilization in policy development.



Working at different levels. While national Government is involved in policy level work, the activities on the ground are carried out through engagement at regional level through the Regional Councils of Mayors and Regional Planning Centres and directly with local governments in collaboration with other local partners, including civil society.



Addressing digital divide to bridge the digital gap and address skill sets required for the future sustainable growth. Leveraging digital and social innovation underpins all actions and leads the design of the specific interventions for implementation of the SDCF.

2.3 Intended development results

The UN entities in North Macedonia have committed to work with the Government and other stakeholders towards the achievement of SDGs within the three strategic priorities.



Based on the CCA findings and stakeholder consultations, the focus is on the following SDGs and targets.

UN in North Macedonia will work towards making growth more robust, sustainable, and inclusive while at the same time creating employment. This is now more important than ever before given the job losses caused by the pandemic and return of migrant workers.

UN will support creation of sustainable enterprises as generators of employment, innovations and decent work.

Employment creation will particularly focus on women's improved labour force participation and their employment, including young people and persons with disabilities.

Given the high potential for agricultural exports and agro-processing, the UN system will work towards integration with global value chains to enhance agricultural productivity by implementing sustainable practices.

To address the high share of youth NEET, particularly among Roma, the UN interventions will promote skills training and work towards innovative start-ups for the youth.

Investment in human capital and delivery of social services will be improved and made more equitable, efficient and resilient particularly focusing on maternal mortality, infant mortality, and non-communicable diseases while at the same time addressing reproductive healthcare and universal health coverage.

Stunting among children, especially Roma, will be addressed through nutrition programmes.

In the context of COVID-19, addressing national capacities for early warning, risk reduction and management of pandemics has become more important and UN will continue to support the Government on this.

Education systems will focus on early childhood development to build a strong foundation for lifelong well-being, ensure equitable access to quality education especially women, girls and marginalised persons and equitable skills and vocational education.

Gender equality will receive additional attention, whether through support for women's equal economic participation, eliminating gender-based violence) or access to reproductive health.

Orderly, safe, and responsible migration and mobility of people will be facilitated through implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.

The UN in North Macedonia will support the Government to address the country's vulnerability to and impact of climate change, especially on vulnerable population segments, arrest degradation and unsustainable use of natural resources, including biodiversity and make communities more resilient to disaster risks.

It will help the country address air quality and its impact on health and workdays lost and promote efficient waste management and environmentally sound management of chemicals. It will contribute to the national capacities to comply with global commitments on GHG emissions reduction and other multi-lateral environmental and disaster risk reduction (DRR) agreements by improved environmental governance at national and local levels.

All these interventions will be anchored within the overarching LNOB framework to reduce inequalities (including income inequalities) and to achieve a more equitable, resilient and sustainable outcome of policies and programme.

2.4 SDCF outcomes and partnerships

Four outcomes reflect the contribution of the UN Development System in North Macedonia to the achievement of the identified three strategic priorities between 2021 and 2025.

Each outcome section below first provides a theory of change, describes pathways to reach the goal, the targeted vulnerable groups and the contributing UN agencies. The relevant SDG targets and indicators are provided in the Results Framework (Annex 1).

Each outcome section also discusses the type of partnerships, existing and planned, required for its achievement. As the UN in North Macedonia is only one of the contributors to the outcomes, the work will be conducted in close collaboration with other stakeholders for better synergy and preventing the overlap of efforts. As the SDCF unfolds and individual entity country programmes and projects are defined, new partnerships, alliances and platforms will be created.

These outcomes were identified in a consultative manner based on the development challenges identified in the CCA and their potential contribution to the strategic priorities. The outcomes were further informed by a filtering process as explained above. The UN comparative advantage, the potential for transformational effect and potential positive impact on groups left behind or at risk of being left behind, and alignment with national strategies were primary filters used. These outcomes are further linked to human rights treaty bodies recommendations (annex 4) and directly contribute to their compliance and implementation. Multiple recommendations contained in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) reports, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) reports and reports of the Special Rapporteurs, among others, are substantive programmatic interventions for the UN in North Macedonia.

2.4.1 Outcome 1: Inclusive prosperity



By 2025, the living standard of all people in North Macedonia is improved through equal access to decent work and productive employment generated by an inclusive and innovative business ecosystem.

Theory of change

If there is an enabling business environment, stronger backward linkages of domestic industry with FDI-led firms, availability of market-driven skills, investment in green and circular economy, suitable conditions for labour force participation by women and vulnerable groups, improved competitiveness and productivity of domestic industry, and creation of green and decent jobs

then the living standard in North Macedonia will improve and income inequality will decrease.

The UN in North Macedonia will work towards making growth more robust, sustainable and inclusive while at the same time creating employment.

Interventions will be anchored within the LNOB framework to reduce inequalities, including income inequality, and achieve a more equitable and sustainable growth.

This outcome aims to create new productive, full-time jobs that are resilient to any sustained or future shocks.

The UN in North Macedonia will contribute to promote economic and social development

People, particularly the vulnerable segments of society, will be equipped with skills and capacities to enjoy and have equal access to full, productive and freely chosen employment and work.

protecting the rights of women, children, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups, including the Roma population, and gender equality in the labour market, in line with the UPR recommendations.

Partnerships

Key Government partners in this area will lead the policy-making processes, give strategic direction and coordinate the work of development partners. They include DPM for Economic Affairs, DPM for anticorruption, sustainable development and human capital, Ministries of Labour and Social Policy, Finance, Education and Science, Economy, Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy; Information Society and Public Administration; Employment Service Agency, Agency for Promotion of Entrepreneurship, Fund for Innovation and Technology Development, Customs Administration, Agency for Real Estate Cadastre, Economic and Social Council, and the Institute of Economics. Partnership with the Parliament will also be enhanced.

The UN in North Macedonia will work with the stakeholders to build capacities to plan, implement and monitor gender responsive policies, programmes and financing that would improve women's and marginalized groups' labour force participation, reduce informality in the economy, generate demand-based knowledge and skills, through regular or vocational education, promote decent work in conformity with international labour standards, encourage entrepreneurship, promote resilient and circular economy, trade facilitation and smart connectivity, 'green jobs', innovations and digitalization, invest in climate-sensitive modernization of agriculture and improve productivity and competitiveness of domestic firms.

This will create legal and regulatory environment – including rule of law, FDI policy, labour policy, family friendly policies and fiscal policy – that is conducive for business and employment.

The civil society organizations' (CSO) representing vulnerable groups such as Roma, women's groups and ethnic communities, youth, rural population and people with disabilities, employers' association, trade unions and workers' associations, Macedonian Occupational Safety and Health Association, chambers of commerce, research institutes and think-tanks bring in local knowledge by virtue of their proximity to people and enjoy credibility. They are also important partners in promoting social accountability.

Partnership with the private sector can help in exploring business solutions to societal problems. COVID-19 is an opportunity to expand e-commerce and digitalisation which are not possible without the private sector partnership. Innovative modalities for partnering and implementation approaches – such as local employment partnerships with market system approach, social contracting, and pay-for-performance schemes – will be explored to achieve this outcome. Internal partnerships and joint project ideas will be proactively sought during the SDCF implementation to address the most important multi-sectoral challenges under this Outcome (e.g. innovative solutions to refugee employment).

Relevant national policies

- Innovation Strategy 2012-2020
- Competitiveness Strategy 2016-2020
- Strategy for Industrial Policy 2009-2020
- National SME Strategy 2018-2022
- Social Protection Development Programme 2011-2021
- National Strategy for Deinstitutionalization 2018-2027
- Roma Strategy 2017-2020
- National Employment Strategy 2016-2020
- Decent Work Country Programme 2019-2022

- Employment and Social Reform Programme 2022
- Strategy for Formalizing the Informal economy 2018 -2022
- National Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development 2014-2020
- National Youth Strategy 2016-2020
- National Strategy for Poverty Reduction and Social Exclusion 2010-2020
- Diaspora Strategy 2018-2023
- Resolution on Migration Policy 2015-2020
- National Trafficking against Human Beings Strategy 2015-2020
- National Strategy on Gender Equality (2013-2020)
- Strategy for regional development 2020-2029
- Program for sustainable local development and decentralization 2021-2026
- National Strategy on Equality and Non-Discrimination (2016–2020).

Contributing UN entities

FAO, ILO, UNDP, UN Women, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNOPS, UNECE, IOM, UNHCR, UN-Habitat

2.4.2 Outcome 2: Quality services for all



By 2025, people in North Macedonia have universal access to rights-based quality social services – healthcare, education, and necessary social and child protection - rooted in systems resilient to emergencies.

Investment in human capital is required because it plays an instrumental role in promoting growth. The UN will work with the relevant partners to support the Government in strengthening the policies and capacities, design and delivery of social services. People-centred participatory approach will be adopted as underlying principle in designing and delivery of the services.

Theory of change

If the health system is strengthened to provide accessible and affordable and quality health services, if it is resilient enough in response to epidemics / pandemics and other emergencies, if non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and risk factors are controlled, there is improved and equitable access to quality education with long-term learning outcomes, skills education is geared towards market needs, social protection is improved in coverage, efficiency and targeting and is fiscally sustainable, if population dynamics (migration, birth rates and ageing) are well-managed, and if these results are gender responsive and inclusive of the vulnerable groups leaving no one behind

then the outcome will be achieved

The UN in North Macedonia will promote health system as a contributor to economic growth and as an equitable and affordable service.

It will address emerging health priorities, including communicable and non-communicable diseases and their risk factors, immunization, sexual and reproductive health – family planning and maternal health, and universal access to health services and improve systems in place to cope with public health emergencies that may impact livelihoods, education, social inequalities and other areas of life.

Social protection, which prevents most vulnerable from falling into poverty and is an investment in the human capital, present and future, will be better designed and better targeted with improved coverage to make it more accessible to those in need.

In the area of child protection, UN will work on establishing comprehensive and mutually reinforcing services for parents, caregivers and the wider family to support for children's development of socio-emotional and intellectual foundations; and setting up a robust system of services to support family-like alternatives for children without parental care or at risk of separation or abandonment. Insecurities and vulnerabilities of the older persons will be addressed through targeted interventions.

Education system will ensure equitable access to quality education by all, both children and adults, and especially vulnerable women, girls and marginalised persons. Particular focus will be on pre-school education, which contributes to better developed social, emotional, cognitive and physical development needed to build a solid foundation for lifelong learning and wellbeing

Additionally, introduction of age-appropriate, innovative and culturally sensitive comprehensive sexuality education will contribute to embed gender equality, non-discrimination, and non-violent behaviour in adolescents' and young people's development. Standards in education will be improved to come up to EU levels. Skills and vocational education will be streamlined to align with market demands. The role of culture in developing and promoting social identity and cohesion will be strengthened.

UN will support the Government to fulfil the standards set in the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) and work towards strengthening the support and protection services for survivors of gender-based violence, violence against women and domestic violence, focusing both on general and specialist service providers.

In addition, it will address child marriages, both being most prominent harmful practices. In addition, the UPR recommendations on rights to health, education and social security will also be promoted.

Partnerships

UN will capitalise on its strong positioning and existing partnerships, which include Ministries of Labour and Social Policy, Health, Education and Science, Culture, Justice, Interior, President's Office, State Statistical Office, health, education and social protection systems, professional associations, wide network of CSOs representing vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities, people in poverty, Roma, most vulnerable of women, victims of violence, women/girls of ethnic communities, including Roma, children, youth, older persons, rural population, migrants and refugees, sex workers, substance users, people living with HIV, LGBTI persons, as well as academia and international partners.

UN will also explore further partnerships with private sector, media and CSOs of older persons, as well as further extend its partnership network in health (private clinics and labs) and in digitalisation and public service reform (Ministry of Information Society and Administration, Faculties of Computer Science, IT companies). Media partnership will offer visibility to the UN work and help advocate on key development issues. Partnership with social media groups will be tapped to reach out to the target groups.

In terms of partnership approaches, strengthening Government institutions' programming and implementation capacity will be supported, also in view of the country's EU accession path. Various incentive-centred financial mechanisms, such as pay-for-performance schemes, cash transfers for social services delivery as well as excise tax on harmful substances would be explored, while gender-responsive budgeting will be further supported.

Within the UN system, partnerships will be explored around topics such as health literacy, immunization, all forms of malnutrition (including both undernutrition and overweight/obesity), maternal/child health, sexual and reproductive health, youth-friendly services, child protection, strengthening services for migrants, refugees and stateless persons, gender equality and fight against any form of violence, with a special focus on violence against women.

Relevant national policies

- Education Strategy 2018-2025
- Law on Social Protection 2019
- Health Strategy 2020
- Resolution on Migration Policy 2015-2020
- National Strategy for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Illegal Migration 2015-2020
- Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy 2010-2020
- National Strategy on Gender Equality (2013–2020)
- National Strategy on Equality and Non-Discrimination (2016–2020)
- National Strategy for Deinstitutionalization (2018-2027)
- National Strategy on Prevention and Protection of Children against Violence (2020-2025)
- Mental Health Strategy (2018-2025)
- Program for Sustainable Local Development and Decentralization 2021-2026
- National Action Plan for the Implementation of Istanbul Convention 2018-2023
- National commitments for ICPD.

Contributing UN entities

WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNECE, IOM, ILO, UNODC, UNOPS, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNODC, UN Women, UN-Habitat

2.4.3 Outcome 3: Healthy environment



By 2025, people in North Macedonia benefit from ambitious climate action, sustainable management of natural resources and biodiversity, and resilience of communities to disasters through good environmental governance and protection.

Theory of change

If the country achieves EU-compliant greenhouse gas emissions reduction, implements climate-sensitive sector policies, creates public awareness about climate change and environmental issues, builds capacities for addressing multi-dimensional risks of climate change, epidemics and natural and man-made hazards, if communities are resilient to disasters through risk reduction, preparedness and response following a preventive approach, if the natural resources are managed in a sustainable manner, the biodiversity loss is reduced, if energy intensity is decreased energy efficiency is improved, and renewables are more utilized if there is regional cooperation in terms of information sharing and collective action, and there is sustainable production and consumption

then the people in North Macedonia, particularly the vulnerable and excluded groups, will benefit from these actions and the outcome will be achieved.

This outcome addresses sustainable and climate-resilient natural resource management (land/soil, water, biodiversity), air quality, clean energy, energy efficiency, waste management and community-based disaster risk reduction and preparedness in line with Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. The UN in North Macedonia will help the country meet its climate change challenges, both in terms of mitigation and adaptation.

It will create awareness about carbon footprints and support industries and the private sector (including SMEs) in adopting resource-efficient and cleaner technologies. It will mainstream climate and environment in the education system at various levels. Degradation and unsustainable practices in utilization of natural resources (land, water, soil), loss of biodiversity, unsustainable forest management and air pollution that are already threatening sustainable development will also be addressed, as will also be the health effects of climate change. National and local capacities for waste reduction and efficient waste management (chemical, water, municipal, hazardous, medical waste) will be strengthened. Innovative and gender-responsive solutions for green and sustainable cities, as well as improved access to clean energy, including for productive purposes, energy efficiency and decarbonization of the transport sector will be delivered under this outcome.

Since emissions are closely linked to resource use, the UN in North Macedonia will support 'green growth' as the future development pathway that promotes resource use efficiency and low-carbon development in energy, transport, infrastructure and waste management sectors.

As the tourism industry rebuilds after COVID-19, there is an opportunity to revive rural economy by promoting eco-friendly tourism that is lighter on the use of resources.

The UN in North Macedonia will assist the country with setting up systems in line with the Sendai Framework to manage disaster risks (prevention, preparedness and response) and make communities resilient to future disasters caused, among others, by extreme weather events like flooding, heat waves and droughts. The country has an opportunity to build back better that combines the Sendai Framework and sustainable development principles.

North Macedonia is a member of the Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative for South Eastern Europe (DPPI-SEE), based in Skopje that aims to address disaster risk reduction and preparedness measures at a sub-regional scale, facilitating cross-border cooperation. A solid engagement in the organization will contribute to a stronger focus on trans-boundary disasters and further strengthen relations among countries in the Western Balkans through regional cooperation, risk assessment and data sharing. The Government capacities, national mechanisms, and institutional frameworks will be strengthened to effectively access and deploy environmental and climate finance from existing mechanisms such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Global Environmental Facility (GEF). North Macedonia is a party of five Multilateral Environmental Agreement conventions: Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution; Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context; Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes; Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents and they implementation will be further supported. The nexus on governance-human rights- environment will be given due consideration and strengthened.

The outcome will contribute to the capacity building of the national authorities in gender-responsive environmental policy making, strengthening environmental governance and implementation capacity, including reporting against various multilateral environmental agreements, including EU's environment policies and an ambitious review of the Nationally Determined Contributions for Climate Change (NDC) under the Paris Agreement.

The role and capacity of local governments in environmental governance will be strengthened. There will be renewed focus on implementation of environmental policies and laws by testing and adopting innovative approaches. This outcome will also take up regional initiatives to manage trans-boundary water bodies.

Partnerships

The Government, as the policymaker and the custodian of the multi-lateral environmental agreements (MEAs) is a key partner, in particular the following entities: DPM for Economic Affairs, Ministries of Environment and Physical Planning, Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy, Education, and Health, Economy, Transport and Communication. Further partners include the Fund for Innovation and Technology Development, Food and Veterinary Agency, City of Skopje, Crisis Management Centre, Environmental Information Center, Institute for Public Health, Macedonian Ecological Society, and the Balkan Foundation for Sustainable Development. Partnership with the civil society will be further expanded for their role in demonstrating sustainable natural resource management on the ground, 'green technologies', promoting eco-tourism, resource-use efficiency, and local knowledge. The UN will further collaborate with the associations, academic institutions, private sector and international organisations. There is growing interest in private sector to align their strategies with the SDG agenda.

UN will also capitalize on its existing partnerships with the academia and expand partnerships with the private sector, international financial institutions (IFIs) and CSOs, especially in the subareas of air pollution, waste management, renewable energy and energy efficiency.

To address low public spending on environmental issues, UN will aim to leverage financing and enable national partners to obtain access to vertical or specialized funds (GEF, GCF, Joint SDG Fund, etc.), as well as seek opportunities for Government co-financing (at central or local levels) and blended finance. In support of the country's EU accession and growing EU focus on green and environment-friendly policies, partnerships will be further deepened with key international partners.

To accelerate achievement of this outcome, partnerships around multi-sectoral topics such as air pollution and renewables, energy efficiency, air pollution and health, air pollution and migration, low-carbon production and circular economy, and financial incentives to reduce pollution will be explored.

Relevant national policies

- Environment and Climate Change Strategy for Republic of North Macedonia (2014-2020)
- Strategy for Sustainable Development of Forestry in North Macedonia (2006)
- National Strategy for Consolidation of Agriculture Land for the period 2012-2020
- National Strategy for Nature Protection for the period 2017-2027
- National Action Plan to Combat Desertification in the Republic of North Macedonia (pending official adoption)
- Strategy for the improvement of energy efficiency in the Republic of North Macedonia by 2020
- National Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development 2014-2020
- Strategy for the use of renewable energy sources in the Republic of North Macedonia by 2020
- National Biodiversity Strategy with Action Plan 2018-2023
- Resolution on Migration Policy 2015-2020
- National Waste Management Strategy 2008-2020
- National Water Management Strategy 2012-2042
- Strategy for Energy Development of the Republic of North Macedonia until 2040
- National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC)
- National Preparedness and Response Plan of the Health System in North Macedonia
- the National Strategy for Development of Culture 2018-2022

Contributing UN entities

FAO, UNDP, UNEP, UNECE, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNIDO, WHO, UNDRR, UNFPA, UN Women, IOM, UNOPS, UN-Habitat

2.4.4 Outcome 4: Good Governance



By 2025, people in North Macedonia benefit from improved rule of law; evidence-based, anticipatory and gender-sensitive policies; greater social cohesion; and effective service delivery by transparent, accountable and responsive institutions.

Theory of change

If the judicial system is reformed to make it more independent and accessible, public administration is more non-partisan and merit-based, decision-making is transparent, participatory and evidence-based, accountability of governance institutions to people is strengthened at all levels, implementation mechanisms for human rights obligations improved, if women's rights are protected and promoted, local governments are empowered with capacity and resources, service delivery is people-centred, statistical systems are improved to generate, analyse and utilize disaggregated data, social cohesion and trust-building are strengthened, anti-corruption policies and measures are strictly implemented, if there is greater civic engagement and freedom for media and civil society and anticipatory governance capabilities are developed

then there will also be improvements in other outcomes and the vision of a prosperous, inclusive and resilient North Macedonia will be achieved.

The UN in North Macedonia will work towards the full realization of human rights for all, in line with the recommendations of the human rights treaty bodies and in harmony with EU acquis and with focus on women, children, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, ethnic minorities, LGBTI and other vulnerable groups. Furthermore, UN will promote gender parity, especially in sectors where women are underrepresented; rule of law and access to justice, by strengthening the justice system, making judicial processes more transparent, and empowering the marginalized people to demand it, including through legal awareness and free legal aid. UN will target harmful practices that explicitly violate human rights, such as gender-based violence and child marriage. It will also help the Government meet its international human rights obligations, including reporting, monitoring and ensuring that these commitments are followed up by action and establishment of institutional mechanisms. UN will support the Government in improving justice for children legislation and enhancing institutional capacities for its implementation.

Focus will be given to development of mechanisms for restorative justice. Legal instruments specific to both firearms trafficking and trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants will be enhanced and improved controls at the air border will be ensured through establishment of an inter-agency body.

Public administration reforms will be supported to ensure merit-based, non-partisan, efficient, accountable and transparent delivery of services, including with the help of innovations and digitalization.

UN will contribute to a more balanced socio-economic local and regional development and to the implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement, EU accession-related and other Government reforms; and capacity building of local governance institutions, regional councils and other regional entities to plan, execute and monitor public services in an efficient and equitable manner, in line with the LNOB approach.

The capacity of national authorities will be enhanced, and evidence-based population policies will be designed to astutely manage demographic dynamics including (out)migration, low fertility and ageing. Anti-corruption measures will be backed through support for legal framework and strengthened law enforcement, and supplemented by improved access to information, digitalization of services and civic action (increased efficiency of administration).

The UN in North Macedonia will contribute to a more efficient and transparent fiscal governance to create fiscal space for delivery of quality, accessible and gender-responsive services and more targeted financing for 2030 Agenda implementation.

The UN in North Macedonia will support national authorities in generating basic, reliable and disaggregated data on a regular basis to promote evidence-based decision-making, long-term strategic visioning and SDG monitoring and reporting; it will support census as a key milestone for ensuring reliable data; and processes to develop new national strategic planning documents.

Anticipatory governance to enhance the strategic planning capacity of the institutions will be promoted and assistance provided to communities in responding to shocks and stresses will be addressed.

In line with the Western Balkans Action Plan,¹¹ SDCF will contribute to social cohesion and trust building in the country by engaging communities divided along ethnic and religious lines, focusing on engaging women (in line with UN Security Council resolution 1325) and youth.

Interventions that promote gender equality, civic engagement of youth, trust building, social dialogue, peace building, equal treatment of all social groups by law, prevention of crimes such as violence and hate speech, and equal opportunities for all to realize their human rights and full potential will be implemented. Support to preventing violence against women and children, and domestic violence, will be provided.

Recognizing that people are not passive recipients of services but agents of change, the UN interventions will support societal transformation for more active and responsible individual and community approaches to sustainable and inclusive development.

All programmes will address social norms, attitudes and beliefs that create barriers to change. Regional interventions that promote reconciliation, trust and collaboration across borders will be supported. Support to border law enforcement will be provided.

The human rights treaty bodies have made extensive recommendations on the rights of specific vulnerable groups – Roma, refugees, migrants, stateless and persons with disabilities – and urged the Government to implement these recommendations.

The Government has taken steps to enact a new law on prevention of and protection against discrimination. It has also established a mechanism to monitor the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). UN in North Macedonia will assist the authorities in implementation of these recommendations.

Partnerships

The Government and constitutional bodies will play the key role. UN will partner with key ministries, departments and agencies, and support the Government in harmonisation of legislation with international norms and standards, with carrying out key governance and judicial reforms, public administration reform, digitalization of public services, public finance, anti-corruption and data. Key partners include the Parliament, Vice Prime Minister on anticorruption, Sustainable Development and Human Capital, Ministries of Interior, Justice, Information Society and Administration, Finance, Local Self Government, Labour and Social Policy and Foreign Affairs, Secretariat for European Affairs, the National Bank, Public Revenue Office, Anti-Corruption Commission, municipalities, judiciary, Office of the Ombudsman and the State Statistical Office.

The partnership with civil society, including media, professional associations and chambers, international and regional organizations in the Western Balkans, international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) active in the political sphere, think-tanks, and non-traditional partners such as CSO coalitions, influencers, volunteers and religious leaders in the areas of regional and local governance, human rights, gender equality, rule of law, and migration as well as in promoting accountability and transparency will be crucial to achieve this outcome.

Partnership with the private sector will be expanded for their crucial role in EU accession and influencing policy making. As a major source of employment and innovations, including digitalisation, they can play a role in promoting transparency and improving service delivery by the public authorities.

Opportunities for deepening partnerships and alignment related to EU accession will be proactively sought out, in view of the expected focus on governance aspects (Chapters 23 and 24) at the opening of EU accession negotiations. To accelerate achievement of this outcome, internal partnerships around migration, SDG financing, anti-violence, advancement of women in decision making, Roma and youth rights through joint projects will be explored.

Relevant national policies

- Judicial Sector Reform Strategy (2017-2022);
- Public Administration Reform Strategy (2018-2022);
- Public Financial Management Reform Programme (2018-2021);
- Open data Strategy (2018–2020);
- Resolution on Migration Policy 2015-2020;
- National Strategy on Development of the Concept of One Society for All and Interculturalism 2020-2022;
- Strategy for Regional Development 2020-2029;
- National Strategy on Equality and Non-Discrimination (2016–2020);
- Programme for Sustainable Local Development and Decentralization (2021-2026);
- Draft Law on Census, Law on Gender -Based Violence, National Strategy on Gender Equality (2013–2020);
- National Strategy on Equality and Non-Discrimination (2016–2020);
- National Strategy on Equality and Non-Discrimination (2016–2020);
- National Action Plan for implementation of Istanbul Convention;
- National Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolution 1325;
- National Strategy for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Illegal Migration 2015-2020;
- Police Development Strategy 2016-2020 and the National Commitments on ICPD.

Contributing UN entities

UNDP, UNODC, IOM, UNHCR, UN Women, UN-OHCHR, UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO, UNECE, UNOPS, UN-Habitat

¹¹ UN system-wide commitment to strengthen its support for trust-building and dialogue in the region, as agreed by UN leadership in 2019

2.5 Synergies between SDCF outcomes & economic transformation

2020 CCA has identified key challenges in the country that are a result of multiple, interlinked and complex issues. Hence, all SDCF outcomes are interlinked and reinforce each other. By working together to generate synergies between outcomes, the UN in North Macedonia will work towards economic transformation of the country based on stronger, more equal and greener growth, accelerating the overall progress towards the Agenda 2030. This will set ground to promote and assist with the formulation of a longer-term national development strategy.

Specifically, climate change, depletion of natural resources and biodiversity (Outcome 3) impose limit on growth and employment (Outcome 1) as does the air quality and air pollution by affecting health (Outcome 2) and productivity. Lower growth, caused by any of the above factors (Outcome 3) will not only affect employment and incomes, but also shrink fiscal space for the Government to provide social services (health, education and social protection) and have adverse impact on Outcome 2.

Outcome 4 (Governance) cuts across others: in the absence of cross-sectoral perspective, evidence-based decision-making and policy coherence, other outcomes will be jeopardised. Rule of law and transparent public administration will not only create conditions for business and employment to flourish (outcome 1) but will also promote delivery of services and LNOB (Outcome 2).

Investment in quality education with equal access especially by women (Outcome 2) will have beneficial impact on women's labour force participation and their employment prospects (Outcome 1). It will also contribute to better reproductive health outcomes and status in the family and community. Improved education of the Roma women and girls will particularly pay high returns. Investment in skills building will potentially reduce the emigration and loss of workforce, while investments in innovation will also enable better backward linkages between the FDI-led firms and domestic firms (Outcome 1).

A disaster or a pandemic (Outcome 3) can divert resources from development to emergency response and thus cause a setback, as recent COVID-19 outbreak shows. This can also be an opportunity to build back better, promote resilience and innovate. This can encourage digitalization in service delivery and potentially reduce corruption and cost of delivery (Outcome 4). This can also be used to bridge the digital divide and improve service delivery for the vulnerable groups while at the same time creating new types of jobs including 'green jobs' that would contribute to Outcomes 1 and 3.

The country's international commitments and human rights processes under UPR, CEDAW and CRPD, among others, will directly contribute to gender equality and the inclusion of vulnerable groups, and impact all other outcomes. LNOB, human rights-based approach and gender equality, cut across all outcomes and promote synergy. Adherence to the principles of non-discriminatory application of laws (Outcome 4) will promote social cohesion and trust, which is a goal and an instrument for sustainable growth. This will promote inclusion of vulnerable groups, especially minorities and refugees, and promote realisation of all other outcomes.

Achievement of outcomes can be accelerated with enhanced regional cooperation in the areas of disaster risk reduction, trade and connectivity, population movements, water, energy, climate change, peace and security, and youth exchange, among others. SDCF will leverage the country's existing collaboration across the Western Balkans and its active membership in several regional structures, to catalyse development solutions.

2.6 Sustainability



The UN in North Macedonia will take steps to ensure sustainability of results beyond the SDCF duration, for which a close alignment with national development policies and the EU accession plan will be key. EU accession is the top national priority, which will drive the formulation of policies and reforms, and will also contribute to the achievement of SDGs.



Capacity building and strengthening national institutions at central, regional and local levels, preceded by a detailed capacity assessment, is key to sustainability of results and UN involvement in North Macedonia. In line with this, there will be less focus on direct delivery, and more on policy support and systemic changes. The improved governance outcomes in terms of policy coherence and inter-sectoral coordination will also ensure synergy in and sustainability of results.



To ensure compliance with international human rights standards and norms and to meet its human rights obligations, the country will have to set up and institutionalise different mechanisms or improve the functioning of the existing ones. SDCF strong focus on the rights of vulnerable groups and LNOB will contribute to the sustainability of results beyond SDCF duration.

2.7 UN comparative advantages and UNCT configuration

The UN in North Macedonia or UN Country Team (UNCT) is comprised of 14 agencies with physical presence in the country and 4 entities that support SDCF implementation remotely.¹² UN has been a trusted and long-standing partner of the Government, contributing to the realisation of national priorities. It leverages knowledge, partnerships and resources, and is the custodian of values. It is a facilitator and convener of multi-stakeholder engagement; knowledge broker; provider of regional and global best practice and a partner that offers catalytic solutions. The UN in North Macedonia is quick to respond to national needs, including to emergencies, and a credible and non-partisan partner of the Government and other stakeholders.

A perception survey of UN in North Macedonia in 2020 among development partners pointed to UN's comparative advantage in the areas of human rights, governance, rule of law, gender equality, climate action, refugees and migration, health and education. Partners recommended strengthening of UN's communications and outreach, enhancement of partnerships with local organizations and of delivering as one UN. In addition, UN was also recommended to engage in substantive collaboration that goes beyond projects, such as being a convener and supporter of high-level policy dialogue on SDGs, as well as strengthening of SDG-related data and statistics.

UN in North Macedonia will use its comparative advantages to convene multi-stakeholder development discourse on key and emerging challenges; to share global and regional best practices with the Government and other national partners; to provide advice on policies and legislation to promote their compliance with international norms and standards; to leverage vast network of partners for sustainable development; and to mainstream LNOB principle in the Government policies and programmes.

The achievement of SDCF outcomes is a combined effort of UN and other partners. UN in North Macedonia works closely with national and local governments, national and international civil society, regional and international institutions, private sector, academia, media and other stakeholders. To avoid overlaps and ensure efficiency, UN in North Macedonia will continue to leverage its donor coordination role and align its programmes with other development stakeholders.

The capacity assessment and UN configuration in support of the SDCF delivery was undertaken and, is further described in the Joint Concept Paper. UNCT in North Macedonia in its current form has the necessary technical, functional and operational expertise and capacity to deliver on the SDCF commitments. UNCT members will provide expertise in their areas of mandate and support the Government through its own human and financial resources and by mobilizing other actors to achieve the desired transformational change. UNCT will also ensure synergies with other partners avoiding duplication and receive support from the UN Sustainable Development Group (UN-SDG) as well as from individual entities' regional and global offices. UN entities will work with the available financial resources brought forward from the previous cycle and will mobilize additional resources; they will seek efficiencies by undertaking joint programmes and making use of joint operations. The UNCT configuration will be regularly monitored.

The way UNCT position evolves towards 2030 will be strongly influenced by the global and regional developments in the aftermath of COVID-19 and the country's EU accession. North Macedonia is a small economy and given its demographic transition, the country will need to become or remain an integral part of regional frameworks and initiatives, in addition to EU, to realise its full growth and development potential. UNCT in North Macedonia organised its visioning exercise shortly after the outbreak of COVID-19 to agree on its role with assisting the country to move towards implementing the 2030 Agenda and it will reassess it as the SDCF implementation progresses.

¹² The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund are part of the UN System and members of the UNCT, but not SDCF signatories.



3

COOPERATION FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

3.1 Implementation strategy and strategic partnerships

1 Multi-stakeholder engagement

The UN in North Macedonia has excellent partnerships with the Government, IFIs, bilateral development partners, private sector, civil society and media. It will continue to engage these and facilitate convergence of efforts around Agenda 2030 by offering a neutral and evidence-based platform for multi-stakeholder development discourse around national development objectives.

The National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD) will be the key national platform for enhanced strategic partnership. Further, the UN will actively participate in the existing assistance coordination mechanisms – such as the Sector Working Groups – to align the work of the UN with all development partners.

UN in North Macedonia will further strengthen partnership with IFIs and EU. Opportunities for joint projects and co-financing with IFIs will be explored, to leverage financing and ensure greater effectiveness. To support and accelerate the country's EU accession path, the UN will ensure close cooperation with the EU Delegation and EU member states representations in the country to seek greater alignment and explore opportunities for more joint initiatives.

Partnership with civil society will be deepened and expanded to non-traditional partners, such as issue-based civil society coalitions, civic movements, influencers, volunteers and religious groups. Centrality of LNOB will guide expanded partnerships with groups that have not been sufficiently engaged before, such as CSOs of elderly.

UN engagement with CSOs will be further enhanced by ensuring their participation in design, governance and implementation of UN interventions. The UN will work to build and strengthen capacities of Macedonian civil society and to expand civic space through dialogue and jointly advocacy.

UN in North Macedonia will also further engage with the private sector to expand its role in delivering the SDG agenda, leveraging particularly its technical expertise and financial resources. Chambers of commerce, companies with specific expertise relevant to the UN activities and private sector organisations with corporate social responsibility policies will be the first choice to engage on issues of common interest, including human rights, gender equality, labour rights, vocational education, climate action, environmental protection, sustainable production and human capital development. Private sector investment in social services and other areas accelerating SDGs will be explored.

2 Joint annual workplans

The Joint Annual Workplans (JWP) are the mechanisms to operationalize the SDCF and are derived from its outcomes and outputs. They form the basis of ongoing performance review and the SDCF Annual Country Results Report. The JWP is prepared on behalf of the UNCT by its subgroups, based on the UN entities' SDCF commitments. The outputs need to be reflected in JWPs as these contain contributions of all UN entities for which they have direct responsibility. The JWP will result from the joint UNCT planning discussion and outline interventions and programmes for the coming year.

JWPs are prepared annually and contain planned interventions and resources by the UN to achieve the outputs and, consequently, contribute to the SDCF outcomes. A JWP is a critical instrument for effective implementation of the SDCF as it can prevent duplication, fragmented approach and ensure UN-wide coherence in collective country programming. JWPs do not replace UN entities' own workplans but are their mirror images with UN entities picking outcomes, outputs, and respective indicators and activities from the JWP. Entities are not required to prepare separate workplans and a JWP can replace an entity-specific work plan.

JWPs undergo an annual review to gauge progress made and suggest course corrections, if any. The JWPs need to align with the SDG framework and national development priorities and uphold the required social and environmental

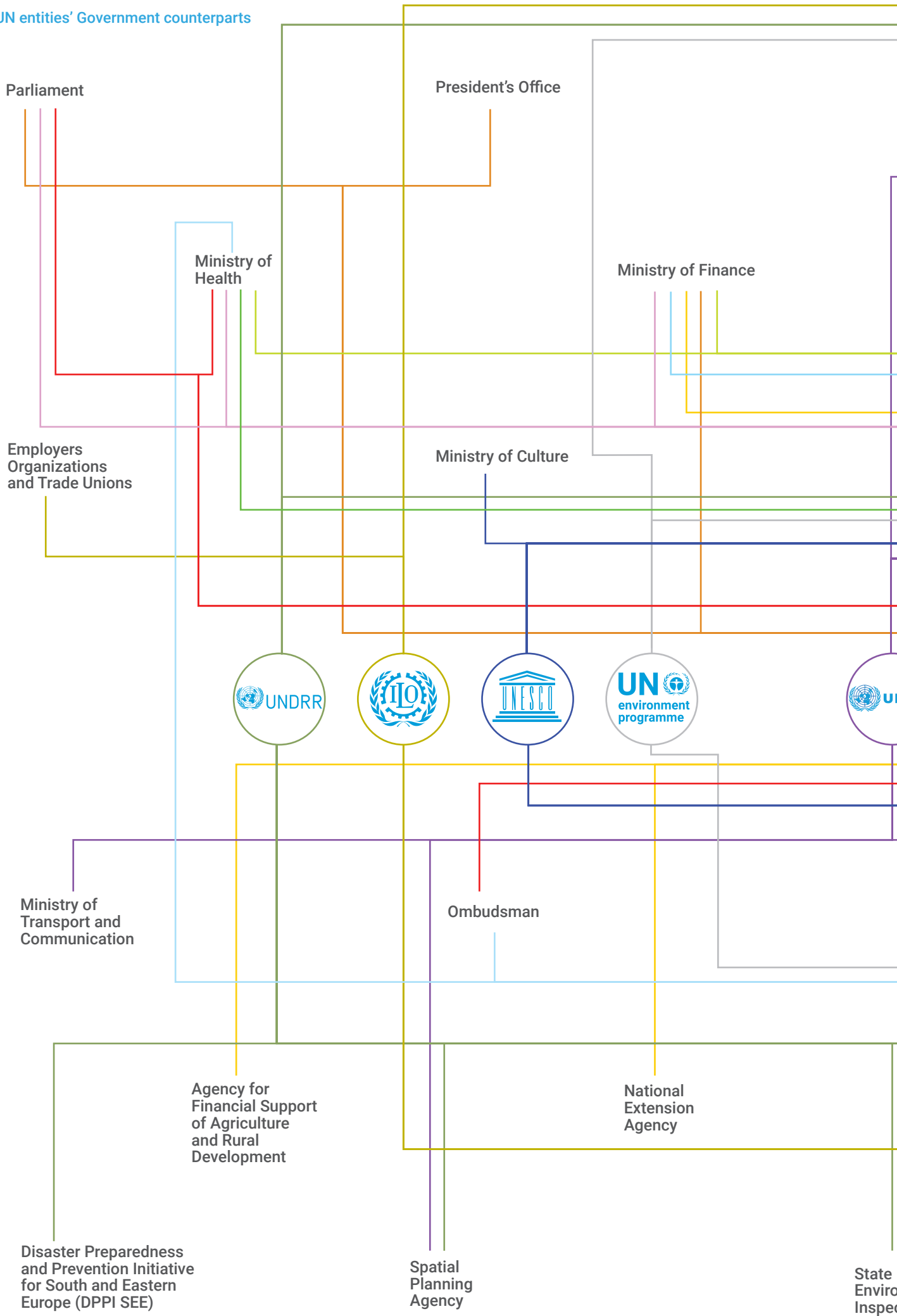
standards. JWPs are digitised in UN INFO, which will provide information on the UN activities to the broader public to enhance transparency and accountability. UNCT and its subgroups will record, report against and update JWPs directly in UN INFO.

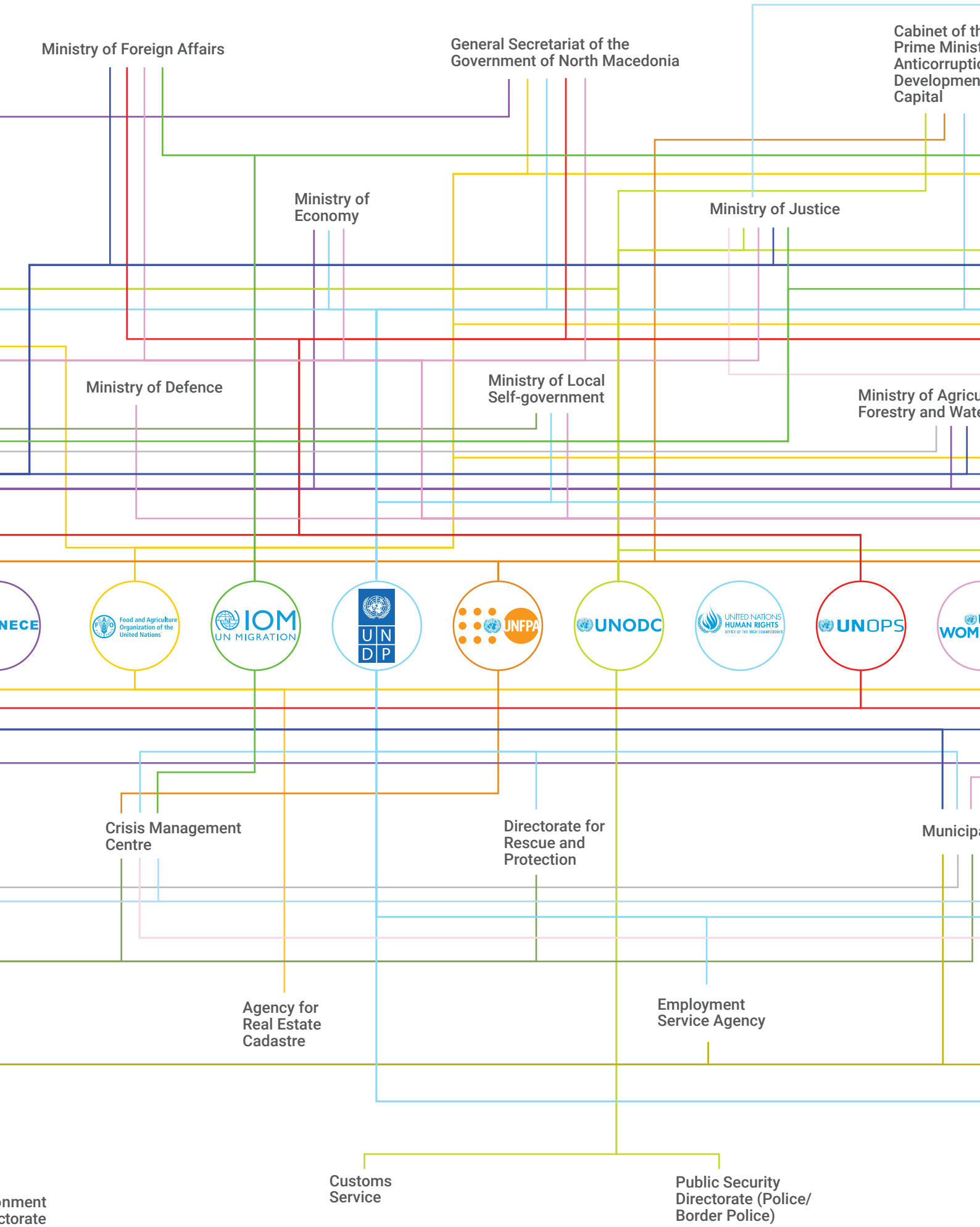
The outputs in the JWP reflect the aggregate of sub-outputs or activities, which are individual entity's or joint project contributions to the output for which an entity is accountable. Outputs can either be unique to one UN entity or more UN entities can contribute to it.

3 Governance and coordination

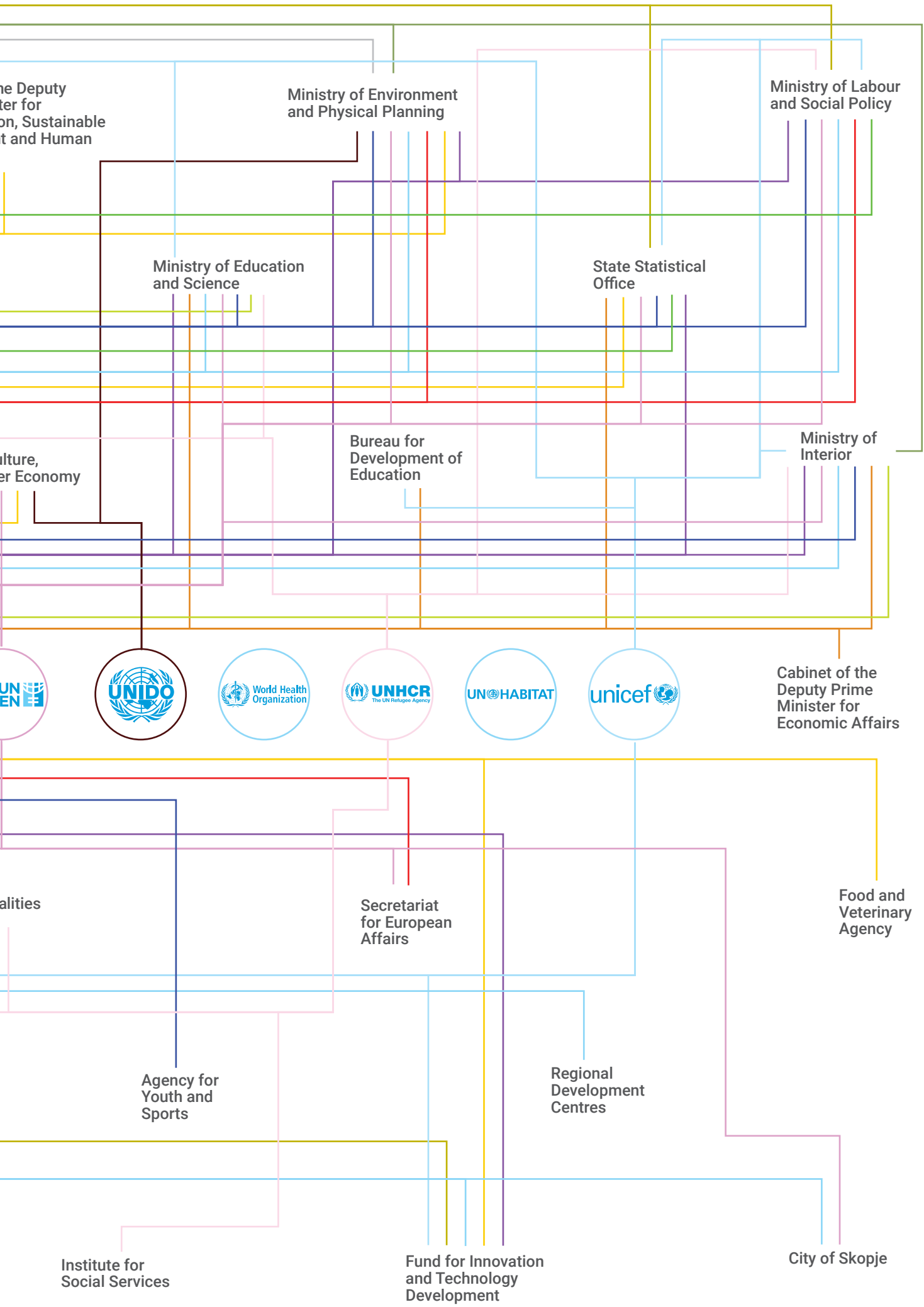
SDCF is executed under the overall coordination of the UN in North Macedonia – represented by the UN Resident Coordinator (RC) – and the Government of North Macedonia – represented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). Individual UN entities work in coordination with their respective government counterparts.

Visual 3: UN entities' Government counterparts





Environment Directorate



3.2 Joint Government-UN Steering Committee

The Joint Government-UN Steering Committee (JSC) is the highest SDCF governing body that provides strategic direction and oversight, and monitors and reviews the overall performance and progress. The JSC is co-chaired by the UN RC, on behalf of the UN, and MFA, on behalf of the Government.

The JSC is composed of ten members: UN RC and four other UNCT members that may be appointed on a rotational basis; and MFA and four other Government representatives that may also be appointed on a rotational basis.

Upon agreement of co-chairs, individual JSC meetings can include other key development partners, such as the IFIs, bilateral development partners and donors, representatives of the private sector, civil society, youth and other groups.

JSC meets at least once a year to take stock of the SDCF progress based on the JWP and progress reports prepared by the UNCT. The RC presents the SDCF Annual Country Results Report, including the assessment of the current country context, achievements, challenges, opportunities, learning and the required SDCF adaptations.

3.3 National coordination mechanisms

UN in North Macedonia partakes on the existing national coordination mechanisms¹³ with



Government



donors



**international
organizations**



civil society



**other
stakeholders**

UN contributes to the work of the NCSO as the primary national body to guide implementation and monitoring of SDGs by providing technical support. This may include but is not limited to preparing SDG progress reports, Voluntary National Review, setting up national indicators and targets, collecting and disseminating disaggregated SDG data, mainstreaming SDGs in sector planning and policies and advocating on the SDG agenda.

3.4 Internal UN System coordination

UNCT is the main UN mechanism in country for inter-agency coordination and decision-making. It is led by the RC and composed of the representatives of UN entities carrying out operational activities for development in North Macedonia, irrespective of their physical presence in the country.¹⁴

The entities represented in the UNCT have two interrelated sets of accountabilities as defined by the Management and Accountability Framework (MAF) of the UN Development and RC System: to the RC for results as defined in the SDCF and/or other UNCT agreements; and to their respective entities on their mandates.

UNCT takes regular stock of SDCF progress and provides strategic guidance to its subsidiary bodies, thematic and programme support groups; and determines the best mechanism to ensure the strategic coherence across the expected SDCF outcomes.

A subsidiary UNCT body – comprised of senior programme staff – may be tasked to coordinate and monitor the achievement of SDCF results and to advise UNCT on opportunities and challenges in the evolving local and regional environment.

UNCT is responsible for and may delegate the following programmatic functions related to SDCF to its subsidiary bodies



➤ **joint analysis and data collection, including annual CCA update**



➤ **annual planning, monitoring and reporting**



➤ **cross-agency coordination**



➤ **identification of joint initiatives, including potential joint programmes**



➤ **identification of new sources of SDCF funding and financing for SDG achievement in North Macedonia**

¹³ For example, but not limited to, the Sector Working Groups – established as technical national programming and coordination mechanisms for EU Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) and overall donor coordination mechanism – and other relevant fora.

¹⁴ UN entities with physical presence in North Macedonia: FAO, ILO, IOM, OHCHR, UNICEF, UNEP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNODC, UNOPS, UN Women and WHO. UN entities with operational activities for development in North Macedonia without physical presence: UNECE, UNESCO, UNIDO, and UNDRR. UNCT North Macedonia membership includes the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), although not signatories of the SDCF.

UNCT may create further sub-groups dedicated to individual SDCF results, monitoring, ensuring technical coordination, coherence, relevance and effectiveness of activities related to the achievement of outcomes; and to ensure synergies across outcomes. They may include participation by the Government, civil society and other stakeholders; and should, to the extent possible, coordinate with the existing national thematic coordination mechanisms.

SDCF sub-groups plan, collect data, record progress, challenges, opportunities and new learning; and provide feedback on SDCF implementation. By constant monitoring of SDCF results through its subsidiary bodies and sub-groups and upon their advice, UNCT recommends course corrections to the SDCF JWPs through the Joint Steering Committee.

UNCT may also assign the SDCF-related tasks to the already existing thematic groups for the purpose of mainstreaming cross-cutting and guiding principles across SDCF and individual outcome areas. These groups may discuss programmatic issues and make recommendations to UNCT.

UNCT delivery of SDCF is also supported by



- › **UN Communications Group (UNCG)**, responsible for communicating UN results and advocating for development change.



- › **UN Operations Management Team (OMT)**, composed of UN entities' operations focal points, provides support and advice to the UNCT on common business operations and measures to improve efficiency in delivery on UN programmes and activities in the country by harmonizing business operations. Measures include, but are not limited to common back office services, as much as possible, to undertake common procurement, recruitment, logistics, ICT and other services.

3.5 Implementation modalities

SDCF implementation modalities include:



Part of the UN system entities' support may be provided to NGOs and CSOs as agreed within the framework of individual workplans and project documents.

Additional support may include access to UN organization-managed global information systems, the network of the UN System entities' country offices and specialized information systems, including rosters of consultants and providers of development services, and access to support provided by the network of UN specialized agencies, funds, programmes and other UN entities.

Subject to annual reviews and progress in the implementation of the programme, the UN System entities' funds are distributed by calendar year and in accordance with the 2021-2025 SDCF. These budgets will be reviewed and further detailed in the workplans and project documents.

By mutual consent between the Government and the UN System entities, funds not earmarked by donors for specific activities may be reallocated to other programmatically equally relevant activities.



4

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

4.1 SDCF monitoring, evaluation and learning plan

UN and the Government agree on an SDCF monitoring, evaluation and learning plan (SDCF MEL Plan) that includes baseline data, indicators and targets, data collection needs and means of verification.

The SDCF MEL Plan will be developed following the signature of the document and approved by the JSC at its first meeting. The SDCF MEL Plan is an overall responsibility of the UNCT, but may be delegated to its subsidiary bodies and sub-groups that support with the regular monitoring of results; coordinating and sharing of entity-specific data collection; participating in joint field visits; undertakes analysis and capacity development activities; monitor risks and assumptions; reflect learning to inform decisions and course corrections due to evolving country context; and support scheduled SDCF reviews and reporting. UN entities' monitoring and evaluation plans derive from and are synchronised with the SDCF MEL Plan.

National SDG indicators supplemented by EU-SDG indicators form the basis for establishing SDCF outcome and output indicators. Global indicators are also used in areas where there are no relevant national indicators determined. As the SDG nationalisation process progresses, SDCF indicators will be adjusted to ensure synchronization.

Data to monitor and assess SDCF performance is collected from multiple sources¹⁵ and may include innovative means to collect real-time and updated data, as necessary. Monitoring is regular and continuous to track real-time progress, in consultation with the Government and other stakeholders. UN will work with the relevant national partners to set targets for the indicators that are currently lacking. While there are no significant data gaps for the outcome indicators, disaggregation of collected data can further be improved. Where possible and viable, UN will support collection and analysis of data for the population left behind to better understand the results of the focused UN work.

Key elements of SDCF monitoring

- › Annual performance review, resulting in the SDCF Annual Country Results Report submitted to the JSC by the UN RC.
- › Quarterly performance reviews led by the delegated programmatic body and applying foresight methodologies.
- › UN entity-specific monitoring and evaluation activities in relation to their sub-outputs and resources recorded directly through UN INFO as the official UN monitoring and information platform.
- › Joint monitoring of UN joint programmes and projects, including through field visits.

4.1.1 Risks and opportunities

Key risks include:

- › Building consensus on key development issues. This is a moderate likelihood and moderate-impact risk that can potentially change national priorities and that would have a direct impact on SDCF.
- › External shocks such as pandemics, disasters and economic shocks. This is a high likelihood and impact risk that would have a direct impact on SDCF.
- › Limited availability of donor funding due to North Macedonia's upper middle-income status or changes in donor priorities. While this can be seen as a positive development for the country, this is a high likelihood and moderate impact risk for the SDCF.
- › Limited national absorption capacity, frequent staff turnover and lack of institutional memory can affect the ownership, continuity and hamper the effective implementation of programmes;
- › Risk of unintentional social or environmental harm. This is a high impact but limited likelihood risk as UN programme staff is well acquainted with the 'do no harm' principle and social and environmental standards.

¹⁵ Including, but not limited to: State Statistical Office, VNR, national reports to human rights mechanisms (treaty bodies, UPR, updates on the recommendations of the Special Procedures) and concluding observations of those mechanism bodies, reports of multiple surveys and other UN System collected data, and other global reports and indices.

These risks are mitigated by:

- › developing a risk management system;
- › aligning SDCF with national development priorities and EU accession process;
- › encouraging cost-sharing with the Government;
- › stronger partnerships and coordination with development stakeholders;
- › pursuing alternative financing and funding options;
- › flexible and agile UN entities structure;
- › regular monitoring and revision of SDCF results matrix to reflect changes in national priorities;
- › applying the “do no harm” principle and compliance with social and environmental standards.

Key opportunities include:

- › integrating SDG agenda with the EU accession process;
- › jointly strengthening SDG-linked data disaggregation;
- › advocacy for and delivery of joint programmes;
- › expanded innovative partnerships, including with private sector, for achieving SDGs;
- › post-COVID-19 opportunity to build back better, innovate and digitalise services.

4.1.2 SDCF review and reporting

JSC undertakes the annual review of SDCF and compares progress against planned results by reviewing and adopting the SDCF Annual Country Results Report. During the review, JSC may also recommend CCA revision and SDCF course corrections through the update of JWPs. SDCF changes require the approval of the JSC.

The SDCF Annual Country Results Report highlights any challenges in the implementation of the SDCF; it describes the delivered outputs for which UN System is directly responsible and the outcomes that the UN System has contributed to. The reported results relate to SDG targets and national priorities. The Report is part of the Government data system and feeds into the Government-led sector thematic reports and VNR.

4.1.3 SDCF evaluation

An independent terminal evaluation of the SDCF, which is the main instrument that holds the UN System accountable to donors, the Government and the people of North Macedonia, will be carried out in the penultimate year of the SDCF cycle. SDCF evaluation is informed by UN entities’ evaluations of their own programmes and joint programmes; it should link to, mutually reinforce and not duplicate prior evaluations. A mid-term evaluation is optional and will be subject to joint decision with the Government.

The evaluation will be guided by the norms and standards of the UN Evaluation Group; it will be carried out with full engagement of the Government and other stakeholders. It will assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of SDCF; partnerships and cross-cutting themes; and, to the extent possible, SDCF impact.

The evaluation will be participatory and will gauge the influence of SDCF on the lives of the people, especially the vulnerable groups, who will be interviewed during the evaluation process. The evaluation will assess the implementation and application of the LNOB principle and how the vulnerable groups benefited from SDCF programmes.

Annex 1 Results framework

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

Sustained and inclusive economic and social development

National development priorities¹⁶

Per the new Programme, in the period 2020-2024, the Government will focus on implementation of the following strategic priorities: EU membership, good neighbourly and interethnic relations, social cohesion, addressing the global COVID-19 pandemic; accelerated economic growth, sustainable development, modern education, efficient good governance and strong institutions. SDCF Strategic priority 1 directly contributes to the following Government strategic priorities:

- Economic transformation (MK Restart), accelerated growth and higher living standard
- COVID-19 is not only a health challenge
- Care for all

Reform Package No 2¹⁷

Economy (a) Invest in workforce development, job readiness, and labour market information systems to support job intermediation, (b) Streamline support programs for access of firms to finance, (c) Close infrastructure gaps in key transport corridors and rebalance spending to invest in road and railway maintenance and in road safety, (d) Reduce restrictions on part-time, temporary, and seasonal work

EU acquis chapters

11. Agriculture and rural development; 19. Social policy and employment; 20. Entrepreneurship and industrial policy; 21. Trans-European networks; 25. Science and research; 26. Education and culture

Reform Package No 3

Human Capital (a) Put in place a broad-based strategy to strengthen the quality and relevance of...tertiary education, (b) ...promote behaviour changes to achieve gender parity in employment

EU acquis chapters

26. Education and culture, 19. Social policy and employment.

SDGs and SDG targets

Goal 1: 1.2 | Goal 2: 2.2, 2.4 | Goal 3: 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.a, 3.b | Goal 4: 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5 | Goal 5: 5.1, 5.3, 5.5, 5.6, 5.b | Goal 6: 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.3 | Goal 8: 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.5, 8.6, 8.7, 8.8, 8.10 | Goal 9: 9.1, 9.2, 9.5, 9.b, 9.c | Goal 10: 10.1, 10.2, 10.5 | Goal 11: 11.1, 11.3

SDGs accelerators

- Investing in creating supportive business environment for inclusive 'green' growth
- Investing in modernization of agriculture and resilient food systems
- Investing in innovations, inventions and R&D and digitalization of business processes and services
- Increasing women's activation and labour force participation including closure of the gender-pay gap
- Prioritizing investments to increase youth activation and labour force participation of young women
- Improving management of culture and cultural heritage as driver of life in urban areas and sustainable tourism development
- Investing in quality, inclusive and sustainable health and education systems
- Investing in protection services including social protection and community-based services
- Greater cross-sector coordination to improve access to basic social services
- Investing in inclusive and sustainable local and regional development

¹⁶ Government Programme 2020-2024

¹⁷ Government of the Republic of North Macedonia and UNDP, The European Pathway of the Republic of North Macedonia: Achieving faster, more inclusive and sustainable growth; North Macedonia 2035: Policy, institutional, and economic convergence with the EU (2019).



Results	Performance indicators (disaggregated)	Baseline (year)	Target (2025)	Source/MoV	Partners
Outcome 1 By 2025, the living standard of all people in North Macedonia is improved through equal access to decent work and productive employment generated by inclusive and innovative business ecosystem	1_10: Employment rate (20-64, %) (a) all (b) female (c) male (d) youth (15-29) (e) youth female (f) youth male <i>SDG indicator: EU SDG 08_30</i> <i>PAF indicator¹⁸: EESP 8.3, EESP 8.5 (Youth)</i> <i>Custodian UN entity: ILO</i>	(2019) (a) 59.2 (b) 48.4 (c) 69.8 (d) 34.4 (e) 28.0 (f) 40.4	(a) 63.1 (b) 49.2 (c) 74.3 (d) 34.9 (e) 28.2 (f) 41.8	State Statistical office, Labour Force Survey	National partners Ministry of Labour and Social Policy; Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy, Employment Services Agency; Regional Employment Offices; Fund for Innovation and Technological Development; Trade Unions; Chambers of Economics and Commerce; Local Economic and Social Councils; Employers; Farmers Associations, Producer organizations Participating UN entities FAO, ILO, UNDP, UN Women, UNFPA, UNOPS, UNECE, IOM, UNHCR, UN-Habitat
	1_20: Proportion of informal employment in total economy, by sex and age (%) (a) all (b) female (c) male (d) youth (15-24) <i>SDG indicator: SDG_A831_SEX_RT_A Modified indicator, covering also agriculture / SDG_8.3.1b</i> <i>Custodian UN Entity: ILO</i>	(2019) (a) 16.1 (b) 13 (c) 18.1 (d) 28.9	(a) 14	State Statistical Office, Labour Force Survey	
	1_30: Percentage of young people neither in employment nor in education and training by sex and age (a) all (b) female (c) male (d) 15-29 years (e) 15-24 years (f) 25-29 years <i>SDG indicator: SDG_0861_SEX_RT_A / EU SDG: 08_20</i> <i>PAF indicator: EESP 8.9</i> <i>Custodian UN Entity: ILO</i>	(2019) 15-29 years Total: 24.5 Male: 20.9 Female: 28.3 15-24 years Total: 18.1 Male: 17.1 Female: 19.2 25-29 years Total: 34.9 Male: 27.1 Female: 43.1	15-29 years Total: 22 Male: 20 Female: 28.2 15-24 years Total: 15.8 Male: 16.9 Female: 19.1 25-29 years Total: 33.3 Male: 25.6 Female: 43	State Statistical Office, Labour Force Survey	
	1_40: Annual growth rate of real GDP per employed person <i>SDG indicator: SDG_A821_NOC_RT_A / SDG 8.2.1</i> <i>Custodian UN entity: ILO</i>	- 1.3 (2019)	2.7	State Statistical Office	
	1_50: Global Competitiveness Index 4.0 (rank) <i>PAF indicator: CI 21</i> <i>Custodian UN entity: UNDP</i>	(2019) Rank 82/141 57.3 points	Rank 67	World Economic Forum	
	1_60: Working Poverty rate (a) all (b) female (c) male <i>SDG indicator: EU SDG_01_41</i> <i>Custodian UN entity: ILO</i>	(2018) (a) 8.8 (b) 6 (c) 10.6	(a) 7	State Statistical Office, Laeken poverty indicators	
	Assumptions: 1. There is political will to carry out economic and governance reforms 2. There is political stability in the country to provide long-term vision and direction to the country. 3. The statistical systems are strengthened to monitor SDGs, collect disaggregated data to analyse impact on vulnerable groups and for evidence-based policy-making 4. Post-Covid-19 economic recession and its consequences on employment are well managed 5. There is no fiscal crunch that could affect social protection especially in crisis situation arising out of Covid-19 6. There is enough implementation and monitoring capacity 7. There are no environmental crises 8. Geo-political situation is calm 8. There are enough resources, including external, to finance SDGs and national priorities				
Output 1.1: Sustainable enterprises created as generators of employment through strengthened value chains and increased capacities to adopt new business models Agencies: UNDP, ILO, UNOPS, UNECE, UN-Habitat					
Output 1.2: Women and vulnerable/excluded persons benefit from supportive environment through tailored employment measures and a more dynamic and inclusive skilling system that responds to labour market needs for all people Agencies: UNDP, ILO, IOM, UNHCR, UNOPS, UNFPA					
Output 1.3: Enhanced and gender-responsive policy and regulatory measures that foster entrepreneurship and financing for inclusive and green growth Agencies: ILO, UNDP, UNHCR, IOM, UN Women, FAO, UN-Habitat					
Output 1.4: Improved quality of employment through measures for transition to formality and adequate protection at work in compliance with international labour standards Agencies: ILO, WHO					
Output 1.5: Policies and capacities strengthened for sustainable and competitive rural economy aligned with EU, with focus on small farms and women farmers Agencies: FAO, UN Women, UN-Habitat					

¹⁸ Performance Assessment Framework (PAF) is developed by the Government with EU support to monitor the performance within the implementation of the EU Instrument for Pre-accession assistance (EU IPA 3 2021-2027). This framework consists of over 200 indicators at impact, outcome and activity level and it is in a process of finalization.



Results	Performance indicators (disaggregated)	Baseline (year)	Target (2025)	Source/ MoV	Partners
Outcome 2 By 2025, people in North Macedonia have universal access to rights-based quality social services – healthcare, education, and necessary social and child protection – rooted in systems resilient to emergencies.	2_10: Percentage of children age 36-59 months attending an early childhood education program (attendance rate), by sex (a) total (b) girls (c) boys <i>PAF indicator: (similar to EESP 2.1)</i> <i>Custodian UN entity: UNICEF</i>	(2019) (a) 39.8 (b) 47.76 (c) 52.24	(a) 60 (b) 60 (c) 60	ECD database	National partners Ministry of Health Ministry of Education Ministry of Labour and Social Policy Vocational Training Institutes Trade Union of Health Workers Civil Society
	2_20: Proportion of children and young people at the end of lower secondary education, achieving at least minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) numeracy <i>SDG indicator: 4.1.1</i> <i>PAF indicator: EESP 3.2 (TIMSS only)</i> <i>Custodian UN entity: UNICEF</i>	(2018) (i) 45 (ii) 39	(i) 55 (ii) 49	PISA	
	2_30: Self-reported unmet need for medical examination and care, % of population aged 16 and over, by sex (a) total (b) female (c) male <i>SDG indicator: SDG_03_60</i> <i>Custodian agency: WHO</i>	(2018) (a) 2.3 (b) 2.6 (c) 2.0	(a) 2.0 (b) 2.2 (c) 1.8	EU SILC Survey Annual	Participating UN entities WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNECE, IOM, ILO, UNODC, UNOPS, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNODC, UN Women, UN-Habitat
	2_40: Proportion of the target population covered by all vaccines included in their national programme: (a) all vaccines coverage (b) 3 doses of diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (DTP3) (%) (c) measles-containing-vaccine second dose (MCV2) (%) <i>SDG indicator: 3.b.1</i> <i>Custodian UN entity: WHO/UNICEF</i>	(2018) (a) 95 (b) 92.5 (c) 74.8	(a) >95 (a) 95 (b) 95	Institute of Public Health annual report on immunization	
	2_50: Probability of dying from any of Cardiovascular diseases (CVD), cancer, diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases (CRD) between age 30 and exact age 70 (%) <i>SDG indicator: 3.4.1</i> <i>Custodian UN entity: WHO</i>	20.3 (2016)	18.5	Institute of Public Health	
	2_60: Modern contraceptive prevalence Rate¹⁹ <i>SDG indicator: 3.6.1</i> <i>Custodian UN entity: UNFPA</i>	14 (2018)	20	MICS	
	2_70: Neonatal mortality rate <i>SDG indicator: 3.2.2</i> <i>Custodian UN entity: UNFPA</i>	3.8 (2019)	3.5	SSO	
	2_80: Proportion of households covered by social protection cash transfers <i>PAF indicator: similar to LRD 10.1</i> <i>Custodian UN entity: UNICEF</i>	8	14.5	SSO	
	2_90: Human Development Index <i>Custodian UN entity: UNDP</i>	0.759 (2019) Ranked 82/189	0.78	UNDP Human Development Report	
	2_100: Proportion of population living below the national poverty line, by sex by age group (a) total (b) male (c) female (d) 0-17 years (e) youth (15-24 years) (f) adult (16 years and over) (g) 25+ <i>SDG indicator: EU SDG: 01_20</i> <i>Custodian UN entity: UNDP</i>	(2018) a) 21.9 b) 21.8 c) 22.0 d) 30 e) 29.7 f) 20.6 g) 16.3	a) 15.5 b) 16.8 c) 14.2 Currently, no targets are set	SSO / EU SILC	

¹⁹ Percentage of women currently in union who are using, or whose partner is using modern contraceptives

Assumptions: 1. There is political will to carry out economic and governance reforms 2. There is political stability in the country to provide long-term vision and direction to the country; 3. The statistical systems are strengthened to monitor SDGs and for evidence-based policy-making; 4. Post-Covid-19 economic recession and its consequences on employment are well managed; 5. There is no fiscal crunch that could affect social protection especially in crisis situation arising out of Covid-19; 6. There is enough implementation and monitoring capacity; 7. There are no environmental crises 8. Geo-political situation is calm; 8. There are enough resources, including external, to finance SDGs and national priorities.

Output 2.1: Health system is strengthened to provide universal access to affordable high quality and people-centred services to promote healthy lifestyles and address population-specific health needs and risk factors, including in emergencies.

Agencies: WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women, IOM, UNHCR, UNOPS, UN-Habitat

Output 2.2: Quality and affordable education is provided in trauma-informed, gender-responsive and inclusive learning environments to children and young people in the country to raise learning outcomes, enable their socio-emotional development and empower them with skills for transition to the labour market.

Agencies: UNICEF, UNODC, UNFPA, UNHCR

Output 2.3: Social protection system is resilient to external shocks and strengthened to deliver progressively improved services to all persons in need, especially to those left behind.

Agencies: UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women, IOM, UNHCR, UNODC

Output 2.4: Improved multisectoral response to prevent and address all forms of violence based on victims/survivor-centred approach, including harmful practices and discriminatory gender norms and stereotypes

Agencies: UN Women, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN-Habitat

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

Climate action, natural resources and disaster risks management

National development priorities

Environmental protection and green developmen

Reform Package No 4

Green Energy (a) Shift the energy sector to a low-carbon development path, away from the current dependence on coal, while improving security and efficiency of energy supply, (b) Adopt a comprehensive approach to reducing air pollution.

EU acquis chapters

15. Energy; 27. Environment.

SDGs and SDG targets

Goal 3: 3.4

Goal 5: 5.1, 5.2, 5.3

Goal 7: 7.1, 7.2, 7.3

Goal 8: 8.4

Goal 11: 11.6

Goal 12: 12.2, 12.4

Goal 13: 13.2

Goal 15: 15.1

SDGs accelerators

- Improving effective and efficient environmental governance
- Sustainable natural resource management through utilization of the partnership potentials with the local population
- Improving the efficiency in the use of natural resources
- Addressing air, water and soil pollution
- Enabling greater reliance on renewable energy and increasing energy efficiency
- Strengthening resilience of communities to climate change and disaster risks
- Innovative solutions for green cities
- Introducing new technologies and encouraging greener and sustainable citizens' behaviour



Results	Performance indicators	Baseline (year)	Target (2025)	Source/ MoV	Partnership
Outcome 3 By 2025, people in North Macedonia benefit from ambitious climate action, sustainably managed natural resources and well-preserved biodiversity through good environmental governance and disaster resilient communities.	3_10: Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Gg CO2-eq) <i>SDG indicator: EU SDG_13_10</i> <i>PAF: MK – NI 010</i> <i>Custodian UN entity: UNDP</i>	8,02 ²⁰ (2016)	6,196 (WEM scenario)	3rd BUR (MOEPP)	National partners Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy; Ministry of Education; Ministry of Labour and Social Policy; Ministry of Economy; Cabinet of Deputy President of the Government in charge of Economic Affairs; Crisis Management Centre; Directorate for Protection and Rescue; Local self-governments; Farmers' associations; Chambers of Commerce; NGOs, private sector Participating UN entities FAO, UNDP, UNEP, UNECE, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNIDO, WHO, UNDRR, UNFPA, UN Women, IOM, UNOPS, UN-Habitat
	3_20: Proportion of a country designated total area that is protected <i>PAF: MK – NI 008</i> <i>Custodian UN entity: UNEP</i>	10.34 (2019)	15 ²¹	MOEPP (UNEP)	
	3_30: Annual mean levels of fine particulate matter PM10 (µg/m3) <i>SDG Indicator: EU SDG_11_50</i> <i>PAF: similar to MK – NI 061 (measuring total emissions)</i> <i>Custodian UN entity: UNDP</i>	88.2 (2019)	40 µg/m3	MOEPP	
	3_50: INFORM Risk Index (2020) (on a scale from 1 to 10 where 1 is very low and 10 is very high) <i>Custodian UN entity: UNDP</i>	Low, 2.6 (2020)	Very low (2.0)	Inter-UN entity Standing Committee Reference Group	
	3_60: System for integrated pest management in place <i>Custodian UN entity: UNDP/FAO</i>	No system in place (2020)	System in place and fully functional	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy	
	3_70: Pesticides per hectare (average use of pesticide per area of cropland, kg/ha) <i>PAF indicator: ARD 106</i> <i>Custodian UN entity: FAO</i>	0.22 (2017)	EU, neighbouring countries benchmarks: EU average 3.14, Albania 2.02	FAO / SSO	
	3_80: Degree of integrated water resources management implementation (0-100) <i>SDG indicator: 6.5.1</i> <i>Custodian UN entity: UNDP</i>	Medium-low (33) (2020)	60	MOEPP, EU Progress Report	
	3_90: Renewable energy share in the total final energy (a) consumption (b) production <i>SDG indicator: 7.2.1 (EU_SDG_07_40)</i> <i>Custodian UN entity: UNDP</i>	(2018) (a) 26.1 (b) 35.1	(a) 32 (2040) (b) 33 (2030)	SSO (Energy development strategy by 2030)	
Assumptions: 1. Economic pressures do not side-track climate action and environmental governance as priorities; 2. There is political will to carry out economic and governance reforms; 3. There is political stability in the country to provide long-term vision and direction to the country; 4. The statistical systems are strengthened to monitor SDGs and for evidence-based policy-making; 5. Post-Covid-19 economic recession and its consequences on employment are well managed; 6. There is no fiscal crunch that could affect social protection especially in crisis situation arising out of Covid-19; 7. There is enough implementation and monitoring capacity; 8. There are no environmental crises; 9. Geo-political situation is calm; 10. There are enough resources, including external, to finance SDGs and national priorities.					
Output 3.1: The enabling policy, regulatory environment, capacities at central and local level and community actions strengthened for low-emission development and multi-sector resilience to climate change Agencies: UNDP, UNEP, FAO, UNICEF, UNECE, UNIDO, UN-Habitat					
Output 3.2: Solutions are identified and scaled-up at central and local levels for integrated, sustainable and inclusive management of natural resources (water, land, forests, biodiversity). Agencies: UNDP, FAO, UNEP, UNECE, UN-Habitat					
Output 3.3: Capacities at central and local levels are strengthened to prevent and respond to the air pollution threats and health consequences in most vulnerable communities Agencies: UNDP, UNEP, WHO, IOM, UNICEF, UNOPS, UNFPA, UNECE, UN-Habitat					
Output 3.4: Capacities at central and local levels are strengthened to identify multi-hazard risks and to plan, finance and implement effective disaster risk reduction and response, including human displacement, in line with the Sendai framework Agencies: UNDP, UNDRR, WHO, UNFPA, IOM, FAO, UN Women, UN-Habitat					
Output 3.5: National and local capacities strengthened, and awareness increased for waste reduction and efficient waste management (chemical, water, municipal waste, hazardous waste, medical waste – including in rural areas) Agencies: UNOPS, UNIDO, UN-Habitat					

²⁰ Data up to 2018 will be available by the end of 2020. The values may change during the future revisions of the GHG inventory.

²¹ NBSAP 2018-2023

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

Transparent and accountable democratic governance

National development priorities

Justice and rule of law
EU accession

Reform Package No 1

Governance (a) Strengthen mechanisms ensuring freedom of the press and of civil society organizations, (b) Increase the transparency and accountability of Government decision-making and build public sector capacity, (c) Ensure independence, accountability, and professionalism of judicial system

EU acquis chapters

23. Justice and Fundamental Rights; 24. Justice, Freedom and Security

SDGs and SDG targets

Goal 5: 5.5, 5.c.
Goal 10: 10.3
Goal 16: 16.1, 16.2, 16.3, 16.5, 16.6, 16.9, 16.a
Goal 17: 17.1, 17.3, 17.4, 17.6, 17.8

Regional frameworks

Western Balkans Action Plan

SDGs accelerators

- Promoting national vision, social cohesion, trust building, civic engagement and evidence-based and participatory decision-making
- Effective management of demographic dynamics and migration policy
- Improved access to justice and fulfilment of human rights (especially women and child rights)
- Strong rule of law and independent judiciary
- Anticipatory, responsive, transparent and accountable governance including fiscal governance
- Digitalization and innovation of public services and processes
- Improving quality of municipal governance



Results	Performance Indicators	Baseline (year)	Target (2025)	Source/ MoV	Partnership
Outcome 4 By 2025, people in North Macedonia benefit from improved rule of law; evidence-based, anticipatory and gender-responsive policies; greater social cohesion; and effective service delivery by transparent, accountable and responsive institutions	4_10: Rule of Law Index (overall, on a scale from 0 to 1) <i>Custodian UN entity: UNODC</i>	(2020) 0.53	To be set by end 2020	World Justice Project	National partners The Parliament; Judicial Council; Prosecutorial Council and Academy for Judges and Prosecutors; Notary Public; Property Registration Office; Legal Aid Society; Ministry of Justice; Ministry of Interior; Ministry of Finance; Ministry of Information Society and Administration; Ministry of Local Self Government; Ministry of Education, Customs Service
	4_20: Gender Equality index <i>Custodian UN entity: UN Women</i>	62 score points (GEI from 2019) ²²	65	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy EIGE	
	4_30: Level of establishment of permanent national child rights coordinating mechanism <i>Custodian UN entity: UNICEF</i>	Weak	Established	Country CRC reports; Alternative report; UNICEF confidential CRC report, CRC concluding observations	

Results	Performance indicators	Baseline (year)	Target (2025)	Source/ MoV	Partnership
Outcome 4 <i>(continued)</i>	4_40: The country has a system in place to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment <i>SDGs indicator: 5.c.1</i> <i>Custodian UN entity: UN Women</i>	(2020) No	Yes	Official Gazette of Republic of North Macedonia MoF (IFMIS)	National partners <i>(continued)</i> Public Security Directorate (Police/Border Police) Ombudsman; Women's Committee in Parliament; Parliamentary Commission on EOWM; Club of Women MPs; Anti-discrimination Commission; Equal Opportunities Commission; Civil Service Agency; Anti-corruption commission; Bureau for Regional Development; Regional Development Centers; UN entity for Youth and Sports; State Statistical Office; Local Self-governments; ZELS; Associations of Journalists; Media Participating UN entities UNDP, UNODC, IOM, UNHCR, ILO, IOM, UN Women, OHCHR, UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO, UNOPS, UN-Habitat
	4_50: Worldwide Governance Indicator²³ (a) voice & accountability (b) political stability & absence of violence/terrorism (c) government effectiveness (d) regulatory quality (e) rule of law (f) control of corruption <i>PAF: PAR 162</i> <i>Custodian UN entity: UNDP</i>	(2018) 49.72	To be set by end 2020	World Bank	
	4_60: Open budget Index (transparency) <i>PAF: PFM 7</i> <i>Custodian UN entity: UNDP</i>	(2019) 41/100 a)	>=45	Open Budget Survey	
	4_70: Percentage of official statistics aligned with EU acquis <i>Custodian UN entity: UNFPA</i>	(2019) 67.1	95 (2027)	SSO	
	4_80: Level of general satisfaction with public services at the local level, by, sex and place: (a) total (b) female (c) male (d) urban (e) rural <i>SDG Indicator: 16.6.2 (no longer in the 2020 list of global indicators)</i> <i>PAF: PAR 173 (similar indicator)</i> <i>Custodian UN entity: UNDP</i>	(2020) (a) 3.07 ²⁴ (b) 3.12 (c) 3.02 (d) 3.09 (e) 3.05	(a) 3.5 (b) 3.6 (c) 3.4 (d) 3.5 (e) 3.5	UNDP annual survey	
	4_90: The level of the alignment of the refugee protection and migration systems with the international and EU standards <i>SDG Indicator: 10.7.2</i> <i>Custodian UN entity: UNHCR, IOM</i>	(2020) Partially aligned	(2025) Fully aligned	EU Progress Report 2019	
	4_100: Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive²⁵, by sex, age, disability and population group <i>SDG indicator: 16.7.2.</i> <i>Custodian UN entity: UNDP</i>	(2020) 19.8	25	UNDP citizens perception annual survey	

Assumptions: 1. There is political will to carry out economic and governance reforms; 2. There is political stability in the country to provide long-term vision and direction to the country; 3. The statistical systems are strengthened to monitor SDGs and for evidence-based policy-making; 4. Post-Covid-19 economic recession and its consequences on employment are well managed; 5. There is no fiscal crunch that could affect social protection especially in crisis situation arising out of Covid-19; 6. There is enough implementation and monitoring capacity; 7. MLSP and the Government has committed to conduct the GEI on regular basis; 8. It is expected that with the PFM reform the Government will introduce programme based budgeting and Integrated Finance Management Information System, which will enable tracking of allocations for gender equality; 9. There are no environmental crises; 10. Geo-political situation is calm; 11. There are enough resources, including external, to finance SDGs and national priorities.

Output 4.1: The rule of law, access to justice and protection and promotion of human rights for all, especially those left behind, advanced by improved and gender responsive legal, policy and institutional frameworks and strengthened capacities

Agencies: UNICEF, UNODC, UN Women, UNHCR, IOM, OHCHR, ILO, UNOPS, UNDP, UNFPA

Output 4.2: Capacities of central and local governments strengthened to:

- a) better plan, budget, monitor and track expenditure and leverage resources in a gender-responsive manner in support of accelerated sustainable development
 - b) improve design and efficient delivery of quality public services (targeting excluded groups, including refugee /migration management)
- with improved social accountability and participation in decision-making

Agencies: UNDP, UNICEF, IOM, UNHCR, UNFPA, UN Women, UNOPS, UNOPS, UN-Habitat

Output 4.3: Increased utilization of foresight and quality and disaggregated data for improved forward looking, evidence-based, results-oriented and transparent policy-making, responsive to the rights of women, men, girls and boys and vulnerabilities of the groups left behind, at all levels and in all contexts, including humanitarian

Agencies: UNFPA, UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM, UNDP, UN Women, UN-Habitat

Output 4.4: Social cohesion and trust improved through dialogue and meaningful participation by youth, women, ethnic and religious minorities, refugees, and other vulnerable groups.

Agencies: UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, UN Women, UNHCR, IOM, UN-Habitat

Output 4.5: Enhanced national and local capacities in asset recovery and countering corruption in public life through better enforcement of anti-corruption laws and preventive measures.

Agencies: UNODC, UNDP

²² The Gender Equality Index for North Macedonia is calculated using the methodology of the EIGE and provides overview of the situation in 2015.

²³ There are 6 indicators (listed). It is suggested to use the percentile rank instead of governance score. Instead of monitoring 6 different indicators it might be clearer to give the same weighting to all of them and use the arithmetic mean as an indicator value.

²⁴ This is the mean value of the general satisfaction of the citizens with the services provided by the municipality (on a scale from 1-5).

²⁵ The indicator is currently measured per different methodology. The methodology will be changed with the next survey and baseline and targets revised accordingly.

Annex 2 The Cooperation Framework Legal Annex

Basis of relationship

Whereas the Authorities of the Republic of North Macedonia have entered into the following relationships:

Agency	Agreement
Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)	<i>Mutatis mutandis</i> the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement (SBAA) between the Government and UNDP applies.
International Labour Organisation (ILO)	The Memorandum of Understanding concluded between the Government and ILO on 6 March 2019.
International Organisation for Migration (IOM)	The Memorandum of Understanding was concluded between the Government and IOM on 6 April 2001.
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	The Standard Basic Assistance Agreement signed between the Authorities of North Macedonia and UNDP on 30 October 1995. Based on Article I, paragraph 2 of the SBAA, UNDP's assistance to the Government shall be made available to the Government and shall be furnished and received in accordance with the relevant and applicable resolutions and decisions of the competent UNDP organs, and subject to the availability of the necessary funds to the UNDP. In particular, decision 2005/1 of 28 January 2005 of UNDP's Executive Board approved the new Financial Regulations and Rules and along with them the new definitions of 'execution' and 'implementation' enabling UNDP to fully implement the new Common Country Programming Procedures resulting from the UNDG simplification and harmonization initiative. In light of this decision this Cooperation Framework together with the Joint Annual workplans (which shall form part of this CF) concluded hereunder constitute together a project document as referred to in the SBAA.
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)	The (general) Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Government and UNEP. In addition, and on project level, UNEP signs a separate MoU with the main partner and beneficiary (so far, the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning).
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)	UNESCO's assistance to the Government shall be made available and shall be furnished and received in accordance with the applicable resolutions of the General Conference and Executive Board of the Organization.
United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO)	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 30 October 1995 shall be applied, <i>mutatis mutandis</i> , to UNIDO projects and programmes in North Macedonia.
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)	The Basic Agreement concluded between the Government and the United Nations Development Programme on 30 October 1995 (the "Basic Agreement"), <i>mutatis mutandis</i> applies to the activities and personnel of UNFPA, in accordance with the agreement concluded by an exchange of letters between UNFPA and the Government, which entered into force on 31 August 2015. This Partnership together with any workplan and other documentation concluded hereunder, which shall form part of this Partnership and is incorporated herein by reference, constitutes the Programme Document as referred to in the Basic Agreement
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	The Country Co-operation Agreement concluded between the Government and UNHCR on 8 December 1994.
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	The Basic Cooperation Agreement (BCA) concluded between the Government and UNICEF through an Exchange of Letters on 8 December 1994.
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)	The following Governments having signed the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement (SBAA) with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), on the dates indicated, agree that the SBAA shall apply, <i>mutatis mutandis</i> , to the assistance provided by UNODC under the present programme document. The Governments confirm, in particular, that Article IX (Privileges and Immunities), Article X (Facilities for the execution of UNDP assistance) of the SBAA shall apply to the activities of UNODC under this programme, Article XI (Suspension or Termination of Assistance) and Article XII (Settlement of Disputes) of the SBAA shall apply to the activities of UNODC under this programme. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government of Albania (17 June 1991) • Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina (7 December 1995) • Government of North Macedonia (30 October 1995) • Government of Montenegro (15 December 2006) • Government of Serbia (24 March 1988)
United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)	UNOPS had the honour to accept the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' suggestion that, in regulating the status of UNOPS personnel, activities, property and assets for the purposes of effective performance of UNOPS activities in the Republic of North Macedonia, the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations of 13 February 1946 shall be applied, as communicated to the Ministry through UNOPS Note Verbale, dated 28 January 2018; noting that these Notes Verbales and the prior correspondence on the subject constitute an Agreement between UNOPS and the Republic of Macedonia, regulating the status of UNOPS personnel, activities, property and assets for the purposes of effective performance of UNOPS activities in the Republic of North Macedonia.
United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN WOMEN)	The Basic Agreement concluded between the Government and the United Nations Development Programme on 30 October 1995 (the "Basic Agreement") <i>mutatis mutandis</i> applies to the activities and personnel of UN WOMEN. Assistance to the Government shall be made available and shall be furnished and received in accordance with the relevant and applicable resolutions and decisions of UN Women's governing structures.
World Health Organisation (WHO)	The Bi-annual Collaborative Agreement for the period 2020/2021, was signed between the Ministry of Health and WHO on September 2019.
For all UN system agencies, including UNECE, UNDRR, UNOHCHR and UN-Habitat, assistance to the Government shall be made available and shall be furnished and received in accordance with the relevant and applicable resolutions and decisions of the competent UN system agency's governing structures.	

- a. The COOPERATION FRAMEWORK will, in respect of each of the United Nations system agencies signing, be read, interpreted, and implemented in accordance with and in a manner that is consistent with the basic agreement between such United Nations system agency and the Host Government.
- b. The Government will honour its commitments in accordance with the provisions of the cooperation and assistance agreements outlined in paragraph on the basis of the Relationship.
- c. Without prejudice to these agreements, the Government shall apply the respective provisions of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations (the "General Convention") or the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies (the "Specialized Agencies Convention") to the Agencies' property, funds, and assets and to their officials and experts on mission.
- d. The Government shall also accord to the Agencies and their officials and to other persons performing services on behalf of the Agencies, the privileges, immunities and facilities as set out in the cooperation and assistance agreements between the Agencies and the Government. In addition, it is understood that all United Nations Volunteers shall be assimilated to officials of the Agencies, entitled to the privileges and immunities accorded to such officials under the General Convention or the Specialized Agencies Convention. The Government will be responsible for dealing with any claims, which may be brought by third parties against any of the Agencies and their officials, experts on mission or other persons performing services on their behalf and shall hold them harmless in respect of any claims and liabilities resulting from operations under the cooperation and assistance agreements, except where it is any claims and liabilities resulting from operations under the cooperation and assistance agreements, except where it is mutually agreed by Government and a particular Agency that such claims and liabilities arise from gross negligence or misconduct of that Agency, or its officials, advisors or persons performing services.
- e. Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, the Government shall insure or indemnify the Agencies from civil liability under the law of the country in respect of vehicles provided by the Agencies but under the control of or use by the Government.
- f. Nothing in this Agreement shall imply a waiver by the UN or any of its Agencies or Organizations of any privileges or immunities enjoyed by them or their acceptance of the jurisdiction of the courts of any country over disputes arising of this Agreement.
- g. Nothing in or relating to this document will be deemed a waiver, expressed or implied, of the privileges and immunities of the United Nations and its subsidiary organs, including WFP, whether under the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations of 13th February 1946, the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies of 21st November 1947, as applicable, and no provisions of this document or any Institutional Contract or any Undertaking will be interpreted or applied in a manner, or to an extent, inconsistent with such privileges and immunities.

Programme implementation

The programme will be nationally executed under the overall co-ordination of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Government Co-ordinating Authority). Government coordinating authorities for specific UN system agency programmes are noted in Section 3.3. Government Ministries, NGOs, INGOs and UN system agencies will implement programme activities.

The COOPERATION FRAMEWORK will be made operational through the development of joint workplans (JWPs)²⁶ and/or agency-specific workplans and project documents as necessary which describe the specific results to be achieved and will form an agreement between the UN system agencies and each implementing partner as necessary on the use of resources. To the extent possible the UN system agencies and partners will use the minimum documents necessary, namely the signed COOPERATION FRAMEWORK and signed joint or agency-specific workplans and project documents to implement programmatic initiatives. However, as necessary and appropriate, project documents can be prepared using, inter alia, the relevant text from the COOPERATION FRAMEWORK and joint or agency-specific workplans and / or project documents.²⁷

²⁶ As per the UNSDG Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for countries adopting the "Delivering as One" approach.

²⁷ In the case of UNDP, the Government Coordinating Authority will nominate the Government Co-operating Agency directly responsible for the Government's participation in each UNDP-assisted workplan. The reference to "Implementing Partner(s)" shall mean "Executing Agency(s)" as used in the SBAA. Where there are multiple implementing partners identified in a workplan, a Principal Implementing Partner will be identified who will have responsibility for convening, coordinating and overall monitoring (programme and financial) of all the Implementing Partners identified in the workplan to ensure that inputs are provided and activities undertaken in a coherent manner to produce the results of the workplan.

Travel costs

Cash assistance for travel, stipends, honoraria and other costs shall be set at rates commensurate with those applied in the country, but not higher than those applicable to the United Nations system (as stated in the ICSC circulars).

Cash transfer modalities

Where relevant, the UN and the Government have initiated the process required for applying the harmonized approach to cash transfers (HACT). The stipulations below apply to the UN agencies – UNICEF, UNFPA and UNDP – that make direct cash transfers to implementing partners.

All cash transfers to an Implementing Partner are based on the workplans agreed between the Implementing Partner and the UN system agencies.

Cash transfers for activities detailed in workplans can be made by the UN system agencies using the following modalities:

1. Cash transferred directly to the Implementing Partner:
 - a. Prior to the start of activities (direct cash transfer), or
 - b. After activities have been completed (reimbursement);
2. Direct payment to vendors or third parties for obligations incurred by the Implementing Partners on the basis of requests signed by the designated official of the Implementing Partner;
3. Direct payments to vendors or third parties for obligations incurred by UN system agencies in support of activities agreed with Implementing Partners.

Direct cash transfers shall be requested and released for program implementation periods not exceeding three months. Reimbursements of previously authorized expenditures shall be requested and released quarterly or after the completion of activities.

The UN system agencies shall not be obligated to reimburse expenditure made by the Implementing Partner over and above the authorized amounts. Following the completion of any activity, any balance of funds shall be refunded or programmed by mutual agreement between the Implementing Partner and the UN system agencies.

Cash transfer modalities, the size of disbursements, and the scope and frequency of assurance activities may depend on the findings of a review of the public financial management capacity in the case of a Government Implementing Partner, and of an assessment of the financial management capacity of the non-UN Implementing Partner. A qualified consultant, such as a public accounting firm, selected by the UN system agencies may conduct such an assessment, in which the Implementing Partner shall participate. The Implementing Partner may participate in the selection of the consultant.

Cash transfer modalities, the size of disbursements, and the scope and frequency of assurance activities may be revised in the course of program implementation based on the findings of program monitoring, expenditure monitoring and reporting, and audits.

In case of direct cash transfer or reimbursement, the UN system agencies shall notify the Implementing Partner of the amount approved by the UN system agencies and shall disburse funds to the Implementing Partner in 30 days.

In case of direct payment to vendors or third parties for obligations incurred by the Implementing Partners on the basis of requests signed by the designated official of the Implementing Partner; or to vendors or third parties for obligations incurred by the UN system agencies in support of activities agreed with Implementing Partners, the UN system agencies shall proceed with the payment within 30 days.

The UN system agencies shall not have any direct liability under the contractual arrangements concluded between the Implementing Partner and a third-party vendor.

Where the UN system agencies and other UN system agency provide cash to the same Implementing Partner, program monitoring, financial monitoring and auditing will be undertaken jointly or coordinated with those UN system agencies. Implementing Partners agree to cooperate with the UN system agencies for monitoring all activities supported by cash

transfers and will facilitate access to relevant financial records and personnel responsible for the administration of cash provided by the UN system agencies. To that effect, Implementing Partners agree to the following:

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

A standard Fund Authorization and Certificate of Expenditures (FACE) report, reflecting the activity lines of the workplan, will be used by Implementing Partners to request the release of funds, or to secure the agreement that the relevant UN organization will reimburse or directly pay for planned expenditure. The Implementing Partners will use the FACE to report on the utilization of cash received.

The Implementing Partner shall identify the designated official(s) authorized to provide the account details, request and certify the use of cash. The FACE will be certified by the designated official(s) of the Implementing Partner.

Cash transferred to Implementing Partners should be spent for the purpose of activities and within the timeframe as agreed in the workplans only.

Cash received by the Government and national NGO Implementing Partners shall be used in accordance with established national regulations, policies and procedures consistent with international standards, in particular ensuring that cash is expended for activities as agreed in the workplans, and ensuring that reports on the utilization of all received cash are submitted to the relevant UN organization within six months after receipt of the funds.

Where any of the national regulations, policies and procedures are not consistent with international standards, the relevant UN system agency financial and other related rules and system agency regulations, policies and procedures will apply.

In the case of international NGO/CSO and IGO Implementing Partners cash received shall be used in accordance with international standards in particular ensuring that cash is expended for activities as agreed in the workplans, and ensuring that reports on the full utilization of all received cash are submitted to the relevant UN organization within six months after receipt of the funds.

Financial assurance and audit

Regardless of the source of funds, each UN entity head is accountable to his/her Executive Head (or governing body) for resources received by the UN entity from its own resources, and in line with the pertinent financial regulations and rules of the concerned UN entity. Each UN entity is subject solely to the external and internal auditing procedures laid down in that organization's financial regulations and rules and procedures.

The audits will be commissioned by the UN system agencies and undertaken by private audit services.

The Supreme Audit Institution may undertake the audits of Government Implementing Partners. If the SAI chooses not to undertake the audits of specific Implementing Partners to the frequency and scope required by the UN system agencies, the UN system agencies will commission the audits to be undertaken by private sector audit services.

To facilitate scheduled and special audits, each Implementing Partner receiving cash from a relevant UN organization will provide the UN system agency or its representative with timely access to:

- All financial records which establish the transactional record of the cash transfers provided by the relevant UN system agency, together with relevant documentation; and
- All relevant documentation and personnel associated with the functioning of the Implementing Partner's internal control structure through which the cash transfers have passed.

The findings of each audit will be reported to the Implementing Partner and the relevant UN organization.

Each Implementing Partner will furthermore:

- Receive and review the audit report issued by the auditors;
- Provide a timely statement of the acceptance or rejection of any audit recommendation to the relevant UN organization that provided cash so that the auditors include these statements in their final audit report before submitting it to the relevant UN organization;
- Undertake timely actions to address the accepted audit recommendations; and
- Report on the actions taken to implement accepted recommendations to the relevant UN system agencies on an annual basis.

Dispute resolution

In the event of any significant change requiring a revision in the objectives or the duration and the scope of the programme components, the Government will make a formal request to the UN agencies and an appropriate amendment to the Partnership will be negotiated.

In the event of a failure by one party to fulfil any of its obligations under this Partnership, where the defaulting party is one of the UN agencies, the government may either:

- Suspend the discharge of its own obligations vis-à-vis the defaulting party by giving written notice to that effect to the defaulting party; or
- Terminate the Partnership vis-à-vis the defaulting party by giving written notice of sixty (60) days to the defaulting party.

Where the defaulting party is the Government, the UN entity to which the government has defaulted, either alone or together with all other UN agencies, may either:

- Suspend the discharge of its own obligations by giving written notice to that effect to the defaulting party; or
- Terminate the Partnership by giving written notice of sixty (60) days to the defaulting party.

Any dispute between the Government and a UN entity shall be resolved in accordance with the provisions of that Organization's basic agreement with the government. Any dispute among the UN agencies shall be resolved exclusively among the UN agencies through approaches identified in the UNDG-endorsed dispute resolution mechanism.

Government commitments

The Government will honour its commitments in accordance with the provisions of the basic cooperation and assistance agreements outlined in the preceding section.

The Government shall apply the provisions of the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations agencies to the Agencies' property, funds, and assets and to its officials and experts on mission. In addition, the Government will accord to the Agencies and their officials and to other persons performing services on behalf of the Agencies, the privileges, immunities and facilities as set out in the cooperation and assistance agreements between the Agencies and the Government. The Government will be responsible for dealing with any claims, which may be brought by third parties against any of the Agencies and its officials, advisors and agents. None of the Agencies nor any of their respective officials, advisors or persons performing services on their behalf will be held responsible for any claims and liabilities resulting from operations under the cooperation and assistance agreements, except where it is mutually agreed by Government and a particular Agency that such claims and liabilities arise from gross negligence or misconduct of that Agency, or its officials, advisors or persons performing services.

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

Nothing in or relating to this document will be deemed a waiver, expressed or implied, of the privileges and immunities of the United Nations and its subsidiary organs, whether under the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations of 13 February 1946, the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies of 21 November 1947, as applicable, and no provisions of this document or any Institutional Contract or any Undertaking will be interpreted or applied in a manner, or to an extent, inconsistent with such privileges and immunities.

Annex 3 Key envisaged SDCF partners



Outcome 1: Employment and business environment

	EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS	PROSPECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS
GOVERNMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central Government: Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Information Society and Administration State Agencies and Institutions: Employment Service Agency, Agency for Promotion of Entrepreneurship, National Extension Agency, Customs Administration, Agency for Real Estate Cadastre, Directorate for Execution of Sanctions Fund for Innovation and Technological Development Municipalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parliament Committees on labour and Social Policy and on Economy Ministry of Finance Minister without Portfolio Responsible for Diaspora Agency for Promotion of Entrepreneurship Institute of Public Health Municipalities Agency for financial support in agriculture and rural development
CSOS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Macedonian Occupational Safety and Health Association Trade Unions National Federation of Farmers CSOs representing vulnerable groups (Roma, youth, rural population) DPOs Labour Law Association of North Macedonia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Macedonian HR Association CSOs promoting workers rights (e.g. Glasen Tekstilec, Lenka, Solidarnost, etc.) Professional associations (e.g. accountants, legal) Business Diaspora
ACADEMIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institute of Economics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Techno-parks Private training providers (extend partnership) Think-tanks (e.g. Finance Think, CEA)
PRIVATE SECTOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual companies, cooperating on employment or skills development Organization of Employers of Macedonia (ORM) Business Confederation of Macedonia (BCM) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chambers of Commerce Topic specific chambers and chamber branch associations (MASIT, Textile Cluster, Chamber of Certified Architects and Certified Engineers) Private employment agencies Producer organizations in agriculture
INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delegation of the European Union, Swiss Embassy, UK Embassy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Swedish Embassy World Bank EBRD



Outcome 2: Health, education, culture, social services and anti-violence

EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS

PROSPECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

	EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS	PROSPECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS
GOVERNMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Defence, Health Insurance Fund, Institute for Public Health, Centers for Public Health, Office of the President • University Clinics, Regional Hospitals and primary level health facilities (special focus on Ob/Gyn, Infectious Diseases, Mental Health and Pediatrics), Immunisation Committee, Safe Motherhood Committee • Bureau for Development of Education, State Education Inspectorate • Centers for Social Work, Institute for Social Activities • National Extension Agency • National Commission of North Macedonia for UNESCO • Parliamentary Committee on Equal Rights of Women and Men • State Statistical Office • Municipalities • Ombudsman • Center for Vocational Education and Training • Center for Adult Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Information Society and Administration, Ministry of Finance • Public Revenue Office • Parliament Committees on Health, Education, Science and Sport, Labor and Social Protection, Culture, Secretariat for European Affairs • E-Health Directorate • Immunization Committee
CSOS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macedonian Red Cross, City Red Cross Skopje • National council of DPOs • Gender rights CSOs • LGBTI, sex workers rights CSOs • Rural Population rights CSOs • Roma rights CSOs • Youth CSOs • Association of Special Educators • Sex Education CSO - HERA • Medical Faculties, Various Specialized Medical Institutes, Faculty of Philosophy • Professional associations (Macedonian Medical Association, Association of Gynaecologists and Obstetricians, Association of Nurses and Midwives, Association of Special Educators) • Open Gate - La Strada NorthMacedonia • STAR STAR - The first sex workers collective in the Balkans • Health Education and Research Association (HERA) • DPOs • HOPS • MYLA • Helsinki Committee for Human Rights • ESE • Zaedno Posilni • Y-PEER (Youth Peer Network) • Medical Chamber 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patient Associations on various Diseases (e.g. on hepatitis, pre-natal care, cardiology, diabetes, cancer) • Macedonian Society for Nutrition and Health • Mother and child organization (Tetovo) • Public (Lice v Lice) • Journalists / media associations • CSOs with elderly: Pensioners' Alliance, Humanost, etc. • Media
ACADEMIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty of Law Iustinianus Primus, Faculty of Philosophy, Faculty of Medicine Skopje, University Clinic of Psychiatry, Teacher Training Faculties in Skopje, Stip, Tetovo and Bitola • Institutes for Social Work, Gender Studies, and Mother and Child Health, UNESCO Chairs • Macedonian Medical Association, Macedonian Association of Nurses and Midwives • Macedonian Civic Education Center • Center for Continuous Education of Family Doctors, Medical Chamber • Smart Up • ECD Cor • CEED Hub 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All medical faculties producing medical cadre (Skopje, Shtip and Tetovo), other faculties of law • FINKI (IT Faculty) • Mother Theresa University • Medical high schools • Think-tanks (Reactor, Finance Think, EPI, CEA, etc.)
PRIVATE SECTOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary Care • Telekom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Hospitals • Private Labs • Media • Companies IT providers/MASIT • Private sector companies engaged in CSR • Chambers of Commerce
INT'L PARTNERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USAID • World Bank • Delegation of the European Union • Swedish, Swiss, Dutch and UK Embassy • USAID, ADA • OSCE Mission • European Training Foundation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delegation of the European Union • World Bank • IFIs investing in health infrastructure • UK, Swiss, Swedish Embassy, • Regional cooperation and platforms (SEE Health Network, CEI, etc.)



Outcome 3: Environment and climate action

EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS

PROSPECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

	EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS	PROSPECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS
GOVERNMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secretary General of the Government; Cabinet of Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs; Secretariat for European Affairs, Cabinet of Vice Prime Minister on Anticorruption, Sustainable Development and Human Capital; Cabinet of the National Council for Sustainable Development, National Commission of North Macedonia for UNESCO Ministries of Environment and Physical Planning; Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy; Transport and Communications; Health; Local Self-Government; Education and Science; Labor and Social Policy State Inspectorate for Environment Hydrometeorological Service Water Management Organisation Food and Veterinary Agency Agency for Real Estate Cadastre Crisis Management Centre Directorate for Protection and Rescue Institute for Public Health (Protocol on Water and Health, The PEP) Centre for Development of South-East Region National Parks Fund for Innovation and Technology Development City of Skopje, municipalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministries of Economy, Finance Parliament: Committee on Transport, Communications and Ecology State Statistical Office Energy and Water Services Regulatory Commission Energy Agency Other Regional Development Centres National Coordinator for DRR - SENDAI Focal Point National Council for Sustainable Development Municipalities
CSOS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental NGOs (Macedonian Ecological Society – MES, Eko Svest, Kocka, Milieukontakt Macedonia, Green Centre, etc.) Agri and rural development NGOs (CeProSARD, CSO FAGRIKOM, Rural Development Network, CNVP, National Federation of Farmers) Skopje Lab Balkan Foundation for Sustainable Development (BFSO) Platform 'Friends of Shara' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Civic Movements (Eco Guerilla, Na Tocak, Fridays for Future, etc.) Professional associations (MACEF) Grass-root civic movements/CSOs/individual activists (recycling, etc.) CSO platforms and thematic coalitions (e.g. CSO platform on Ohrid Lake) National Red Cross Youth Organizations (NYCM) DPOs ZELS
ACADEMIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University Goce Delcev, Shtip MANU Research Center for Energy and Sustainable Development Ss. Cyril and Methodius University (UKIM) (Faculty of Computer Science & Engineering; Faculty of Agriculture and Food Science; Hans Em Faculty of Forest Sciences, Landscape Architecture and Environment engineering; Faculty of Natural Science and Mathematics; State University of Tetovo (Institute of Ecology and Technology) Hydrobiology Institute 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Think-tanks UKIM American College Institutes of Economics; Agriculture
PRIVATE SECTOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diaspora 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial banks Development bank of North Macedonia EVN AD Skopje Okta AD Skopje Specialized Chambers of Commerce Small business chamber Producer organizations/individual producers in agriculture Companies producing energy efficient materials/Renewable Energy technologies
INT'L PARTNERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delegation of the European Union Bilateral donors (Norwegian, Swiss (SDC), Austrian (ADA), Swedish (SIDA) Embassies UNECE Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency The International Union for Conservation of Nature, Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (IUCN – ECARO) Green Climate Fund (GCF) Global Environmental Facility (GEF) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bilateral donors (UK, Norwegian, Swiss (SDC), Swedish (SIDA) International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) NATO GIZ Energy Community Climate Alliance Regional organisations (NALAS)



Outcome 4: Good governance

EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS

PROSPECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

	EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS	PROSPECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS
GOVERNMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cabinet of the Vice Prime Minister on Anticorruption, Sustainable Development and Human Capital • Ministries of Interior, Justice, Finance, Local Self-Government, Labor and Social Policy and Foreign Affairs, Secretariat for European Affairs, General Secretariat of the Government, Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy, • Bureau for Regional Development, Centers for Regional Development • Local self-government units • Ombudsman • Judiciary • Academy for Judges and Public Prosecutors • Basic Public Prosecutor's Office, Public Prosecutor for Organized Crime and Corruption • State Statistical Office • National Commission for Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings • Directorate for Management of Registry Books • Institute for Social Activities, Centers for Social Work • Directorate for Execution of Sanctions (MoJ) • Skopje Lab (City of Skopje) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Information Society and Administration • Parliament (Parliamentary Institute, Parliamentary Budget Office, Club of Women MPs, Parliamentary Committees) • Fund for Innovation and Technology Development • Anti-corruption Commission • Public Revenue Office • National Bank of Republic of North Macedonia • Agency of Youth and Sports
CSOS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSO networks on rights of vulnerable groups (women, youth, people with disabilities, Roma, sex workers, LGBTI, migrants, refugees and stateless persons, anti-poverty, anti-violence, etc.) • ZELS • Professional associations (Macedonian Lawyers' Association) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MCIC, EPI • CSO Forum (CSO consultative body to government) • CSO coalitions (e.g. coalitions around Blueprint, Margini, Platform for Gender Equality etc.) • Helsinki Committee for Human Rights • Institute of Human Rights • Volunteers Networks • Influencers • Religious leaders • Association of financial workers • Journalist Associations • Macedonian Institute for Media • Diaspora • YPEER • National Council for Gender Equality
ACADEMIA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institute for Human Rights • Faculties of Law, Police Academy, Institute of social policy and social work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think-tanks (e.g. CEA, Finance Think, Centre for Legal Research and Analysis, Analytica)
PRIVATE SECTOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media • Bar association, Chamber of mediators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MASIT • Chambers of Commerce • Media
INT'L PARTNERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delegation of the European Union • OSCE Mission • Bilateral donors (Norwegian, Swiss (SDC), Swedish (SIDA) Embassies, USAID, • Regional organisations (NALAS, MARRI, RYCO) • International organisations (DCAF, ICMPD) • GIZ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International NGOs (NDI, IRI, KAS, FES, WfD, etc.) • World Bank • World Economic Forum • UK Embassy



Key Government partners of UN entities

FAO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning Cabinet of the Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs Cabinet of the Deputy Prime Minister for Anticorruption, Sustainable Development and Human Capital Ministry of Finance Fund for Innovation and Technological Development State Statistical Office Food and Veterinary Agency Agency for Financial Support of Agriculture and Rural Development National Extension Agency Agency for Real Estate Cadastre Municipalities
ILO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Labour and Social Policy Employers' organizations and trade unions Employment Service Agency State Labour Inspectorate Economic and Social Council Local Economic and Social Councils
IOM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Interior Ministry of Labour and Social Policy Ministry of Justice Crisis Management Centre Ministry of Health Ministry of Foreign Affairs State Statistical Office Secretariat for European Affairs Municipalities
UNDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet of the Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs Cabinet of the Deputy Prime Minister for Anticorruption, Sustainable Development and Human Capital Ministry of Labour and Social Policy Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning Ministry of Local Self-Government Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy Ministry of Finance Ministry of Interior Ministry of Economy Employment Service Agency Spatial Planning Agency Crisis Management Center Directorate for Recue and Protection Fund for Innovation and Technology Development Regional Development Centres City of Skopje Municipalities
UNDRR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Interior Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning Crisis Management Center Ministry of Local Self-Government Municipalities Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative for South and Eastern Europe (DPPI SEE) European Commission
UNECE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning Ministry of Labour and Social Policy Ministry of Economy Ministry of Interior State Statistical Office Ministry of Education and Science Ministry of Transport and Communication Cabinet of the Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs Spatial Planning Agency Fund for Innovation and Technology Development
UNEP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Health Ministry of Labour and Social Policy Cabinet of the Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs Cabinet of the Deputy Prime Minister for Anticorruption, Sustainable Development and Human Capital Ministry of Interior Ministry of Finance State Statistical Office Ministry of Education and Science Bureau for Development of Education President's Office The Parliament Crises Management Center

UNESCO	<p>Ministry of Interior Ministry of Labour and Social Policy Crisis Management Center Office of the Ombudsman Ministry of Justice Institute for Social Affairs (Zavod) Ministry of Education and Science Bureau for education Municipalities</p>
UNFPA	<p>Ministry of Health Ministry of Labour and Social Policy Cabinet of the Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs Cabinet of the Deputy Prime Minister for Anticorruption, Sustainable Development and Human Capital Ministry of Interior Ministry of Finance State Statistical Office Ministry of Education and Science Bureau for Development of Education President's Office The Parliament Crises Management Center</p>
UNHCR	<p>Ministry of Interior Ministry of Labour and Social Policy Crisis Management Center Office of the Ombudsman Ministry of Justice Institute for Social Affairs (Zavod) Ministry of Education and Science Bureau for education Municipalities</p>
UNICEF	<p>Ministry of Labour and Social Policy Ministry of Education and Science Bureau for Development of Education Ministry of Health Ministry of Interior Ministry of Justice Office of the Ombudsman State Statistical Office Crisis Management Center</p>
UNIDO	<p>Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy</p>
UNODC	<p>Cabinet of the Deputy Prime Minister for Anticorruption, Sustainable Development and Human Capital Ministry of Interior Ministry of Finance Ministry of Justice Ministry of Health Ministry of Education Customs Service Public Security Directorate (Police/Border Police)</p>
UNOPS	<p>Secretariat for European Affairs Ministry of Labour and Social Policy Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning Ministry of Health Ministry of Foreign Affairs Parliamentary Committee for European Affairs Ombudsman's office General Secretariat of the Government of North Macedonia</p>
UN WOMEN	<p>Ministry of Labour and Social Policy Ministry of Finance Ministry of Economy Ministry of Defence Ministry of Interior Ministry of Health President's Office Secretariat for European Affairs Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy Ministry of Local Self-Government Ministry of Education Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning Ministry of Justice The Parliament (Committee on Equal Rights of Women and Men, Commission for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, Committee for European Affairs) City of Skopje & Municipalities State Statistical Office</p>
WHO	<p>Ministry of Health</p>

Annex 4 SDCF contribution to key recommendations of UN Human Rights Mechanisms

SDCF Outcome Recommendations in chronological order, next reporting cycle

Universal Periodic Review (UPR) (next review cycle in 2023)

2019 Third Periodic Review UPR - Working Group Report - A/HRC/41/11

4.	104.1 Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure;
All	104.2 Ratify the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;
4	104.3 Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance;
4	104.8 Ratify the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide;
4	104.7 Consider ratifying the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families;
4	104.15 Adopt an open, merit-based process when selecting national candidates for United Nations treaty body elections;
All	104.17 Continue its efforts to reduce discrimination and provide equal opportunities, implement the National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2018–2020 and enact the proposed law on protection against discrimination;
All	104.19 Ensure effective mainstreaming of a human rights-based approach into legislation, policies and budgets that affect young people;
1; 2	104.20 Further promote economic and social development and protect the rights of women, children, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups;
4	104.21 Ensure the independent and sustainable functioning of the national oversight institutions, including the communications control agency, the future State commission for the prevention of corruption, the coordinating body for anti-discrimination measures and the agency for media and audiovisual services;
All	104.25 Ensure that sufficient resources are allocated to implement national action plans and national strategies;
4	104.26 Continue the policy of harmonizing national legislation with international human rights standards;
4	104.27 Establish national mechanisms for the presentation of reports to international human rights bodies and to follow up on recommendations received through an effective institutional coordination system in order to make progress in implementing the 2030 Agenda;
4	104.30 Amend the Law on the Ombudsman in order to be fully in line with the Paris Principles and provide the Office of the Ombudsman with the necessary human and financial resources to ensure the effective and independent implementation of its mandate;
4	104.32 Ensure that the national unit for countering illegal migration and human trafficking is adequately resourced, and that the Ministry of the Interior and the Public Prosecutor's Office increase funding to provide further training for staff to avoid the Unit relying on donors;
4	104.33 Take the necessary measures to effectively eliminate and combat corruption, including by appointing a new anti-corruption commission that is free from political pressure or influence;
4	104.35 Continue strengthening the fight against discrimination and incitement to violence against minority and vulnerable groups and ensure that crimes motivated by prejudice are effectively investigated and their perpetrators punished;
4 at all	104.45 Take appropriate measures to prevent and combat all forms of discrimination and to align the national anti-discrimination legislation with international standards, in particular by increasing efforts to protect lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons;
4 at all	104.46 Fight hate speech, both online and offline, and hate crimes against minorities, including the Roma and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex community, by adopting legislation based on international human rights standards;
4 at all	104.54 Continue reforming the national legislation, including by incorporating a definition of racial discrimination in line with the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;
All	104.56 Take effective measures to address multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination against persons with disabilities, especially women and girls;
All	104.57 Continue efforts to fully implement the national strategy for equality and non-discrimination for 2016–2020, including by expediting legislative procedures;

4	104.58 Integrate more the concerns of minorities, indigenous peoples and stateless persons in existing political programmes;
4	104.62 Consider including in the Criminal Code a definition of torture that is in line with the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;
4	104.63 Accelerate progress towards ensuring the protection of human rights defenders against physical attacks, threats, verbal assaults and stigmatization;
4 at all	104.69 Take appropriate measures to prevent and combat all forms of discrimination and violence against women, including domestic violence, in particular by implementing the Istanbul Convention;
4	104.75 Carry out thorough, impartial investigations of cases of abuse of authority by law enforcement personnel;
4	104.76 Immediately implement measures to investigate complaints of ill-treatment in prisons, improve material conditions in detention centres and reduce overcrowding;
4	104.77 Continue to reform the penitentiary system, particularly to strengthen oversight mechanisms, in line with the recommendations of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, so as to provide much-needed information on the treatment of convicts and detainees;
2	104.79 Improve the living conditions of people in closed institutions and ensure their full access to health care;
2; 4	104.84 Continue efforts to fight against violence against women and domestic violence and take appropriate measures to protect the victims;
4	104.87 Pursue its actions and initiatives aimed at implementation of judicial reforms, the promotion of the rights of vulnerable groups and the harmonization of the national legislation with international human rights standards;
4	104.88 Continue with reforms in order to build an independent, impartial, professional and efficient justice system;
4	104.92 Continue to take measures to improve the judicial system and reform the law enforcement agencies;
4	104.97 Create a conducive environment for media pluralism and independence, ensure the safety of journalists and the media and guarantee proper and impartial investigation of all crimes committed against journalists;
4	104.99 Ensure respect for freedom of expression and the right to privacy, including online;
4	104.102 Take further steps to ensure that the importance of the protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression is recognized, by providing a safe and secure environment for civil society activists, human rights defenders and journalists to carry out their work;
4	104.109 Continue to increase actions in the fight against trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and strengthen measures to detect and prevent these cases and ensure access to remedies for victims;
1	104.116 Continue efforts to promote gender equality in the labour market and in decision-making;
2	104.117 Take measures to ensure that the most disadvantaged and marginalized persons are fully protected under the social security system;
2	104.118 Make medical abortion available and accessible throughout the country, in line with the World Health Organization safe abortion guidelines, and urgently remove waiting periods, biased counselling and unnecessary administrative burdens;
2	104.119 Ensure universal coverage by the State health insurance of all costs related to sexual and reproductive health and modern contraceptive methods;
2	104.121 Intensify efforts to ensure that primary health-care services are available and accessible to all citizens, regardless of geographical location;
2; 4	104.123 Establish an effective mechanism to ensure the participation of civil society organizations and affected communities in the creation of national preventive programmes in the field of mother and child health;
2	104.128 Take all necessary measures to promote inclusive education, making sure that minority groups are not neglected and that persons from vulnerable groups are fully integrated in the educational system;
2	104.131 Take further steps to build a more inclusive society by ensuring that sufficient special educators are employed to support the integration of children with disabilities in primary and secondary schools in all municipalities;
2	104.134 Improve the quality and accessibility of the education system and the health-care system for children;
2	104.136 Promote inclusive education, by improving the enrolment and retention of students from minority groups and of Roma students, including in preschool education, and by ensuring access to education for all children, specifically those without identity documentation;
All	104.138 Continue efforts to promote women's participation in political and public life and in decision-making positions;
4	104.140 Strengthen the measures aimed at the eradication of forced marriage of girls and women, and take the necessary measures to punish cases of forced marriage;

4	104.141 Strengthen efforts to protect the rights of children, in particular by promoting the inclusion of children with disabilities in the education system and by further preventing child, early and forced marriage;
4	104.143 Ensure that there are no impediments to the preservation, expression and development of the cultural identity of all citizens;
2	104.148 Make further efforts to improve the social inclusion of national minorities, in particular access to education and health-care services for women, children and people with disabilities;
All	104.155 Intensify its efforts to eradicate structural discrimination against the Roma, to improve their socioeconomic status and to increase their participation in public life and decision-making processes;
2; 4	104.157 Take further concrete and effective action to improve the living conditions and social and economic rights of the Roma community, including simplifying complex civil registration procedures which disproportionately affect them;
2	104.161 Adopt measures to make mobility aids and functional devices, including affordable assistive technologies, available to persons with disabilities;
4	104.163 Ensure that persons with disabilities, particularly blind persons and persons with intellectual impairment, have the right to vote by secret ballot;
4	104.164 Provide adequate and affordable support to ensure that people with disabilities are able to access health, education and employment services and participate fully in society;
4	104.165 Intensify efforts to effectively implement the Strategy on the Integration of Refugees and Foreign Nationals 2015–2025, in order to enhance local integration programmes;
4	104.166 Ensure the protection of the rights of migrants and combat their trafficking;
4	104.167 Put an end to the policy of detention and expulsion of migrants and consider alternatives to detention of asylum seekers, particularly unaccompanied minors;

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) *(State report due 9 November 2022)*

2018 CEDAW Recommendations to the Sixth Periodic Review (CEDAW/C/MKD/CO/6)

All	Ensure that the Convention is applied by public authorities, across all sectors and at all levels, in legislation and policies and by the judiciary in court decisions; provide all women, in particular Roma women, women from rural areas, women migrants, asylum seekers and refugees and women with disabilities, with information about the Convention; strengthen legal training and capacity-building programmes for judges, prosecutors, lawyers and other legal professionals, so as to enable them to apply, invoke and/or refer to the provisions of the Convention directly and to interpret national legislation in line with the Convention.
All	Accelerate the adoption of the draft law on prevention of and protection from discrimination, ensuring protection from discrimination on the basis of sex and protection from multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination; accord priority to the recognition of gender-based violence against women, ensuring a focus on Roma, rural, migrant, asylum-seeking and refugee women, women in prostitution and women with disabilities; strengthen cooperation with civil society organizations and other stakeholders.
4	Ensure that women and girls have equal, sufficient and good quality access to legal aid; ensure that intersecting forms of discrimination are adequately addressed by courts, including through awareness-raising activities and training of judiciary and legal professionals; ensure effective remedies in cases of discrimination on the basis of sex or gender, including restitution, compensation and other civil remedies, rehabilitation and various forms of protection and support; conduct a legislative review with the aim of abolishing any form of compulsory mediation and/or reconciliation in cases of gender-based violence against women; and establish a mechanism to collect information on case law at all levels of the judicial system.
4 at all	Adopt and community-based strategy aimed at eliminating discriminatory gender stereotypes and harmful practices against women, including review of textbooks and curricula, ensuring access to education for girls in the most disadvantaged areas; enforce the provisions concerning registration of marriages, collect data, disaggregated by age and other relevant factors, on child and/or forced marriages and other harmful practices and the related legal sanctions imposed on perpetrators; prevent and monitor hate speech against women and girls on social media.
4 at all	Gender based violence - Prioritize the enactment of legislation and strategy to address all forms of gender-based violence, including violence occurring in marriages and de facto unions, in particular marital rape, and in public and private life; address the underlying causes of gender-based violence and situations of heightened risks for women with disabilities, women in prostitution and women in all situations of detention; amend the Criminal Code in order to ensure that the definition of rape and other sexual crimes is based on the lack of consent and remove the requirement that penetration be an element of the crime; ensure free legal aid and cases brought before the courts, number of temporary protection orders, increase the number of shelters, counselling and rehabilitation services.
4	Trafficking and exploitation of prostitution - Combat violence against women in prostitution and adopt measures to prevent, investigate, prosecute and adequately punish such violence; ensure that health-care and social protection programmes are available to women and strengthen income-generating opportunities for women to leave prostitution.

4	Participation in political and public life - Accelerated recruitment and appointment of women to decision-making positions in public administration, including the diplomatic service; adopt strategies and programmes to facilitate and promote the involvement of women in political and public life, in particular women belonging to disadvantaged groups; promote the equal participation of women in decision-making processes at all levels in the public and private sectors and ensure that Roma women, rural women and women with disabilities in particular have access to decision-making positions and mechanisms in public institutions.
4	Nationality - Collect, analyse and make available statistics, disaggregated by sex, on stateless persons within its territory; ensure that women and girls have equal access to identity documentation; or ensure access to birth registration and that public authorities uphold the rights of Roma women to acquisition, change and retention of nationality; ensure that the existing mechanisms for providing access to health care, housing, employment and social protection programmes reach stateless Roma persons, in particular women and girls.
2	Education - Adopt targeted measures to combat school drop-out and ensure that rural women, women belonging to ethnic minority groups, women and girls with disabilities and migrant, asylum-seeking and refugee women have access to mainstream education, and combat and eliminate discriminatory attitudes against, and stigmatization and bullying of, women in disadvantaged groups in education; equal access for all women and men to affordable and high-quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university education.
1	Employment - Undertake comprehensive data collection, disaggregating those data by relevant factors to identify and address the underlying causes of the gender pay gap; adopt effective control mechanisms to ensure compliance with the obligation of equal pay for work of equal value; adopt legislation and programmes to facilitate access to the formal labour market and give priority to the adoption of legislation and public policies to recognize caregiving as a form of work; adopt measures to accelerate access for women to employment, provide rural women with access to different types of pensions, social benefits and allowances to uphold an adequate standard of living; expedite the amendment of legislation concerning paternity leave/
2 at all	Health - Ensure access to affordable and high-quality health care and family planning and sexual and reproductive health services, take measures to prevent stigmatization and prejudices against Roma women among medical practitioners, integrate Roma health mediators into the public health-care system, delivery of age-appropriate education on sexual and reproductive health in school and prevention of early pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases; ensure that modern forms of contraception and treatment are available to all women and girls and raise their awareness on unwanted pregnancy, and address the stigma experienced by lesbian, bisexual and transgender women and intersex persons when they endeavour to gain access to health care, including sexual and reproductive health care.
1 at all	Economic empowerment of women - Allocate additional earmarked financial resources for increasing a access for women to microcredit, loans and other forms of financial credit in order to promote entrepreneurship and empower women economically, in particular with respect to rural women, Roma women, migrant and refugee women and women with disabilities, and improving their managerial skills; ensure women's participation in planning and implementing national strategies to achieve SDGs.
1; 3	Rural women -Develop a strategy to ensure access for rural women to land titles and ownership and adopt measures to protect their security of land tenure; ensure that rural women have access to subsidies and rural development support measures to the greatest possible extent and are represented in decision-making processes at all levels in the agricultural sector, including policies concerning disaster risk reduction, post-disaster management and climate change and programmes.
All	Roma women - Adopt targeted measures, including temporary special measures, to combat intersecting forms of discrimination against Roma women and girls, including in education, employment, health care and housing; develop specific poverty alleviation and social inclusion programmes for Roma women and girls; engage with civil society organizations representing Roma women in order to strengthen advocacy against ethnic discrimination and promote tolerance and the equal participation of Roma women in all areas of life.
4	Migrant, asylum-seeking and refugee women - improve the availability of open reception facilities for female migrants and provide a sufficient number of female staff members among medical and security personnel, frontline workers and other professionals are gender sensitive; ensure that refugee status determination procedures and decisions on appeal are conducted in a gender-sensitive manner and access to free legal aid; employment, health care, housing and education and benefit from reunification

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) (State combined second, third and fourth periodic reports due 29 June 2026)

2018 CRPD Recommendations to the State Initial Report (CRPD/C/MKD/CO/1)

4	Ensure harmonization of legislation and policies with the Convention; conduct continuous campaigns about the Convention in the public and private sectors and among persons with disabilities and their representative organizations; and make sure that disability assessment method fully incorporate the human rights-based approach to disability.
4	Ensure that organizations of persons with disabilities are meaningfully involved in the design and evaluation of laws, policies, action plans, timelines and budgets and that their views are considered prior to adopting decisions affecting them.
4	Revise all legislation to incorporate all forms of discrimination on grounds of disability, including multiple and intersecting discrimination, especially for women n and girls; and establish measures to provide redress, including compensation, for persons who have faced discrimination on the basis of disability, and sanction perpetrators.
4	Allocate adequate resources for the implementation of the new National Strategy on Equal Rights of Persons with Disabilities, particularly regarding the support services necessary to ensure that persons with disabilities can live independently.

4; 2	Implement effective legal, policy and practical measures to address gender-based violence against women and girls with disabilities; prevent and investigate violations of their human rights and prosecute and punish those responsible; and ensure that those affected have access to immediate protection and accessible support services, including reasonable accommodation in mainstream services and shelter facilities.
2	Mainstream the rights of children with disabilities, including the principle of the best interest of the child, in national policies, plans, programmes and compliance frameworks that apply to children and young people in general
2	Promote comprehensive strategies and mechanisms for the full participation of children with disabilities in consultations, decision-making processes and policy development, through representative organizations of persons with disabilities, in order to promote an adequate choice of services that best fit the needs of the child and evolving capacities.
1; 2	Review its legislation to provide for the mandatory application of accessibility standards in all areas, particularly regarding buildings, transport, other facilities and services open to the public, and information and communications technologies and systems, and for the strict application of sanctions to those who fail to comply.
1; 2	Ensure that access to buildings, transport, information and communications technologies and systems, other facilities and services open to the public and public institutions and services is available on all the territory of the State party;
4	Repeal all discriminatory provisions that permit deprivation of legal capacity based on impairment and replace them with supported decision-making mechanisms that respect the autonomy, will and preferences of the person concerned;
4	Take measures to align the laws requiring courts to facilitate trial procedures and procedural accommodation for persons with disabilities and extend such measures to the police and prosecution services; and effectively implement the principle of procedural accommodation.
4	Review the existing legislation and policies to incorporate remedies and sanctions that prevent, in both the public and the private spheres, all forms of violence against and abuse and ill-treatment of persons with disabilities, particularly women, girls and children with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities; and conduct investigations into all allegations of violence against and abuse of persons with disabilities, especially those with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities, and suspicious deaths of residents in institutions conduct, and effective investigation.
2	Provide adequate human, financial and technical resources for the full implementation of deinstitutionalization, particularly for implementing the transition to independent living conditions;
2; 4	Allocate sufficient resources for the provision of personal assistance and ensure that services in the community are available, accessible, affordable, accommodating and of high quality in order to enable persons with disabilities to exercise their right to live independently and be included in the community, including assistive devices, including assistance technologies.
4	Consider adopting the bill on the right to access information and eliminate any limitation that hinders the exercise by persons with disabilities of their freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas on an equal basis with others, including by ensuring that website owners and designers make their websites accessible to persons with disabilities, especially persons who are blind or visually impaired.
2	Adopt a strategy to ensure free or affordable access for persons with disabilities to all required health services, including by training medical personnel on the human rights-based approach to disability; removing physical obstacles to health centres and providing information in accessible formats.
1	Take effective and affirmative measures to ensure the employment of persons with disabilities in the public and private sectors and ensure that the open labour market is inclusive and accessible, that reasonable accommodation is available and that the duty to provide reasonable accommodation is explicitly prescribed in legislation.
4	Review its election laws with a view to removing the prerequisites that prevent persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities from exercising their right to vote and run for office.
4	Adopt measures to ensure the accessibility of polling stations and their environments, particularly for persons with disabilities who live in institutions, including the provision of electoral materials and information in accessible formats for all persons with disabilities.
All	Adopt measures to ensure the effective participation, inclusion and consultation of persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations, in international cooperation programmes.
4	Provide sufficient funding for monitoring frameworks and organizations of persons with disabilities to enable them to monitor the CRPD implementation.

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) *(State fifth report due 30 June 2021)*

2016 CESCR Recommendations to the Combined Second and Forth Periodic Report (E/C.12/MKD/CO/2-4)

1; 2; 4	Conduct the population census without further delay, improve timely collection of reliable data on the situation in all areas of Covenant rights, robust analysis, and effective and efficient data management.
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1; 2; 4	Reminds that decentralization of powers by no means reduces the responsibility of the State party for fulfilling its obligations under the Covenant, increase the awareness of the municipal authorities and enable all municipalities to carry out their responsibilities to enable all people, in urban and rural areas, to enjoy the Covenant rights on an equal basis, and conduct a comprehensive analysis of the impact of the decentralization process on the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights.
1; 2; 4	Consider amending the Law on Free Legal Aid in order to ensure that all people, including disadvantaged and marginalized individuals, particularly women, Roma, people living in rural areas, migrants and asylum seekers, are able to claim their economic, social and cultural rights with professional assistance and that it allocate sufficient resources to the legal aid programmes.
1; 2; 4	Increase the level of public spending, at both the national and municipal levels, to progressive realization of economic, social and cultural rights, and take all measures necessary to ensure that the planning and spending of public funds is carried out in a transparent manner.
1; 2; 4	Combat corruption, including by improving public governance and ensuring transparency in the conduct of public affairs and raising awareness of public and government officials on anti-corruption measures, as well as about the unacceptability of bribery;(b) Strengthen the enforcement of the Law on Prevention of Corruption and combat impunity for corruption, particularly involving high-level officials; (c) Enhance the independence and functioning of the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption.
1; 2; 4	Intensify its efforts to eradicate the structural discrimination against Roma and to improve their socioeconomic status, including by designing targeted policies and programmes for the realization of the economic, social and cultural rights of the Roma population on the basis of reliable statistical data as well as thorough and regular monitoring of the results of such policies and programmes, as well as address the situation of stateless persons in line with the requirements of the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons of 1954.
1; 2	Concrete targets and time frame are set for increasing women's labour participation and employment rates and develop employment programmes targeted at women, paying special attention to ethnic minorities, and take effective measures to narrow the gender pay gap.
1	Upgrade the vocational skills of the workforce to meet the needs of the labour market; create decent job opportunities, including through implementation of the Active Labour Market Programmes; develop and implement special measures to promote the employment of youth, women, persons with disabilities and Roma, including through quota systems; and provide reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities. Ensure that workers in the informal economy are protected under labour legislation and enjoy their rights to fair and favorable conditions of work and to social security and intensify its efforts to facilitate the transition from the informal economy to the formal economy.
1; 2	Bring the Law on the Minimum Wage into line with the Covenant and the Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970 (No. 131) of the International Labour Organization (ILO), and apply the same level of minimum wage across all sectors, including the textile, garment and leather industries, and increase the minimum wages and regularly adjust them to the cost of living so as to ensure an adequate standard of living for workers and their families.
4	Ensure the most disadvantaged and marginalized individuals are fully protected under its social security system, streamline the application procedure for entitlement to social security benefits and increase their level of benefits to ensure an adequate standard of living and ensure their timely payment.
1; 2	Intensify its efforts to combat poverty, including through the comprehensive analysis of the needs of the most disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups and the adoption of concrete and targeted measures to address them. Such measures could include effective measures to reduce income inequality among the population, including through reforms of the tax system and the social security system.
2	Protect the right to adequate food, including the adoption of a national strategy.
2	Takes measures necessary to provide affordable social housing units for disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and families, including especially Roma families, and to improve living conditions in informal settlements and collective centres, and guarantee security of tenure for all residents of informal settlements, particularly Roma, and adopts a legal framework establishing procedures to be followed in the case of evictions that is in line with the international standards.
2	Intensify its efforts to ensure that primary health-care services are available and accessible to all regardless of geographical location, securing a sufficient number of qualified medical professionals and expanding the coverage and the benefits under the Health Insurance Fund.
2	Take all measures necessary to increase the number of gynecologists in the country and to ensure that all women have access to gynecological health services within their municipality; improve school education on sexual and reproductive health that is up to date, age appropriate and based on a human rights perspective; and ensure that modern contraception methods are affordable to all, including by adding contraceptives to the list of medicines covered by the Health Insurance Fund.
2	Take effective measures to reduce drug abuse; to reinstate harm reduction programmes in the National Strategy on Drugs 2014-2020; provide sufficient support for the implementation of the strategy and to ensure the maintenance of the programmes funded by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria; and review the restrictive provisions introduced in the Law on the Control of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.
2	Take steps to progressively develop and apply appropriate indicators on the implementation of economic, social and cultural rights in order to facilitate the assessment of progress achieved by the State party in complying with its obligations under the Covenant for various segments of the population. In this context, the Committee refers the State party to, inter alia, the conceptual and methodological framework on human rights indicators developed by OHCHR .

International Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) (State report due on 17 September 2018)

2015 CERD Recommendations to the Combined Eight and Tenth Periodic Reports (CERD/C/MKD/CO/8-10)

4	Conduct a census as soon as possible, or to collect updated disaggregated data on the demographic composition of its population by other appropriate methods, in full respect of the principles of confidentiality, informed consent and self-identification, particular data specifying where each minority/majority community is living.
4 at all	Revise its Criminal Code to ensure that it contains a clear and comprehensive definition of racial discrimination fully consistent with the Convention; include provisions on the prohibition of organizations that promote or incite racial discrimination and participation in or assistance to such organizations/
4	Clarify the mandate of national mechanisms, such as the Ombudsman and the Commission, avoiding duplication and encouraging coordination and synergy between them to enhance the protection against racial discrimination and violations of other human rights.
4	Take steps to respond to the causes that lead persons belonging to these communities to leave or seek refuge in other countries and take the necessary steps to prevent questioning, arrests and searches solely on the basis of the ethnicity of individuals.
4 at all	Firmly address the issue of segregation of Roma children in education; eliminate any discrimination against Roma students in their access to adequate education and combat stereotypes that lead to social exclusion; strengthen its efforts to provide adequate social housing to Roma families, including by allocating an adequate budget for such programmes; continue to take special measures for Roma by promoting the employment and advancement of Roma and combating their social exclusion.
All	Allocate sufficient resources to the implementation of the National Action Plan on Roma Women (2016-2020) and the grant scheme "Integration of Women from Ethnic Communities in the Labour Market"; raise awareness on gender-based violence and child marriages and their negative impact of this practice on girls' education, health and employment prospects.
2; 4	Provide adequate institutional protection to children living in the street and enhance the efficiency of protocols aiming at the reintegration of these children into their family, address root causes; continue to develop prevention programmes and ensure access for all to the rehabilitation programmes for drug users, including those under the age of 18; and take measures to identify children whose births were not registered and who lack identity documents and continue to proceed with retroactive birth registration and issuance of documents, including, if possible, by simplifying the entire process.
4	Strengthen the efforts for the implementation of the principle of adequate and equitable representation, strive for the representation of smaller communities in managerial posts and fully cooperate with the Ombudsman in monitoring the implementation of this principle.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR) (State report due in 2020)

2015 CCPR Recommendations to the Third Periodic Report (CCPR/C/MKD/CO/3)

4	Ensure that the draft amendments to the Law on the Ombudsman are in line with the Paris Principles (General Assembly resolution 48/134, annex), and provide the Office of the Ombudsman with the human and financial resources necessary to ensure that it can effectively and independently implement its mandate
4	Take the measures necessary to raise awareness of the complaints' procedure under the Optional Protocol, and establish mechanisms to facilitate the implementation of the Committee's future Views, so as to guarantee the right to an effective remedy.
4; 1	Strengthen its efforts to increase the participation of women in the political and public sectors, particularly in decision-making positions and, if necessary, through appropriate temporary special measures to give full effect to the provisions of the Covenant, to close the wage gap between men and women and eliminate gender biases and stereotypes on the role and responsibilities of men and women in the family and society.
2; 4	Ensure that cases of domestic violence are thoroughly investigated, that perpetrators are prosecuted and, if convicted, punished with appropriate sanctions, and that victims have access to effective remedies and means of protection, including an adequate number shelters, specialized assistance to all victims of domestic violence, carry out awareness-raising campaigns to sensitize the population, training sessions for local authorities and law enforcement officials, as well as social workers and medical personnel, on how to detect and adequately advise victims of domestic violence.
4 at all	Strengthen its efforts to eliminate police brutality and the excessive use of force by law enforcement officials and ensure that the police force receives quality professional training that includes full respect for human rights, and ensure that cases of torture and excessive use of force are systematically investigated and perpetrators punished and victims re awarded compensation.
2	Improve the living conditions in detention facilities on a sustainable basis with regard to access to adequate health-care services and sanitary conditions, reduce overcrowding, including by using alternatives to detention.
4	Reinforce measures to guarantee and protect the full independence and impartiality of the judiciary by ensuring that judiciaries operate without pressure and interference from the executive power or other outside influences; Ensure that the appointment and promotion of judges is made in accordance with objective criteria of competence and merit and that dismissal of judges takes place with full respect for due process and on the basis of predetermination of the causes for dismissal; Ensure the right to a fair trial without undue delay, and increase the number of qualified and professionally trained judicial personnel.

4	Take measures to combat trafficking in persons, systematically and vigorously investigate and prosecute perpetrators and ensure that, when convicted, they are adequately sanctioned, and guarantee adequate protection, reparation and compensation to victims, including rehabilitation.
4 at all	Ensure that the right to freedom of movement in the State party is fully respected.
4	Ensure that any restrictions to the freedom of expression fully comply with the strict requirements laid down in the Covenant, and ensure the full enjoyment by all of the freedom of expression and association, and protect journalists and others who exercise these rights from harassment, intimidation and violence, and promptly investigate such cases and prosecute those responsible.
2; 4	Accelerate efforts to identify children whose birth has not been registered and children without identity documents and to ensure the retroactive registration of births and the issuance of documents for those children, ensuring that these children are not refused access to health, education and other public services, and further strengthen provision of birth certificates for all children, particularly in rural areas, through simplifying registration procedures.
All	Take measures to eliminate all forms of institutional and de facto discrimination against children, particularly children who are members of minority communities and children who are held in correctional institutions. It should ensure that drug-prevention and rehabilitation programmes are available to all children.
4	Ensure that surveillance activities and any interference with the right to privacy complies with the principles of legality, proportionality and necessity, and that persons who are unlawfully monitored are systematically informed thereof and have access to adequate remedies.

Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT) (State report submitted on 29 June 2020, due May 2019)

2015 CAT Recommendations to the Third Periodic Report (CAT/C/MKD/CO/3)

4	Take measures to protect the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex community from attack, abuse and arbitrary detention and all such acts of violence are promptly, effectively and impartially investigated and perpetrators are brought to justice, victims provided with redress and law enforcement personnel given proper training, and include representatives of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex community in any matter concerning their interests.
4 at all	Combat and prevent discriminatory police misconduct by ensuring that all alleged cases of excessive use of force by law enforcement officials against members of the Roma community are promptly and effectively recorded and investigated and, as appropriate, prosecuted and punished, ensuring that the victims are provided with an opportunity to seek redress; and provided training on human rights of law enforcement officials.
4	Increase efforts to prevent, combat and punish violence against women and girls, including domestic violence; implement the existing legal framework by promptly, effectively and impartially investigating all reports of violence and prosecuting and punishing perpetrators; encouraging women to report incidents of domestic and sexual violence by raising awareness and providing adequate assistance, protection and redress of victims.
4	Ensure that detention is only applied as a last resort, and alternatives to detention are available in law and practice; ensure that stateless persons, asylum seekers, irregular migrants and refugees, are not held in detention indefinitely and have access to an effective judicial remedy; put an end to the inhuman and degrading conditions of detention places; fully respect the non-refoulement principle; find alternative accommodation for unaccompanied minors so that they are not kept in the same facilities as the adults, and make sure that appointed special guardians maintain regular contact and help them claim their rights.

Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Arm Conflict to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (see CRC next periodic report below)

2012 CRC Recommendations to the Optional Protocol Initial Report (CRC/C/OPSC/MKD/CO/1)

4	Develop protocols and specialized services to ensure that child victims are provided with appropriate assistance for their physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration.
4	Ensure explicit prohibition of trade and export of small arms and light weapons to countries where children are known to have been involved in armed conflict; and that illicit activities, including the manufacturing and trafficking of small arms and light weapons, are criminalized, that records are maintained and firearms marked.
4	Pay increased attention to children particularly at risk of becoming victims of offences under the Optional Protocol, especially Roma children, children in street situations, children in residential care, children among refugees and persons under subsidiary protection, and unaccompanied and separated children, with special attention to their birth registration, education and health care.
4	Ensure the protection of child victims and witnesses at all stages of the criminal justice process and be guided Guidelines on Justice in Matters Involving Child Victims and Witnesses of Crime (Economic and Social Council resolution 2005/20, annex).
4	In cooperation with NGOs and supporting NGO activities in this area ensure that adequate services are available for child victims of all practices covered under the Optional Protocol, including for their full social reintegration and their full physical and psychological recovery and; access to shelters where they are separated from adults; continue specialized medical and psychological care services for child victims, including by ensuring access and availability of child mental health professionals.

Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (State combined third, fourth, fifth and sixth periodic report submitted on 12 March 2019, due March 2017; 8 February 2021 Pre-sessional Working Group)

2010 CRC Recommendations to the Second Periodic Report (CRC/C/MKD/CO/2)

4	Continue and strengthen data collection system as a basis for assessing progress achieved in the realization of child rights, whereby data will be disaggregated by sex, age, urban and rural area with specific emphasis on children in vulnerable situations, including child victims of abuse, neglect or ill-treatment, children with disabilities, refugee and asylum-seeking children, children in conflict with the law, working children, and children in street situations.
4	Ensure that all relevant legislation guarantees the right of the child to be heard in judicial and administrative proceedings and in accordance with his or her evolving capacities and promote and facilitate respect for the views of children and their participation in all matters affecting them.
2; 4	Prohibit corporal punishment in the home, identify protection gaps in order to end the use of corporal punishment in all areas, including in schools, in the home, in the penal system, and in alternative care settings; protect children from other cruel or degrading forms of punishment.
2; 4	Prohibit all violence against children, prioritize prevention, promote non-violent values and awareness-raising, enhance the capacity of all who work with and for children, ensure accountability and end impunity, and work in partnership with civil society and in particular with the involvement of children, to ensure that every child is protected from all forms of physical, sexual and psychological, and have access to specialized services for recovery, rehabilitation and family reintegration.
2 at all	Continue to strengthen measures to protect and promote the rights of children with disabilities, inter alia, by developing a comprehensive policy for the protection of children with disabilities and for their equal access to social, educational and other services; promote and expand community-based and family-focused programmes, including parent support groups; ensure that children with disabilities are able to exercise their right to education and participation.
2	Continue raising the standard of health among children, in particular by strengthening efforts to prevent and reduce infant mortality among the Roma community; increasing the quality and availability of health services to eliminate urban-rural disparities; ensuring the provision of primary health care, by extending coverage to children belonging to the most vulnerable population; and raising the quality of pre- and postnatal health care for mothers with a view to preventing perinatal mortality.
2	Ensure that adolescents have access to age-appropriate and confidential culturally and adolescent-sensitive, confidential counselling, care and rehabilitation and for those abusing drugs/alcohol.
2	Prioritize the protection of an adequate standard of living for children in vulnerable situations, including in legislation, policies and programmes for social protection and distribution of child allowances and welfare.
2 at all	Undertake measures to ensure that children are not denied access to education on any grounds, and to that effect develop specialized services to prepare children in street situations for reintegration into the school system; promote and provide in practice possibilities for children from the different communities to study and interact together with a view to reverse the current trend of segregation along ethnic lines at all levels – national, regional and municipal; invest in the training of teachers and development of curricula, textbooks and other aides; promote the integration of Roma children in mainstream education; promote, develop and ensure access to early childhood development and education.
4	Ensure that unaccompanied and separated children are appointed a guardian and are accommodated separately from adults, and that children among refugees and asylum-seekers are assured of access to education, health care, social protection and housing.
1	Strengthen the implementation of labour laws and policies and investigate the root causes in order to prevent children at risk from child labour, particularly in the informal economy.
2; 4	Provide adequate protection and assistance for recovery and reintegration to children in street situations; raise public awareness of the rights and needs of children in street situations and combat misconceptions and prejudices; and ensure that children in street situations are consulted in their development process.
4	Continue and increase efforts to prevent, protect children from and strengthen measures to prosecute the crimes of sale and trafficking, conduct capacity-building programmes for law enforcement officers and judiciary; investigate and prosecute all cases of sale and trafficking to avoid impunity; strengthen measures to protect child victims and ensure access to child-sensitive social and psychological assistance for their recovery and reintegration; address the root causes the sale of children, child trafficking and abduction, in cooperation with NGOs and the media.
4	Ensure that juvenile justice standards are fully implemented, in particular ensure the separation of juvenile and adult offenders; take effective measures to improve conditions in all places where children are detained and reduce overcrowding; ensure that children are deprived of their liberty only as a measure of last resort especially by developing measures alternative to detention, including possibilities for restorative justice, and that sentences are reviewed.

ACRONYMS AND TERMS

BCM	Business Confederation of Macedonia	NCD	Non-communicable Disease
BFS	Balkan Foundation for Sustainable Development	NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
CCA	Common Country Analysis	NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women	NPAA	National Plan for Adoption of Acquis
CEFTA	Central European Free Trade Agreement	NYCM	The National Youth Council of North Macedonia
CNVP	Connecting Natural Values and People	OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
CO₂	Carbon Dioxide	OP	Optional Protocol
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child	ORM	Organization of Employers of Macedonia
CRMW	Convention on Protection of Rights of All Migrant Workers	OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	PAF	Performance Assessment Framework
CSO	Civil Society Organisation	PAR	Public Administration reform
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility	PFM	Public Finance Management
CSWs	Centres for Social Work	PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
DCAF	Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance	PSD	Partnership for Sustainable Development
DPOs	Disabled Persons' organizations	PWDs	Persons with Disabilities
DPPA	UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs	RC	Resident Coordinator
ECD	Early Childhood Development	RYCO	Regional Youth Cooperation Office
EFTA	European Free Trade Association	SDC	Swiss Development Cooperation
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality	SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
EU	European Union	SDSN	Sustainable Development Solutions Network
FACE	Fund Authorization and Certificate of Expenditures	SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	SILC	Survey on Income and Living Conditions
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment	SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
GBV	Gender Based Violence	SSO	State Statistical Office
GCF	Green Climate Fund	TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
GEF	Global Environment Facility	UN	United Nations
GHGs	Green House Gases	UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH	UNCG	United Nations Communications Group
HACT	Harmonised Cash Transfers	UNCT	United Nations Country Team
HDI	Human Development Index	UNDAF	UN Development Assistance Framework
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus	UNDESA	United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs
ICMPD	International Centre for Migration Policy Development	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development	UNDRR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
ICT	Information and Communications Technology	UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
IFI	International Financial Institution	UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
IFMIS	Integrated Financial Management Information System (Ministry of Finance)	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)
ILO	International Labour Organisation	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
IMF	International Monetary Fund	UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
IOM	International Organisation for Migration	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
IPA	EU Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance	UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
IRENA	International Renewable Energy Agency	UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
IT	Information Technology	UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature	UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
JSC	Joint Steering Committee	UPR	Universal Periodic Review
JWP	Joint Work Plan	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex	USD	United States Dollar
LNOB	Leave No One Behind	VAW	Violence against women
MACEF	Macedonian Center for Energy Efficiency	VNR	Voluntary National Review
MAF	Management and Accountability Framework	WB	World Bank
MARRI	Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative	WBA	Waste Batteries and Accumulators
MASIT	Information and Communications Technologies Chamber of commerce	WBIF	Western Balkans Investment Fund
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning	WEEE	Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment
MES	Macedonian Ecological Society	WFD	Water Framework Directive
MICS	Multi-Indicator Cluster Survey	WHO	World Health Organisation
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	WTO	World Trade Organization
NALAS	Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South-East Europe	ZELS	Association of Local Self-Government Units
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation		

LIST OF TABLES AND VISUALS

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Table 2: LNOB drivers

Visual 3: UN entities' Government counterparts



UNITED NATIONS
NORTH MACEDONIA



Republic of North Macedonia
Government of the Republic of North Macedonia

The 2021-2025 United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (SDCF) is a key strategic document guiding the work of the UN System in the Republic of North Macedonia, developed in close partnership with the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia and other stakeholders.