

# UN-Malaysia Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2021-2025

## Evaluation Report



Prepared by the Evaluation Team

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***Disclaimer:*** This is an independent evaluation report. The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed are those of the evaluation team and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations.

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## List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

11MP	11th Malaysia Plan
12MP	12th Malaysia Plan
CCA	Common Country Analysis
CF	Cooperation Framework
CPD	Country Programme Document
CRR	Country Results Reports
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
DCO	Development Coordination Office
DOSM	Department of Statistics Malaysia
EDM	Evaluation Design Matrix
FGD	Focused Group Discussion
GDI	Gender Development Index
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
GII	Gender Inequality Index
HDI	Human Development Index
HR	Human Rights
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach to Development
IHDI	Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ITC	International Trade Centre
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
JP	Joint Programme
KII	Key Informant Interview
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation

OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
PHDI	Planetary Pressures-adjusted Human Development Index
RCO	Office of the UN Resident Coordinator
RRF	Results and Resources Framework
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SPA	Strategic Priority Areas
SPV	Shared Prosperity Vision
SUHAKAM	Human Rights Commission of Malaysia
TBE	Theory-Based Evaluation
ToC	Theory of Change
UN Women	United Nations Women
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDRR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
UNDS	UN Development System
UNEDAP	United Nations Evaluation Development Group for Asia and the Pacific
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNGCMYB	United Nations Global Compact Network Malaysia & Brunei
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNRC	United Nations Resident Coordinator
UNSDCF	UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
UNU-IIGH	United Nations University International Institute for Global Health
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
VNR	Voluntary National Review
WFP-UNHRD	World Food Programme-UN Humanitarian Response Depot
WHO	World Health Organization

# 1. Executive Summary

The evaluation of the UN-Malaysia Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (CF) 2021-2025 aimed to assess its alignment with national priorities, effectiveness in advancing sustainable development outcomes, and the level of internal coordination across the UN system. This is vital for ensuring accountability to stakeholders, extracting key lessons, and providing strategic guidance for the design of the next CF (2026-2030).

The CF 2021-2025 marks Malaysia's first cooperation framework with the UN after the 2019 UN Development System reform and the first such document since the UN started its work in the country. This reflects a significant milestone in the country's collaboration with the UN. Designed to align more effectively with national priorities and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the CF has served as the de facto guide for the UN's work in Malaysia since 2021, despite remaining unsigned. Importantly, its Results and Resources Framework received formal written endorsement from the Government in November 2021, underpinning its strategic relevance. Considering that the CF is not yet fully formalized, the evaluation adopted a focused, largely internal approach, examining the UN Country Team's (UNCT) collective contribution to CF outcomes through both individual and joint programmes or initiatives. The process also integrated insights from the concurrent evaluations of the Country Programme Documents for UNDP, UNFPA, and UNICEF, ensuring complementarity and consistency.

The evaluation employed a mixed-methods approach to data collection, incorporating semi-structured key informant interviews, focus group discussions with select informants, a structured online perception survey, and a comprehensive document review. This diverse data was analysed using a theory-based evaluation approach, allowing for an assessment of causal pathways and the alignment of activities with expected outcomes. The evaluation also adopted a participatory approach, engaging a wide range of stakeholders, including the UNCT, UN entities, the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator (RCO), national partners from the Government, civil society, private sector, academia, and international development partners. A mainstreaming approach was applied to integrate normative principles such as human rights, gender equality, disability inclusion, and environmental sustainability into both data collection and analysis processes.

The findings of the evaluation are structured around three thematic clusters — Relevance and Adaptability, Performance and Impact Orientation, and Coordination and Coherence — to ensure a cohesive and comprehensive analysis. These clusters examine the CF's alignment with the national priorities and international commitments, its effectiveness in driving outcome-level change, and its ability to foster strategic coherence and synergies across UN agencies and national stakeholders. The analysis also highlights the CF's relevance in addressing normative priorities such as gender equality, human rights, disability inclusion, and environmental sustainability, as well as its adaptability to emerging challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

Based on these findings, the evaluation adopted an integrated approach to interpreting results through conclusions that synthesize insights across various areas. This methodology ensures that the analysis captures the interconnected nature of the CF's relevance, performance, and coordination dimensions, providing a nuanced understanding of its strengths and areas for

improvement. The recommendations then build on these conclusions, offering actionable, strategic, and impactful guidance aimed at enhancing the CF's ability to drive sustainable development outcomes.

The evaluation's main findings and conclusions highlight both strengths and areas for improvement, offering a pathway to strengthen the CF's relevance, effectiveness, and coherence. Key conclusions include:

- **Relevance and Adaptability:** The UN has maintained its relevance in Malaysia by aligning the CF with national priorities and international commitments, demonstrating adaptability to evolving contexts and providing strong normative complementarity in areas such as human rights, gender equality, disability inclusion, and environmental sustainability. As Malaysia transitions toward high-income status, the UN has an opportunity to adopt a more integrated approach to address both the priorities of this transition and the remaining “last mile” socioeconomic and environmental challenges. This includes targeted support to specific policy areas critical for the transition, facilitation of innovative SDG financing mechanisms, deeper collaboration with the private sector, and promotion of evidence-based policymaking, all aimed at strengthening the UN's transformative role in supporting the country's sustainable development priorities.
- **Performance and Impact Orientation:** The CF has contributed significantly to institutional and legislative reforms, particularly in social and environmental domains, while providing technical support in economic and governance areas. At the same time, gaps in performance measurement, such as the absence of specific output-level indicators, hinder accurate tracking of progress and attribution of outcomes to CF interventions. Additionally, instability and limited functionality of the Results Groups for Strategic Priority Areas 2 (Planet), 3 (Prosperity) and 4 (Peace), coupled with gaps in the formulation and execution of UN-supported policy initiatives, constrain the CF's overall impact. Strengthening grassroots engagement could improve impact orientation by supporting alignment of federally adopted policies and action plans with local needs and ensuring that local innovations inform national policymaking.
- **Resource Mobilization and Financing:** The UN has successfully mobilized resources for the CF, achieving nearly 60% of the estimated funding needs by 2023, reflecting strong local ownership and commitment to SDG initiatives. However, limited private sector engagement points to a need for more innovative and diversified financing strategies, particularly as international donors in upper-middle-income countries shift focus to regional and global public goods. Mechanisms such as the Malaysia-UN SDG Trust Fund present valuable opportunities to address national priorities, and their potential can be fully realized by fostering robust and well-designed interventions. Moving forward, expanding financing mechanisms and fostering strategic private sector collaboration will be critical to bridging resource gaps and ensuring sustainable, long-term development.
- **Normative Integration:** The CF effectively integrates human rights, gender equality, disability inclusion, and environmental sustainability across its strategic priorities, with the

UN's rights-based approach widely valued for its focus on social protections and inclusion of vulnerable groups. However, opportunities remain to broaden the rights agenda, including a stronger emphasis on marginalized groups such as indigenous peoples, older persons, and persons with disabilities, alongside stateless, undocumented, migrant, and refugee populations. Expanding the scope to include cultural rights and enhancing support for female economic participation, particularly in the context of the care economy, can further strengthen the CF's impact. Ensuring a more systematic and comprehensive focus on disability inclusion through both targeted interventions and mainstreaming is also critical. Continuous staff capacity development, including practical guidance on the application of mainstreaming tools, including gender equality and human rights markers, will be essential to address inconsistencies and embed normative principles systematically across UN activities.

- **Coordination and Coherence:** The governance and implementation arrangements of the CF have demonstrated significant strengths, enhancing synergies between UN agencies through joint initiatives and programmes, with the UNCT serving as a fully functional platform for coordination and strategic alignment. Flexibility in configuring agency contributions beyond formal designations highlights the UN's adaptability to emerging needs, while smaller thematic working groups have effectively fostered operational synergies by narrowing focus and enhancing collaboration. Joint programmes have successfully addressed regional and global public goods, aligning with the UN's strategic focus on shared benefits and transboundary challenges.

However, the absence of a formalized CF, including the non-establishment of key governance structures, particularly the Joint Steering Committee, has constrained high-level strategic coordination and decision-making. This gap has resulted in less structured priority alignment and reduced agility, with cascading effects on other governance elements, including the limited functionality of the Results Groups. The absence of a Business Sector Advisory Group also limited private sector engagement, which is critical for mobilizing SDG financing and fostering innovation. Strengthening governance structures, incentivizing meaningful participation, promoting collective accountability, and formalizing the CF will be essential to enhance the CF's coordination mechanisms and ensure its effectiveness in advancing Malaysia's development priorities.

- **Role of the Resident Coordinator and RCO:** The post-UNDS reform has significantly enhanced the RC and RCO's role in fostering coherence among UN agencies, strengthening joint convening power, leading advocacy on normative aspects of sustainable development, and facilitating policy dialogue on priority areas requiring nuanced engagement. These efforts have helped bridge gaps between the UN, the Government, and other stakeholders, positively influencing collaborative approaches to development priorities. However, externally, limited familiarity with the RCO's distinct coordination role — focused on facilitation rather than direct implementation — posed some challenges to fully leveraging its strategic value. Similarly, awareness of the CF as the UN's overarching strategic planning document is uneven, partly due to its unsigned status and novelty. Enhanced communication efforts, particularly after the CF's formal

signing, are essential to reinforce its strategic purpose and build broader stakeholder understanding of its role in guiding the UN's collective contributions to national development priorities.

These findings and conclusions underscore the need for a recalibrated, integrated approach to strengthen the CF. Reflecting this, the evaluation team developed a set of strategic recommendations aimed at addressing the interconnected challenges and opportunities identified, ensuring that the CF remains a dynamic and impactful framework for advancing sustainable development.

The recommendations aim to provide a forward-looking roadmap for strengthening the UN's strategic engagement and impact. While the primary focus is on leveraging the lessons learned from CF1 to inform the design and implementation of CF2, it is equally important to utilize the remaining year of CF1 to make meaningful improvements wherever feasible. These efforts can help set a stronger foundation for the next CF cycle.

Key recommendations are summarized below, presented in order of priority:

- **Strengthen coordination and governance:** Advocate for the formal signing of the CF to reinforce its role as a strategic framework. Establish and operationalize key governance structures, such as the Joint Steering Committee. Enhance the functionality of Results Groups through focused mandates, leadership, and clear accountability mechanisms. Strengthen the UNCT configuration to align agency roles and contributions with the scope and ambition of the CF to enhance accountability and ensure impactful delivery of results. Use the RC and RCO's convening power and the UNCT Communication Group know-how to raise awareness of the CF's strategic purpose through targeted communication efforts, particularly following its formal signing.
- **Improve performance monitoring and accountability:** Enhance the CF's results framework by introducing specific output-level indicators, forming a dedicated Monitoring and Evaluation Group, and strengthening outcome-level SDG indicators through partnerships with relevant institutions to improve data quality and availability.
- **Expand SDG financing and private sector engagement:** Develop innovative SDG financing modalities to unlock resources for both UN and national partners. Establish structured platforms for collaboration with the private sector, international financial institutions, and other stakeholders, leveraging innovation to drive sustainable development solutions.
- **Promote integrated programming:** Support integrated approaches that simultaneously address high-income transition priorities and "last mile" socioeconomic and environmental challenges, ensuring alignment with national priorities and inclusivity.
- **Facilitate knowledge exchange and partnerships:** Leverage global and regional expertise by participating in knowledge-sharing initiatives, such as South-South and

triangular cooperation, to address emerging challenges by using the experience of countries in similar development circumstances.

- **Build staff capacity for normative integration:** Implement continuous training to enhance staff capabilities in applying normative mainstreaming tools and targeted interventions. Provide practical guidance for embedding these principles systematically into programming and operations.

## 2. Introduction

### 2.1 Purpose and Objectives

The present Cooperation Framework (CF) evaluation is commissioned by the Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator's (UN RCO) in Malaysia under the guidance of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) mandated Evaluation Steering Committee in the penultimate year of the current CF period of 2021-2025, in line with the joint UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) – UN Development Cooperation Office (DCO) Guidelines for the Evaluation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework<sup>1</sup>.

The overall purpose of the CF Evaluation is to provide an independent, transparent, and participatory tool for learning and dialogue with stakeholders about what worked, what did not work and why – in the delivery of the CF outcomes. It also provides inputs for strengthening programming and results at the country level, specifically informing the planning and decision-making for the new CF 2026-2030 and for improving coordination across UN agencies and at the country level. Additionally, it aims to support greater accountability of the UNCT to CF national stakeholders, and to sensitize others on the work and role of the UNCT in Malaysia. Thus, the purpose of the evaluation is to ensure accountability, support learning and inform decision-making.

The specific objectives of the evaluation are as follows:

- Assess the contribution of the CF to national development results through evidence-based judgements using evaluation criteria to the extent possible, taking into consideration that the CF has yet to be signed by the Government, and accordingly, reach conclusions concerning the UN's contribution across the scope being examined.
- Identify factors that have affected the CF's contribution, answer the question of why the performance is as it is, and explain the enabling factors and bottlenecks.
- Provide actionable recommendations for improving the current CF's contributions, especially for incorporation into the new CF programming cycle.

### 2.2 Scope and Timeframe

The CF's delayed official signing has imposed some constraints on this evaluation exercise, and as such the scope is more limited than as set out in the UNEG Guidelines for the Evaluation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework. There are three key implications:

- 1) The evaluation focused on the Results and Resources Framework (RRF) as endorsed by the Government. At the same time, it is noted that:
  - a) the RRF implicitly conveys the CF's overall mission (i.e., delivering national prosperity and high-income country status, alongside sustainable and inclusive

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<sup>1</sup> The Guidelines can be accessed here: <https://www.unevaluation.org/document/download/3737>

and resilient development based on good governance, and achievement of the SDGs through a whole of government and whole of society approach<sup>2</sup>);

- b) the four Strategic Priority Areas (SPAs) include embedded Theories of Change (ToC) and these provide the basis for evaluation.
- 2) As a result, the focus was on UN agency programmatic activities and advocacy to the extent that these align with the RRF and its implicit ToCs and the delivery of the SPAs. The evaluation was also linked with the ongoing evaluations of UN agency programmes, specifically UNDP, UNFPA, and UNICEF<sup>3</sup>.

The evaluation assessed the contributions of all members of the UNCT<sup>4</sup> to the CF 2021-2025 outcomes through their individual as well as joint programmes/projects and advocacy in the form of joint initiatives. It also examined the CF cross-cutting themes and global UN programming principles (leaving no one behind, human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment, disability inclusion, and environmental sustainability and resilience, and accountability). The evaluation also considered exceptional circumstances that emerged during the CF cycle, notably: political changes and the COVID-19 pandemic. The evaluation did not evaluate individual UN agencies' programmes but only focused on their contributions to CF outcomes, SPAs and the CF wider mission.

In terms of the geographic scope, the evaluation covered UN programmes implemented in Malaysia. The UN activities covered in the evaluation at the federal level included Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya, which serve as key administrative and governance hubs where the UN had engaged with federal-level state and non-state stakeholders. At the subnational and local level, the evaluation followed the CF's whole-of-nation approach and UN agency programmes, which covered various state governments and local stakeholders<sup>5</sup>.

The evaluation did not cover any UN activities in Brunei and Singapore.

The evaluation focused on the current CF 2021-2025 and specifically covered the period from January 2021 through June 2024<sup>6</sup>.

## Timeframe

The evaluation was undertaken from August to December 2024. During this period, three UN entities (UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF) also conducted their country programme evaluations. The evaluation team made efforts to synchronize schedules, leverage available findings and minimize replication to the extent possible.

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<sup>2</sup> This paraphrases the opening paragraph of the CF text - in full: The Government of Malaysia and the United Nations in Malaysia commit to work together under the UNSDCF 2021-2025 in support of Malaysia's transformation to a high-income and advanced nation, securing for its people a future that is inclusive, sustainable and resilient; that assures the well-being and prosperity of all people living in the country; and that is grounded in active citizen participation, transparency and accountability towards achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by fostering a whole-of-nation approach.

<sup>3</sup> UNDP Country Programme Document for Malaysia 2022-2025; UNFPA Country Programme Document for Malaysia 2022-2025; UNICEF Country Programme Document for Malaysia 2022-2025.

<sup>4</sup> The UNCT comprises of the following agencies, whereby Resident Entities are UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNFPA, WHO, WFP, UNHRD, IOM, UNU-IIGH, UNDSS; while Non-resident Entities are OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNIDO, ILO, UN Women, UNDRR, UNEP, UNCDF (represented by UNDP), UN-Habitat, ITC, UNODC, ITU.

<sup>5</sup> See a detailed list of geographic locations covered by the CF in Annex 4.

<sup>6</sup> At the same time, most of the reporting data on the CF implementation is available as of the end of 2023, this is noted where relevant in the report.

The evaluation was conducted in a hybrid mode, with an onsite visit to Malaysia (9-18 September) and remote work (August-December 2024).

## 2.3 Primary Intended Users and Intended Use

The primary users of the evaluation are the UNCT, the Government of Malaysia (in particular, Ministry of Economy as the UNCT’s main counterpart, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and other line ministries as relevant). Civil society organizations and other stakeholders could also benefit from the findings. In addition, bilateral and multilateral donors, and other development partners are also potential users. Table 1 provides an indicative list of primary and potential users as well as their intended uses.

Table 1. Intended Evaluation Users and Uses

	Intended use
<b>Primary Users</b>	
UNCT Malaysia	Accountability and learning from the CF 2021-2025 to inform the development and implementation of the new CF 2026-2030 and the engagement of UNCT members in related coordination mechanisms.
UN entities	Findings and recommendations to feed into the development and delivery of Country Programmes and/or other programmatic frameworks.
Government of Malaysia	Guide the development of the new CF 2026-2030, including areas that need further UN support to address national development priorities in line with national plans, the 2030 Agenda and Malaysia’s international commitments.
<b>Potential Users</b>	
CSOs, private sector and other non-government stakeholders	Insights towards more effective engagement in the new CF design and implementation.
Donors and development partners	Entry points for cooperation with the UN in support of CF implementation.

## 2.4 Evaluation Criteria and Questions

The evaluation criteria and questions (Table 2) are formulated in line with the CF evaluation’s purpose, objectives, scope and needs and based on the Terms of Reference (Annex 1). The questions are organized into three areas of focus to enhance clarity and ensure better understanding and utilization by future users.

The range and depth of the evaluation criteria and questions are also influenced by the limited scope of the evaluation, as outlined in the Section 2.2 of this report and are shaped by the considerations and implications discussed therein.

Table 2. Overview of CF Evaluation Criteria and Questions.

Areas of focus	Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions (EQ)
RELEVANCE AND ADAPTABILITY	Relevance and adaptability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. EQ1: To what extent are the CF's SPAs consistent with the country's evolving needs, national priorities, the country's agreed international and regional commitments, including the normative dimensions of gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE), human rights (HR), disability inclusion and environmental sustainability?</li> <li>2. EQ2: How resilient, responsive and strategic was the UNCT in addressing the changing political context and emerging needs, notably in addressing the COVID-19 impacts and in reprioritizing/adapting to provide timely support to the country and ensure the achievement of the CF results?</li> <li>3. EQ3: To what extent were the CF prioritized activities based on the needs (demand side) rather than on the availability of resources (supply side)? Particularly, how was this achieved (or not) in the absence of CF joint governance structures such as the Steering Committee?</li> </ol>
PERFORMANCE AND IMPACT ORIENTATION	Effectiveness and efficiency	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. EQ4: To what extent has the CF contributed to key institutional, behavioural and legislative changes that are critical for catalysing progress towards the CF desired impact, including integration of normative areas such as GEWE, HR, disability inclusion and environmental sustainability?</li> <li>5. EQ5: How has the CF facilitated the identification of and access to new financing flows at scale for national partners?</li> </ol>
	Orientation towards impact	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. EQ6: To what extent have CF results contributed to sound and sustainable progress towards the achievement of national SDG targets?</li> </ol>
COORDINATION AND COHERENCE	Coordination	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. EQ7: To what extent have the CF coordination mechanisms (for example, the Results Groups, Thematic Working Groups, Operations Management Team, and the Communications Group) contributed to coherent and increased synergies between agencies?</li> <li>8. EQ8: Post UN reform, to what extent have UN agency programmes and work plans been effectively and meaningfully derived from the CF both in design and implementation?</li> <li>9. EQ9: To what extent did the post-UNDS reform Resident Coordinator Office's roles and responsibilities enable positive UNCT's joint convening power and better coherence of the country team?</li> </ol>

## 2.5 Structure of the Evaluation Report

The evaluation report follows a structured, recommended format to ensure clarity and coherence. It opens with an Executive Summary, which concisely outlines the evaluation's purpose,

objectives, methodology, key findings, and recommendations. This is followed by the Introduction, which details the evaluation's objectives, scope, criteria, and questions. Section 3 provides the country context, highlighting Malaysia's development situation and the status of the UN-Malaysia Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2021-2025, the object of this evaluation. Section 4 elaborates on the evaluation approach and methodology, outlining how the data was collected, analysed, and interpreted.

Subsequent sections present findings, conclusions, and recommendations organized to logically address the evaluation criteria and questions. A dedicated section on limitations and lessons learned reflects on the challenges encountered during the evaluation and their implications for similar future exercises.

Annexes are included to offer supplementary information that supports the main report, enhancing its comprehensiveness and transparency. These annexes document the rigor of the evaluation process and provide stakeholders with details for further reference.

## 3. Country Context

### 3.1 Malaysia's Development Situation and Progress to SDGs

Malaysia, an upper-middle-income country approaching high income status, has made significant strides since its independence. It has successfully transitioned from a commodity-based economy to a diversified and industrialized one. This economic transformation has been accompanied by a significant increase in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita<sup>7</sup> and near eradication of extreme poverty. Socio-economic indicators such as life expectancy<sup>8</sup> and infant mortality<sup>9</sup> rates have also improved considerably, reflecting the country's commitment to enhancing the quality of life.

The country's national vision and development strategy align with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and are reflected in key policy documents such as the Shared Prosperity Vision (SPV) (2019), the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Malaysia Plans (2021), and Malaysia MADANI (2022). Additionally, Malaysia's Voluntary National Review (VNR) of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) progress undertaken in 2017 and 2021 and its National SDG Roadmap Phase I and II, underscore its commitment to the SDGs. The governance and monitoring of progress toward SDGs is carried out through a comprehensive national SDG governance infrastructure.

The following section provides a snapshot of Malaysia's progress and remaining challenges mapped against the respective SDGs. It is based on the VNR (2021)<sup>10</sup> and a UN in-house SDG assessment carried out in 2023 (Table 3).

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<sup>7</sup> As of 2023, GDP per capita (current US\$) is 11,648.7. World Bank (2024). Source: <https://shorturl.at/bhqdp>

<sup>8</sup> Life expectancy for Malaysia is 74.8 years across all ethnic groups and sexes (72.5 years for males and 77.4 years for females). Source: <https://open.dosm.gov.my/dashboard/life-expectancy>

<sup>9</sup> The under-five mortality rate for Malaysia is 7.8 deaths per 1,000 live births. Source: <https://data.unicef.org/country/mys/>

<sup>10</sup> Malaysia Voluntary National Review 2021. Source: <https://shorturl.at/rXHxq>

Table 3. Overview of Malaysia’s SDG Achievements and Challenges.

SDGs	Progress
People (SDG 1-6)	Significant progress in reducing poverty and improving health and education outcomes. However, challenges remain in areas such as gender equality and access to clean water and sanitation. The exclusion of certain marginalized groups (notably refugees, migrants, and undocumented persons) is a key issue.
Prosperity (SDG 7-10)	Successful economic transformation has taken place alongside generally inclusive growth. However, environmental sustainability has not been secured, and income inequality and socio-economic and regional disparities are high and persist.
Planet (SDG11-15)	Commitment to achieving net-zero emissions and addressing environmental degradation. However, challenges remain in areas such as sustainable urbanization, production and consumption, and biodiversity conservation.
Peace (SDG 16)	Strong community relations and institutional strengthening. However, challenges remain in areas such as corruption and access to justice.
Partnerships (SDG 17)	Active engagement in regional and global partnerships. However, more needs to be done to enhance the effectiveness of these partnerships.

In relation to international human rights conventions, the country has to date ratified three of the nine human rights treaties and is party to several International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions<sup>11 12</sup>. In January 2024, Malaysia entered its fourth Universal Periodic Review of Human Rights (UPR) cycle, where several ongoing challenges were noted, relating to both systemic issues and specific groups facing rights deprivation. According to the outcome report by the UPR Working Group, the country received a total of 348 recommendations, of which it accepted 182 recommendations in full and 41 recommendations in part and took note of 125 recommendations<sup>13</sup>. The country has put in place a UPR monitoring and implementation mechanism.

Crucially, Malaysia faces challenges in ensuring that no one is left behind, particularly among the most vulnerable populations. These include marginalized and excluded groups such as informal sector workers, the poor and vulnerable in peripheral regions, including indigenous peoples, migrants and refugees, undocumented persons, and persons with disabilities, facing barriers to full participation in society, including access to basic services. These barriers are rooted in various institutional and governance issues, socio-economic status, geography, and associated vulnerabilities, which require a comprehensive approach that addresses the root causes and ensures the full realisation of human rights.

The country's social development is marked by significant achievements in education and health. However, social protection schemes require strengthening, including in terms of coverage of informal workers and vulnerable groups. In addition, while economic transformation has been successful, challenges remain in ensuring shared prosperity and decent work for all.

<sup>11</sup> Currently, Malaysia is a State Party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Status of ratifications by Malaysia is available from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (2024): <https://shorturl.at/CUult>. Status of ratifications of ILO conventions is available from ILO (2024): <https://shorturl.at/YgkI5>

<sup>12</sup> The country maintains reservations about the CEDAW provisions perceived to conflict with Sharia law. This includes Articles related to gender equality in marriage, family matters, and property ownership. It has also expressed reservations on the CRPD provisions regarding equality and non-discrimination if these conflict with existing domestic laws or practices.

<sup>13</sup> Universal Periodic Review Malaysia. OHCHR (2024). Source: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/upr/my-index>

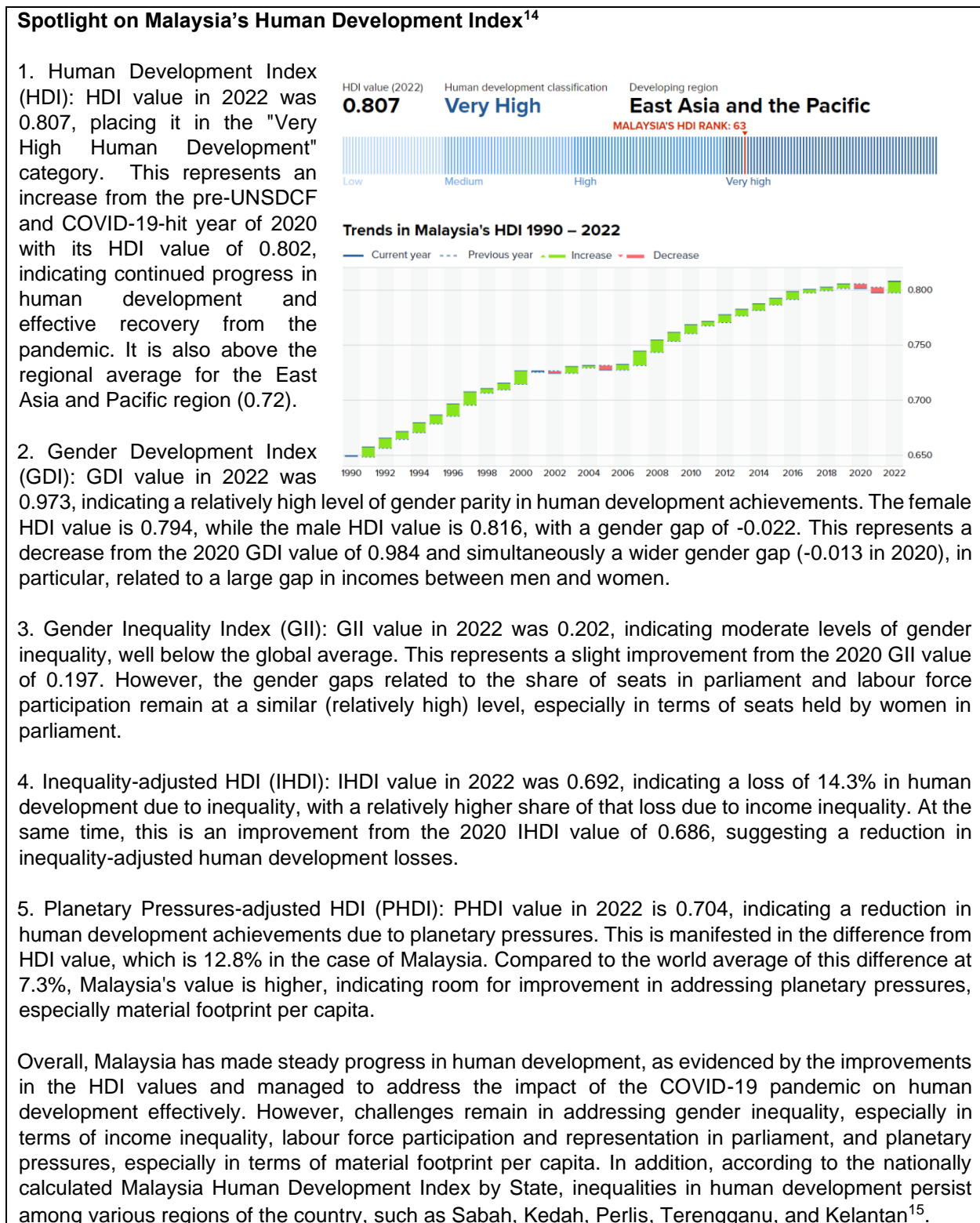
Malaysia faces serious environmental challenges, including climate change and biodiversity loss. The Government has shown commitment to addressing these issues, including a pledge to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. Yet actions to achieve these goals remain insufficient.

The country's overall financial resource base is robust, but the tax base is limited and there is a need for more resources for development investment and SDG delivery. This includes the limited extent to which private sector resources are channelled to support SDGs acceleration and more inclusive and sustainable growth.

In terms of regional and cross-border dynamics, Malaysia is considered a leader in regional economic growth and development, and it plays an active role in regional, particularly ASEAN, and in international fora. It leads in Islamic financing and has influence in this regard in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and as an oil producer, also within the Organization of Petroleum Producing Countries. Malaysia's role in multilateralism, international cooperation and contributions to regional and international development are expected to evolve at a larger scale as it transitions to Net Contributor Country and high-income status. Some of the challenges faced by the country clearly require solutions that are designed and coordinated together with other countries and the international community at large, including but not limited to cross-border haze pollution, irregular migration, human smuggling, wildlife trafficking, drug trafficking, and climate change.

Malaysia has made significant progress in its development journey towards high-income status. However, it faces challenges, many of which are related to addressing its last mile objectives, including those related to the realization of human rights and gender equality; wide and persistent inequalities in several dimensions (such as geographic disparities, income inequality, gender wage gap, inadequate access to social services for some of the poor and vulnerable groups, including migrants, refugees and asylum seekers); and the fulfilment of its commitment to environmental sustainability, including related to climate change.

Figure 1. Trends in Malaysia's Human Development Index.



<sup>14</sup> Based on the Malaysia Country Profile (source: <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/specific-country-data#/countries/MYS>) as part of Human Development Report 2023-2024: Breaking the gridlock: Reimagining cooperation in a polarized world. UNDP. 2024

<sup>15</sup> Department of Statistics Malaysia (2023). Source: <https://shorturl.at/K9SZF>

## 3.2 Status of UN-Malaysia Cooperation Framework 2021-2025 as Object of Evaluation

### Overview

The UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2021-2025 is the country's first framework agreed between the UN and the Government and aims to support Malaysia's efforts to achieve the SDGs by 2030. Malaysia is among the first cohort of countries to develop such a document post UN Development System (UNDS) reform of 2019, and it had never had an UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), CF predecessor. The CF evaluation therefore breaks new ground for the UN practice in the country.

It is important to note, however, that the CF document has not yet been formally adopted (that is, not signed with the Government), due to lengthy negotiations on the Legal Annex. While awaiting signature, the CF has been updated several times since 2020, upon the request of the Government. This has allowed the CF to be kept current and reflect the latest national priorities and directions including the current Government's Malaysia MADANI Framework<sup>16</sup>.

The CF's Results and Resources Framework (RRF) was endorsed by the Government in November 2021, implying acceptance and agreement on the CF's substantive content and its underlying theory of change. By virtue of this understanding, the CF is the de facto framework that guides the work of UN entities in Malaysia and forms the basis of agency programming documents. At the same time, the joint CF oversight and governance arrangements have not been initiated, due to the absence of the CF's formal adoption.

The overall UN strategy in Malaysia, as reflected in the CF, is coordinated by the UN Resident Coordinator (UN RC) in consultation with the 21 UN Agencies working in Malaysia, including those with resident offices and staff in the country and those working from regional offices. The UN RC is responsible for reviewing the UN Agencies' individual Country Programme Documents (or other planning documents) with a view to ensuring alignment and coherence with the CF, identifying opportunities for synergies, and avoiding duplication and overlap.

The CF is shaped according to the SDG framework themes (People, Planet, Prosperity, and Peace) which provide for the four respective Strategic Priority Areas (SPAs), plus a fifth cross-cutting pillar that supports these (Partnerships). The SPAs are further disaggregated into 13 collaborative outputs. Annex 2 provides an overview of the CF Results Framework and shows linkages between the four SPAs (outcomes and outputs) and individual SDGs as well as the 12MP's Game Changers, which are akin to the Plan's priorities for action. It also indicates Participating UN Agencies per SPA and estimated SPA budgets.

### CF Theory of Change

The Theory of Change (ToC) served as the main frame of reference, guiding the evaluation. It connects national development priorities and SDGs to the CF outcomes. These outcomes are achieved through specific actions, referenced as "Collaborative Outputs" in this CF, and organized into four SPAs. Each Collaborative Output is delivered through a set of activities or

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<sup>16</sup> Malaysia MADANI Framework. Source: <https://shorturl.at/XTmAv>

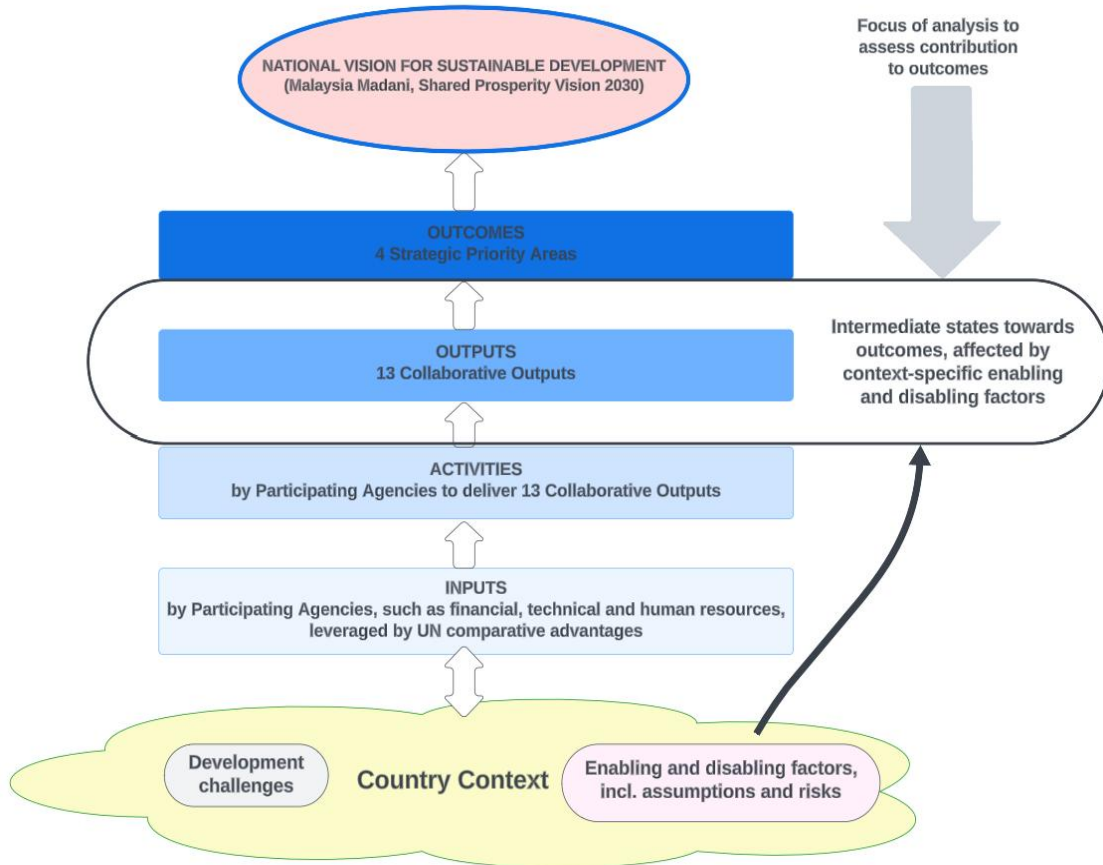
pathways of change, contributing to the respective CF outcomes. The overall CF ToC consists of four distinct, “nested” ToCs corresponding to the four SPAs. The four SPA ToCs are described in detail in the CF document and reflected in the Results and Resources Framework.

The purpose of the ToC analysis during the evaluation was not to examine the problem or solution tree but rather to assess the logical linkages between: 1) The CF outcomes and the national development priorities, and 2) The UNINFO-based joint work plans which reflect agency outputs and their contribution to the CF outcomes.

The analysis and discussion of these agency outputs and their role in contributing to the collaborative outputs through pathways of change was conducted during fieldwork in collaboration with the RCO and the participating agencies. It showed that the CF ToC is well rooted in the country context, considering various development challenges along with enabling and disabling factors (such as assumptions, risks, and measures to enhance results through coordination and partnerships). The overall ToC model outlines a standard results path, progressing from inputs (including financial, technical, and human resources of the participating agencies), leveraged by the UN’s comparative advantages, towards the achievement of 13 collaborative outputs, organized within four nested ToCs, with enabling and disabling factors shaping the CF’s ability to deliver results. The analysis also addressed cross-cutting issues such as gender equality and women’s empowerment (GEWE), human rights (HR), disability inclusion, and environmental sustainability.

The evaluation used Contribution Analysis to assess whether the collaborative outputs (as intermediate states towards outcomes) have been delivered through pathways of change, specifically as sub-outputs of the Joint Work Plans, or are on track for delivery (see Figure 2). The central hypothesis is that evidence of the delivery or progress of these collaborative outputs would indicate that the UN has likely made a significant contribution to the CF outcomes and, by extension, to the country's progress towards achieving the SDGs. Furthermore, the analysis explored the influence of enabling and disabling factors, testing the validity of the initial assumptions and identifying any materialized risks. This approach has formed the core of the assessment of the CF’s performance, providing a solid foundation for understanding its progress, potential impact and input for evaluation questions regarding relevance, performance and coherence.

Figure 2. CF Theory of Change: Conceptual Model.

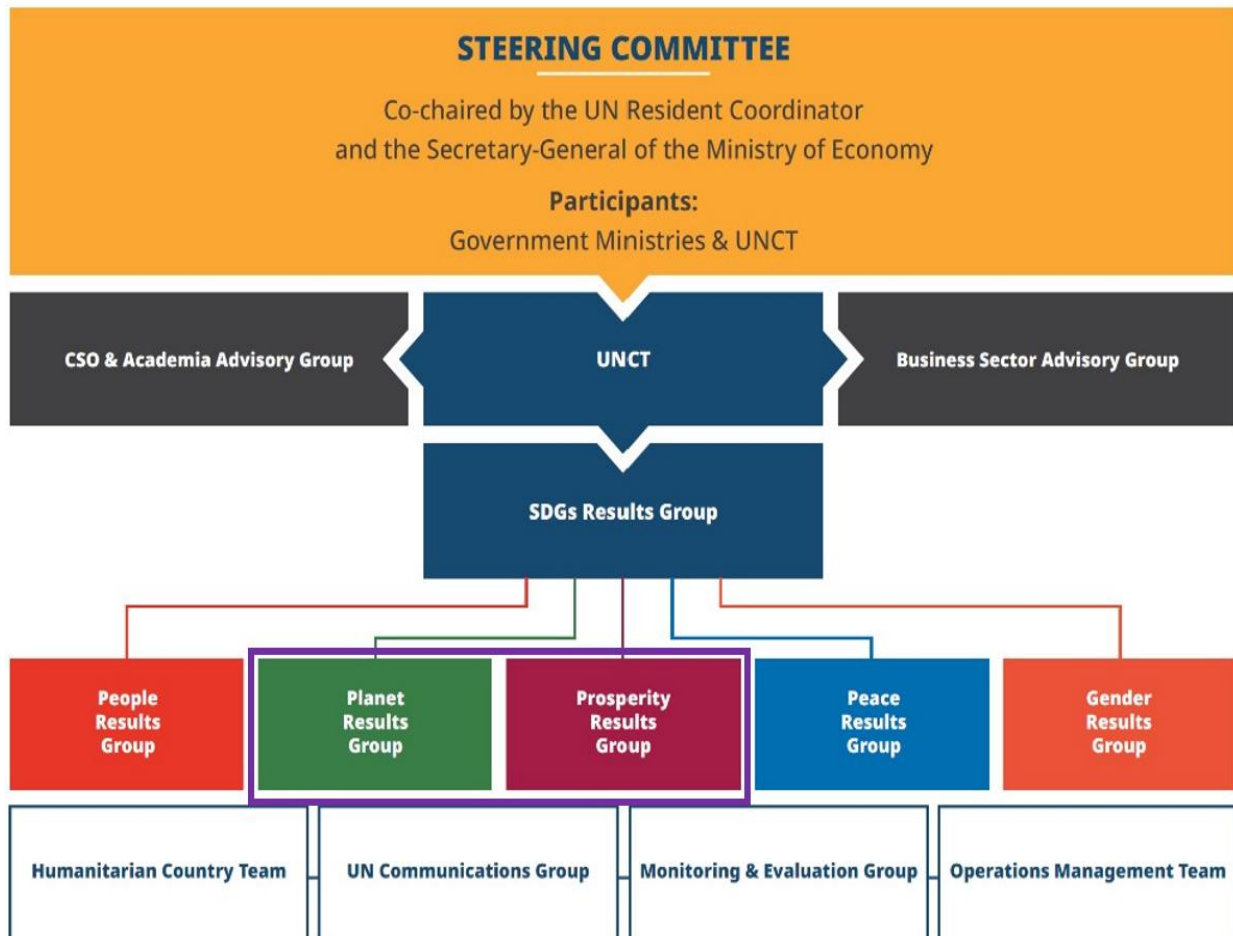


Narratives on the four nested ToCs and an overview of assumptions and risks are summarized from the CF Annex 3.

### Governance of the CF

The planned CF governance structure is shown in Figure 3. However, given that the CF is yet to be signed, the Steering Committee and its external subgroups – the Civil Society Organizations (CSO) and Academic Advisory Group and the Business Sector Advisory Group – have not been formally operationalized. Additionally, according to the UN RCO, the Planet and Prosperity Results Groups have been merged to enable more streamlined and joined-up delivery and reporting (see purple box on the Figure 3).

Figure 3. Planned CF Governance Structure.



### Financial Envelope

The overall budget to deliver the CF is estimated at approximately USD 225 million over five years. It was projected at the start of the implementation in 2021 that about USD 105 million (47 per cent) would be available, leaving USD 120 million (53 per cent) to be mobilized during CF implementation. In addition to the CF funding resources as indicated above, the UN pledged to work closely with the Government, the business sector and NGOs to leverage different sources of financing and investment flows for SDG achievement (SDG Financing), including via the national budget, private financing and other sources.

### Key Stakeholders

The implementation of the CF and support to the Government in achieving the SDGs are premised on close coordination among UN entities and with strategic partners to pursue the interlinked SPAs interventions, including partnerships and collaborations with a wide range of public, private, civil society, and other actors.

However, given the narrower scope of this evaluation, which prioritizes synthesizing agency evaluations rather than individual agency programmes, it is crucial to concentrate on internal

stakeholders, specifically UN agencies working under the four SPAs. This targeted approach is justified as the CF is not formally adopted (and its governance structure is not operationalized) but rather operates de facto, implying that internal coordination and coherence among the involved UN agencies are pivotal. By focusing on these internal stakeholders, we can ensure that the evaluation is directly relevant to those who are most involved in and impacted by the CF's implementation and outcomes.

In addition, the internal stakeholders include the roles and functions established specifically to guide and provide quality assurance to the evaluation, such as the Evaluation Manager, Evaluation Technical Team and Evaluation Steering Committee as well as elements of the broader quality assurance infrastructure, such as the UN Evaluation Development Group for Asia and the Pacific (UNEDAP) at the regional level and Development Coordination Office (DCO) at the global level.

At the same time, it has been possible to engage a number of external stakeholders, representing all major sectors, including governmental, civil society, academia, private sector as well as international partners. The engaged external stakeholders included the Ministry of Economy, whose Secretary General is expected to co-chair the CF Steering Committee. This outreach has helped triangulate the evidence obtained from internal stakeholders, providing a more holistic view of the CF's effectiveness and enhanced the credibility and utility of the evaluation findings. Annex 4 offers a more specific list of internal and external stakeholders, and Annex 4A specifies the stakeholders interviewed for the evaluation.

## 4. Approach & Methodology

### 4.1 Approach

The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with the [UNEG-DCO Guidelines for the Evaluation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework](#) and in line with the [UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation](#). The conduct of the evaluation follows the [UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation](#), providing for the four ethical principles of integrity, accountability, respect and beneficence, and uses [UNEG guidance on integrating human rights and gender equality in evaluations](#).

The evaluation was done by a team of independent consultants, based on a clear Terms of Reference (Annex 1) and quality assured through a comprehensive and multi-level system of quality reviews including internal quality assurance, RCO-based Evaluation Manager, UNCT-mandated Evaluation Technical Team and Evaluation Steering Committee, regional-level UNEDAP Advisor and global-level DCO-based Evaluation Advisor. The evaluation team was operationally independent but conducted the evaluation under the oversight of Evaluation Manager and the Evaluation Steering Committee. The team members signed the 2008 UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators (Annex 1A). The team also provided regular updates on progress to the Evaluation Manager as the day-to-day representative of the Evaluation Steering Committee.

The evaluation team employed **rigorous methodologies**, including document reviews, key informant interviews, and data triangulation, to ensure robust and evidence-based findings. Data collection tools and analysis methods were aligned with the evaluation's objectives, reinforcing the credibility of the results.

The evaluation adopted a **theory-based evaluation approach**, focusing on the understanding of the underlying causal mechanisms that link programme activities to outputs, and ultimately to outcomes and impacts. By explicitly mapping out the theories of change that underpin the CF SPAs, this approach enabled a critical assessment of whether the desired outcomes have been achieved (or are on track) and how and why they have been achieved, or in some cases, why they have not. This approach proved to be particularly advantageous in the context of development, where complex, multi-faceted interventions must account for a variety of contextual factors and diverse stakeholder interests and needs. The theory-based evaluation approach provided a structured framework for unpacking these complexities and identifying the pathways through which change is expected to occur, and to assess the validity of these pathways in practice.

The evaluation used a **participatory approach, involving UNCT, UN participating agencies, RCO, national partners from the Government, civil society, private sector and academia as well as international development partners**. The evaluation was designed to directly address the needs of key stakeholders, including the UNCT and national counterparts, by focusing on relevant evaluation questions derived from the CF. This participatory approach ensured that stakeholders' needs and expectations were considered, facilitating actionable recommendations to inform decision-making. Initial insights were presented and discussed during the UNCT Strategic Prioritization Retreat in September 2024 to contribute to the design of the new CF for 2026-2030. In addition, the preliminary findings, conclusions and recommendations were presented to the UNCT on 12 November 2024 and during the Strategic Prioritization Workshop with the Government for development of the new CF on 27 November 2024. Additionally, key initial findings of the evaluation were incorporated into the speeches of the UN RC during multi-stakeholder (e.g. civil society, academia, private sector) consultations on the new CF. These contributed to the reporting/dissemination and utility aspects of the UNEG standards. Furthermore, these arrangements also helped create opportunities for capacity development by engaging national stakeholders and UN staff in the evaluation process, building the understanding of evaluation standards and methodologies, and promoting a culture of learning and accountability.

A **mainstreaming approach with respect to the normative principles was employed to ensure that these considerations are addressed during data collection and analysis**. This was done by including respective questions into the interview guides, applying the normative lens during document reviews, triangulating information from the interviews and other qualitative data collection methods and that from formal reports and databases such as UNINFO (e.g. gender marker and human rights marker).

**Ethical standards were upheld by ensuring informed consent, confidentiality, and the respectful treatment of participants**. The evaluation team adhered to the UNEG ethical guidelines, mitigating potential risks to participants and ensuring that their rights and dignity were respected throughout the evaluation process. All meetings with the evaluation team were either

conducted in person bilaterally in an appropriate environment or online through a secure meeting link so the individual was free to act in confidentiality.

In summary, **these comprehensive measures and steps secured the implementation of the UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation**, ensuring best practices in the management, conduct, and use of the evaluation.

## 4.2 Methodology

The CF evaluation utilized a **theory-based non-experimental design, with a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods** and triangulating data to compile a robust and credible evidence base. The CF theory of change (Annex 3), covering all the four SPAs, served as the primary reference framework for the evaluation team. An analysis of the CF theory change for consistency with the national development framework was conducted at the inception phase (Annex 3A). Quantitative analysis mainly relied on secondary data and existing documentation, including but not limited to UNINFO reports, agency evaluation findings and various progress monitoring and results reports, and administrative and substantive reports compiled by the UN RCO. A structured online survey, such as a perception survey, was conducted to complement the qualitative data. The evaluation primarily focused on qualitative data, sourced from document reviews (see Annex 5 for a comprehensive list of documentation reviewed for this evaluation), semi-structured key informant interviews (KII), and focus group discussions (FGD) with small groups of informants. Annex 6 details the perception survey questionnaire and interview guides for KIIs and FGDs.

Considering the limited scope of the evaluation and the relatively large number of stakeholders (Annex 4), purposive sampling was used for semi-structured interviews. This involved selecting individuals or groups with specific knowledge, experience, or involvement in the CF and/or who have contributed to the specific pathways of change within the four SPAs. The sampling followed two main strategies: group characteristics and theory-focused sampling. In particular, the purposive sampling methodology selected participants based on their relevance to the evaluation questions and their role in implementing and/or influencing the CF. The perception survey included the entire sample of UNCT and their key programme staff. The response rate was about 40% and included 19 respondents.

Table 4 outlines a sampling approach for internal and external stakeholders and presents the sampling frame. The primary sample was fully covered, while the secondary sample was reserved to enrich data collection, if needed, and mitigate potential non-responses or incomplete data from the primary sample.

Given that much of the UN's work is geared towards government entities, the sampling prioritized interviews with key government coordination agencies, such as the Ministry of Economy and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These entities play a critical role in shaping and implementing national policies related to the SDGs. To further capture the outcomes and sustainability of UN interventions, this evaluation included representatives from CSOs, academia, and an umbrella organization for the private sector. Their involvement ensures that the evaluation captures a broad range of perspectives, particularly at the outcome level, where the long-term impact of UN interventions on the sustainable development agenda is assessed.

Table 4. Stakeholder Sampling Frame.

	Internal	External
<b>Primary sample</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● UNCT (resident and non-resident members)</li> <li>● Key programme staff</li> <li>● RCO</li> <li>● Chairs of Results Group (People, Prosperity &amp; Planet, Peace and Gender)</li> <li>● Results Groups (People, Prosperity &amp; Planet, Peace and Gender)</li> <li>● Chairs of working and thematic groups:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Social Protection</li> <li>- Disability Inclusion</li> <li>- CCA-CF</li> <li>- Migration</li> </ul> </li> <li>● UN-MY SDG Trust Fund Secretariat</li> <li>● Country Programme evaluators (UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP)</li> </ul>	<p>Government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ministry of Economy:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- International Cooperation Division</li> <li>- National SDG Centre</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Ministry of Foreign Affairs:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Multilateral Policy Division</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Parliament:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All Party Parliamentary Group on SDGs (APPGM-SDG)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Civil society:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Human Rights Commission (SUHAKAM)</li> <li>● National Council of Women's Organizations</li> <li>● CSO SDG Alliance</li> </ul> <p>Private sector:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● UN Global Compact Network Malaysia &amp; Brunei (UNGC-MYB)</li> <li>● Malaysia SDG Trust Fund / SDG Foundation</li> </ul> <p>Academia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● UKM/IKMAS</li> </ul> <p>International partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● European Union (EU)</li> <li>● World Bank</li> </ul>
<b>Secondary sample</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Participating Agencies under the four Strategic Priority Areas and other agencies contributing to JWP (bilateral discussions)<sup>17</sup></li> <li>● Members of specific thematic and working groups (bilateral discussions)</li> </ul> <p>+ Others as relevant</p>	<p>Government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ministry of Finance, Department of Statistics, Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, National Disaster Management Agency</li> </ul> <p>Civil society:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sunway Centre for Planetary Health, Yayasan Hasanah, Bar Council of Malaysia, Pusat KOMAS, Justice for Sisters, Geutanyoe Foundation, Fugee School</li> </ul> <p>Private sector:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Bank Pembangunan, Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil</li> </ul> <p>Academia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● IDEAS, Social Wellbeing Research Centre, IMAN Research</li> </ul> <p>International partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Other donors</li> </ul> <p>+ Others as relevant</p>

The interview sampling approach was driven by the limited scope and internal focus of the evaluation, ensuring comprehensive coverage of internal stakeholders. This includes leveraging ongoing UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF CPD evaluations, which have conducted meetings with key stakeholders, including sectoral ministries, implementing partners, and beneficiaries. The final list of stakeholders interviewed for the evaluation, based on the sampling approach, is provided in Annex 4A. A total 44 internal and external stakeholders were interviewed in semi-structured interviews (external: 41%), and another 20 internal stakeholders took part in three focus groups (based on the three Results Groups).

The geographic scope of the sampling focused primarily on federal-level stakeholders, ensuring the inclusion of key government agencies, CSOs, academia, and parliamentarians who play

<sup>17</sup> There is a total of 17 entities as Participating Agencies across all 4 SPAs: ILO, IOM, ITC, ITU, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNDRR, UNEP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNODC, WHO; three of them are not indicated in Joint Work Plan (JWP) 2021-2023 (UNDRR, UNESCO and ITU); thus, there are 14 agencies with activities in JWP, including one entity (ITC) with one activity. FAO, UNCDF, UNOCT, UN Women – are not under Participating Agencies but contributing to activities in JWP, especially under Joint Programmes.

critical roles in policy implementation and advocacy. However, insights from broader geographic regions were considered through the CPD evaluations of UNFPA, UNDP, and UNICEF, which encompass a wider range of regions and local stakeholders. This will ensure a comprehensive understanding at both national and subnational levels.

## Data analysis

Overall, the methodology was designed to ensure that the data and information collected is valid, reliable and sufficient to meet the evaluation objectives, including with the use of the triangulation principles and practical evaluation design tools such as Evaluation Design Matrix (EDM).

EDM (Annex 7) connects the proposed methodology with the evaluation criteria and questions through specific evaluation tools. It was the centrepiece of the evaluation and played a critical role at all the steps of the evaluation process. It contains core elements of the evaluation: (a) what will be evaluated (evaluation criteria, evaluation questions and related issues to be examined – “assumptions to be assessed”); and (b) how to evaluate (sources of information and methods and tools for data collection).

To ensure methodological rigor, triangulation was applied to ensure that qualitative and quantitative data were not only contextualized but corroborated to validate patterns and enhance reliability, and to examine consistency across the stakeholder categories while identifying and addressing discrepancies.

The methodology incorporated multiple techniques tailored to the nature of the data and the evaluation questions, as outlined below:

- **Stakeholder mapping analysis:** This method was utilized to assess the roles, contributions, and perspectives of various stakeholders involved in the CF. The evaluation examined how different stakeholder groups, especially government entities and UN agencies, interacted and contributed to achieving the planned outcomes. The mapping helped identify synergies, gaps, and coordination mechanisms across stakeholders.
- **Descriptive quantitative data analysis:** The evaluation team used basic descriptive statistical techniques to examine programmatic and financial data as well as responses from the perception survey. These techniques included financial tracking and analysis (tracking the flow of funds secured through CF initiatives, including an analysis of their scale and sources) and trend analysis (quantitative analysis of SDG and outcome indicators over time). This approach facilitated a clear understanding of trends, patterns, and distributions related to the evaluation questions along the dimensions of relevance, performance and coordination.
- **Thematic, content and comparative qualitative data analysis:** Qualitative data collected through key informant interviews, focus groups with the Results Groups, documentary evidence and open-ended perception survey responses were analysed for identifying and interpreting patterns or themes relevant to the evaluation questions.
- **Contribution analysis:** Based on the CF Theory of Change, including the specific Theories of Change for each SPA, contribution analysis was conducted to evaluate the

extent to which activities under the Joint Workplan contributed to achieving the intended collaborative outputs and how these outputs aligned with the outcomes through the planned pathways of change. This analysis also examined critical assumptions, contextual factors, and risks that affected the performance and progress of these pathways.

- **Mainstreaming of human rights, gender equality, environmental sustainability, disability inclusion and other aspects of LNOB:** The respective considerations were systematically integrated into data collection and analysis to ensure inclusivity and relevance. Specific questions addressing these dimensions were included in the interview guides, focus group discussion guides and the perception survey questionnaire, and a normative lens was applied during document reviews and data triangulation.

### **Data quality assurance**

The evaluation team employed a comprehensive approach to data quality assurance, ensuring reliability, validity, and ethical rigor throughout the process. The central element of this approach was the use of standardized data collection instruments, such as semi-structured interview guides, tailored to elicit consistent and comparable information from diverse stakeholder groups. In addition, multiple data collection tools, including an online perception survey, semi-structured interviews, and document reviews, were utilized to gather data from a variety of sources. This triangulated approach strengthened the evidence base, allowing the evaluation to validate findings across different methods and perspectives. Preliminary findings were systematically reviewed and validated through consultations with the UNCT, Evaluation Technical Team, and agency-specific evaluators to ensure their accuracy and relevance.

To mitigate potential risks and ensure contextual appropriateness, survey and interview questions were vetted by the Evaluation Technical Team. This step ensured that the tools were neutral and sensitive to cultural norms. Regular progress meetings with the Evaluation Manager were held to identify and address any risks or anticipated challenges related to data collection. The involved participants were encouraged to provide feedback throughout the process, reinforcing a participatory approach to quality assurance.

## 5. Findings

The main findings are structured into three key thematic clusters to ensure a coherent and comprehensive presentation of the results. This clustering is designed to streamline the analysis, focusing on how the CF remains relevant in a dynamic context, how effectively it contributes to national development outcomes, and how well it facilitates inter-agency coordination and strategic coherence.

The first cluster – **Relevance and Adaptability** – corresponds to EQs 1, 2 and 3 and assesses how well the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2021-2025 (CF) aligns with Malaysia's national priorities and international commitments, particularly in addressing the normative areas of gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE), human rights (HR), disability inclusion, and environmental sustainability. This cluster also examines the CF's adaptability in responding to significant shifts, such as the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and other critical changes at the country level. Additionally, the analysis in this cluster assesses to what extent the CF has prioritized activities based on the needs rather than on the availability of resources, particularly in the absence of the key CF governance structures such as the Steering Committee.

The second cluster – **Performance and Impact Orientation** – addresses EQs 4, 5, and 6. It examines the CF's effectiveness and efficiency in driving key institutional changes and reforms that support Malaysia's efforts toward achieving the SDGs. This includes the CF's role in facilitating new financing flows to national partners to enhance sustainable development.

Finally, the third cluster – **Coordination and Coherence** – covers EQs 7, 8, and 9 and evaluates the internal and external coherence of the CF, particularly the role of coordination mechanisms and the CF's ability to ensure synergies across UN agencies and national stakeholders.

### 5.1 Relevance and Adaptability

**EQ 1: To what extent are the CF's SPAs consistent with the country's evolving needs, national priorities, the country's agreed international and regional commitments, including the normative dimensions of GEWE, HR, disability inclusion and environmental sustainability?**

#### *Alignment with national priorities*

**The CF demonstrates a high degree of consistency and strong alignment with the national priorities.** These priorities are embodied in the 12<sup>th</sup> Malaysia Plan or 12MP (including 3 Themes and 14 Game Changers) and its Mid-Term Review, operationalizing Malaysia MADANI (SCRIPT) and Shared Prosperity Vision 2030. The latter two are the key strategic frameworks establishing foundational values and vision<sup>18</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup> While the Malaysia MADANI was adopted after the CF was drafted, the CF remains consistent with MADANI's foundational principles and objectives. This consistency reflects the CF's alignment with the Shared Prosperity Vision 2030, which served as a key strategic framework during the CF's drafting and shares similar overarching goals with MADANI in terms of sustainable and inclusive development.

**Under the 12 MP's Theme 1 (Resetting the Economy)**, this is evidenced in the CF's focus on fostering conditions for inclusive economic growth and supporting Malaysia's goal of becoming a high-income, technology-driven nation. This includes emphasis on promoting decent work and enabling transitions to higher value-added, skilled economic activities. Additionally, the CF emphasizes economic empowerment through targeted support for women-led micro-, small, medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), aligning with national efforts to enhance MSME contributions to growth. The CF also prioritizes integrating sustainability into business practices, supporting industries while improving environmental governance. Finally, the CF's advocacy for green technologies and resource efficiency contributes to the country's commitment to an inclusive sustainable development trajectory.

**Under the 12 MP's Theme 2 (Strengthening Security, Wellbeing, and Inclusivity)**, this is evidenced in the CF's emphasis on comprehensive social protection reforms, aiming to expand coverage for vulnerable groups and improve social assistance, thus contributing to poverty eradication strategies. It promotes changing social norms and community engagement to foster inclusivity and support vulnerable populations by addressing sociocultural barriers linked to poverty and vulnerability. Additionally, the CF supports disaster preparedness, focusing on inclusivity in risk reduction efforts to ensure that no one is left behind. The CF's contributions to urban planning and sustainable infrastructure development address regional development disparities, while initiatives to strengthen legal frameworks, prevent violent extremism, and enhance social cohesion align with national priorities for security and stability. It further reinforces good governance through judicial strengthening, improved law enforcement, and anti-corruption measures, supporting counterterrorism efforts and human rights protections to address security challenges.

**Under the 12 MP's Theme 3 (Advancing Sustainability)**, this is evidenced in the CF's focus on technical support, policy harmonization, and societal behaviour change to promote sustainable economic and consumption practices. By embedding circular economy principles and enhancing environmental management, the CF aspires to contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, minimizing waste, and promoting resource efficiency. Additionally, the CF envisages policy and legislative support, capacity building, and data-driven approaches to integrate biodiversity conservation into national agendas, reinforcing protections for natural areas. The CF also aims to empower local authorities and to facilitate innovative financing for sustainable urban development, targeting improvements in waste management, urban green spaces, and sustainable transportation to reduce environmental impacts in urban areas.

**The CF, through its alignment with both the 12MP and its MTR, which explicitly reference the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda, contributes to the national efforts towards SDG achievement.** The overarching goal of the 12MP, as outlined in its introduction, is to build "A Prosperous, Inclusive, Sustainable Malaysia," which directly aligns with the SDGs' purpose for inclusive growth, environmental sustainability, and social well-being. The three main themes of the 12MP are closely and directly linked to several SDGs, including SDG 7, 8, 9, 11 and 12 under Theme 1, SDG 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10 and 16 under Theme 2, and SDG 6, 7, 12, 13, 14 and 15 under Theme 3. The CF, through its alignment with the 12MP, reinforces this commitment by ensuring that UN interventions support national policies geared toward inclusive sustainable development. This synergy between the CF and the 12MP highlights a strong mutual effort to accelerate

Malaysia's progress towards the SDGs, ultimately advancing the country's sustainable and inclusive development agenda.

**While the CF is generally well aligned with national priorities, there are areas where this alignment is less prominent, indicating that the CF does not emphasize or facilitate substantial focus or activities in these areas.** This stems from various factors, such as lack of comparative advantages, limited capacities, and/or insufficient resources within the UNCT, as well as the outcomes of the CF1 strategic prioritization exercise with the Government, during which some national priorities were not reflected due to the absence of demand or interest in engaging the UN in those areas at that time. Under Theme 1 (Resetting the Economy), alignment is relatively weaker in the areas considered in the 12 MP as critical for the country's transition to the high-income status such as high-impact sectors, including mining, construction, and farming (in particular, in terms of innovations and implementation of environmental, social and governance standards in those sectors), and trade strategies to support Malaysia's high-income goals. Under Theme 2 (Strengthening Security, Wellbeing, and Inclusivity), specific poverty reduction strategies as outlined in the 12 MP such as dedicated poverty units, enhanced poverty databases, and relevant tax reforms, as well as improvements of healthcare services and digital platforms for reducing regional disparities and enhancing social cohesion were less prominent in the CF. Under Theme 3 (Advancing Sustainability), the CF does not address aspects such as integrated water management and energy sustainability, which figure prominently in the 12 MP.

**Both internal and external stakeholders recognize and acknowledge the relevance of the CF.** They generally perceive the UN's work as relevant to the country's priorities, particularly in the areas related to SDGs, social protection, vulnerable populations, and environmental sustainability. The stakeholders also note that the UN's value lies in its ability to address sensitive issues that may not always be explicitly articulated in the national development plans, such as gender equality, human rights, and the protection of vulnerable populations.

### ***Alignment with the normative dimensions***

**The CF demonstrates a high degree of coherence with Malaysia's national priorities and needs with respect to the normative dimensions,** particularly in promoting the rights of vulnerable groups, inclusive economic growth, environmental sustainability, and social cohesion. There is strong complementarity of the CF's normative dimensions of human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment, disability inclusion and environmental sustainability with the national long- and medium-term planning frameworks. The CF is well-aligned with Malaysia's international normative commitments, particularly the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), and the Paris Agreement. Several stakeholders emphasized that the UN's presence in the country provides an essential platform for promoting global norms and supporting the country in the implementation of its international commitments. They recognize that the UN has played a significant role in agenda-setting, including in policy advocacy for vulnerable groups.

- **Human Rights: The CF adopts a rights-based approach to development, ensuring that no one is left behind. This is embedded in its efforts to promote social inclusion, equitable access to services, and support for vulnerable populations. The CF explicitly references Malaysia's commitments to three key human rights**

**conventions (CEDAW, CRC, and CRPD).** The country has ratified these three core treaties, and the CF reflects this alignment in its strategic priorities. For example, it acknowledges the need for gender equality in social services and highlights efforts to expand protections for vulnerable populations, including children and persons with disabilities. The CF references Malaysia's engagement with the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process and reflects commitments to enhancing human rights protections, including governance reforms and the promotion of social inclusion.

**At the same time, the review of stakeholder perspectives reveals several areas with potential for strengthening human rights efforts,** such as stronger local engagement for human rights work, particularly to address systemic discrimination and exclusions and focus on marginalized groups such as indigenous people, older persons, and those with disabilities in addition to the vulnerable people that the UN has a continuous focus on such as stateless, undocumented, migrant and refugee populations. Furthermore, stakeholders emphasized the need to broaden these efforts beyond social, economic, civil, and political rights to encompass cultural rights as well.

- **Gender Equality: Gender equality is a cross-cutting theme in the CF.** The CF recognizes significant progress in achieving equitable access to healthcare and education but highlights persistent gaps in economic participation, leadership, and protection against gender-based violence. Specific outputs aim to empower women economically, improve social protections, and address violence against women and other harmful practices such as child marriage, which predominantly affects girls.

Gender equality is largely seen by the stakeholders as a well-integrated aspect of UN initiatives, although **there is also a perception that women's participation in the labour market is an area that can benefit from stronger emphasis,** in particular, in connection with the efforts in the sphere of the care economy.

- **Disability Inclusion: The CRPD is integrated into the CF through strategic actions that focus on enhancing accessibility and inclusion for persons with disabilities in both the economic and social spheres.** The CF outlines support for national legislation that addresses these issues, aiming to ensure that persons with disabilities have equal access to social services, education, and employment opportunities.

**At the same time, disability inclusion is identified by many stakeholders as an area needing more comprehensive and coordinated efforts,** both in terms of targeted actions and mainstreaming. Despite progress in social protection and labour market inclusion, the stakeholders indicate that disability rights are not yet fully integrated into the UN initiatives.

- **Environmental Sustainability: The CF strongly emphasizes environmental sustainability, in line with Malaysia's commitments to the Paris Agreement and other environmental conventions.** It aims to promote climate action, sustainable urban development, resource efficiency, and biodiversity conservation. The CF also acknowledges the vulnerability of specific populations, including indigenous communities and those living in disaster-prone areas, highlighting the need for inclusive climate adaptation and mitigation strategies. The UN's work in environmental sustainability is well-

regarded by the stakeholders, particularly its role in fostering multi-stakeholder collaboration and advancing sustainable development practices.

**EQ 2: How resilient, responsive and strategic was the UNCT in addressing the changing political context and emerging needs, notably in addressing the COVID-19 impacts and in reprioritizing/adapting to provide timely support to the country and ensure the achievement of the CF results?**

**In terms of adaptability, the UN’s response within the country’s dynamic context can be observed across three key areas:** the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the ability to adjust to a volatile political environment, and adaptation to Malaysia’s rapidly advancing economic development, which could elevate the country to high-income status as early as 2028 according to some projections<sup>19</sup>.

***Adaptation to COVID-19 pandemic***

**While the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic occurred before the launch of the CF, much of the UN’s response unfolded during the CF’s first year of implementation (2021).** This is evident in the UN Annual Results Reports (2021-2023), which outline the achievements during this period. 64% of the count of results in 2021 were specifically related to COVID-19 response and decreased over time as the pandemic receded, demonstrating continued adaptation.

Table 5. COVID-related Results Reported for 2021-2023.

Year	Covid-related results	Non-Covid results	Total count of results in the UN Annual Results Reports	% of Covid-related results of total reported results
2021	14	8	22	64%
2022	7	45	52	13%
2023	1	63	64	2%
Total	22	116	138	16%

The UNCT response to the pandemic was primarily guided by the Socioeconomic Response Plan (SERP), a coordinated, multi-agency initiative designed to bridge immediate health needs with longer-term socioeconomic recovery. Although a detailed report on SERP implementation and its resource mobilization efforts is not available, key outcomes are reflected in the UN Annual Results Reports. Stakeholders, both internal and external, praised the SERP for addressing critical gaps in public health and for providing essential support to vulnerable groups. Several UN agencies highlighted that the SERP also facilitated enhanced engagement with government ministries and institutions, fostering joint planning and implementation.

<sup>19</sup> According to a World Bank economist speaking in October 2024, Malaysia is on track to achieve high-income nation status by 2028, potentially earlier if current economic trends persist. This projection aligns with the findings from the earlier World Bank’s report on Malaysia’s economic trajectory and ongoing structural reforms, which emphasize the need for sustained efforts to ensure inclusive and sustainable growth ([World Bank](#); [Al Jazeera](#)).

### ***Adaptation to political volatility***

**Another major adaptation challenge was the political volatility caused by frequent changes in government leadership.** This complicated coordination efforts with government agencies and further delayed the formalization of the CF, including the establishment of key governance structures. Notably, the Joint Steering Committee, a critical mechanism for formal UN-Government coordination, was not operational during the COVID-19 response in the first year of the CF implementation. Instead, coordination occurred on an ad hoc basis, limiting the UN's ability to adapt more swiftly to shifts in government policy and the country's needs.

**Despite concerted efforts by the Resident Coordinator (RC) to overcome legal obstacles and secure the CF's formal signature, this has not been achieved.** This is primarily due to the ongoing deliberations between the Government and the UN on the legal and institutional implications of signing the CF's Legal Annex. The 2021-2025 CF marks the first formal cooperation framework between the UN and Malaysia, unlike in most other countries, where such agreements were preceded by a UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), thereby necessitating a new approach to its formulation and endorsement. At the same time, the Government's formal endorsement of the CF's Results and Resources Framework, which encompasses the four Strategic Priority Areas and associated UN outputs, stands as a testament to adaptive management. Rather than abandoning efforts in the face of the challenges, the RC and UNCT successfully pivoted to ensure alignment on the substantive elements of the CF, thereby sustaining the UN's strategic contributions to Malaysia's development priorities.

### ***Adaptation to evolving country income status***

To capture the alignment of the CF with Malaysia's current development situation, **it is essential to recognize that the CF's relevance and adaptability is not only shaped by the country's socio-economic priorities but also by its status as an upper-middle-income country on a trajectory toward high-income status.** This context influences the country's developmental goals, shaping both national expectations and stakeholder priorities. A review of stakeholder perspectives indicates that while the CF demonstrates considerable alignment with the upper-middle-income status, in particular in addressing the existing social vulnerabilities, opportunities remain to strengthen its relevance and adaptability in supporting the country's development journey.

**Various stakeholders have expressed an interest in the UN playing a more prominent role in making strategic contributions to facilitate this trajectory, while simultaneously maintaining efforts to address key socioeconomic and environmental development gaps that characterize the "last mile" of the transition and continuing to leverage its human rights mandate.** They identify several priority areas where the UN could increase its relevance and adaptability within the upper-middle-income context. These include sectors such as energy transition, digital economy, AI-driven and industrial innovation, food security, and health system strengthening, including emphasis on mental health for both children and adults. There is also a noted need for new models and mechanisms for SDG financing, private sector engagement in sustainable development, and a concerted focus on strengthening support to developing data and evidence frameworks to guide policy decisions. This includes capacity development in areas such as data systems, research, evaluation, and training. Finally, stakeholders highlight the value

of the UN in supporting stronger policy feedback mechanisms between federal and state levels to enhance alignment and responsiveness in development planning.

**EQ 3: To what extent has the CF prioritized activities based on the needs (demand side) rather than on the availability of resources (supply side)? Particularly, how was this achieved (or not) in the absence of CF joint governance structures such as the Steering Committee?**

**Findings from interviews with internal and external stakeholders reveal that the CF's prioritization of activities has been largely demand-driven and were based on Malaysia's national priorities and the SDG agenda.** The design of the CF was informed by a comprehensive consultative and analytical process, initiated in 2019, to ensure alignment with Malaysia's needs. Through the Common Country Analysis, the UN identified priority areas, which were subsequently presented to the Government for feedback. A key consultation at the Malaysia SDG Summit in November 2019 engaged 2,600 participants across sectors, including government, private industry, civil society, academia, youth, and vulnerable groups such as indigenous peoples, refugees, and persons with disabilities. Further engagement occurred with the Malaysia CSO-SDG Alliance, representing over 90 organizations covering a wide range of communities and vulnerable groups, solidifying the CF's foundation in inclusive, multi-stakeholder input.

**The responsiveness to the needs of vulnerable populations has been enhanced through the incorporation of the SDGs into the 12MP and the Government's financial contributions via mechanisms such as the Malaysia-UN SDG Trust Fund.** These efforts underscore the government's recognition of and commitment to addressing critical development gaps, particularly for underserved and vulnerable groups. Nevertheless, the absence of a Joint Steering Committee (JSC), originally intended to facilitate high-level strategic coordination between the UN and the Government, has created challenges in formalizing decision-making processes and ensuring cohesive and agile strategic direction.

**In the absence of the JSC, the UN has relied on less formal mechanisms, such as consultations and dialogues with national stakeholders, to ensure continued responsiveness to the national needs and priorities.** While these efforts have mitigated some of the challenges, they lacked the formal mandate that a JSC would provide, resulting in less structured coordination and prioritization. The delayed establishment of this formal governance body has hindered a more cohesive, nationally driven UN strategy. Interviews with the key informants highlight this challenge, noting that the Government's reluctance to formally request support –the JSC would have provided an institutionalized platform for that – at times has complicated coordination efforts. External stakeholders emphasized that although the UN's support remains relevant, especially during crises such as COVID-19, formal governance structures are needed to enhance the UN's ability to proactively and systematically address Malaysia's evolving needs, including its transition to high-income status and for addressing the remaining critical development gaps related to the persisting vulnerabilities, social protection coverage, income inequality, equitable access to services and broader sustainability agenda.

## 5.2 Performance and Impact Orientation

**EQ4: To what extent has the CF contributed to key institutional, behavioural and legislative changes that are critical for catalysing progress towards the CF desired impact, including integration of normative areas such as GEWE, HR, disability inclusion and environmental sustainability?**

### *Analysis of Theory of Change (ToC)*

**A key finding from the review of the CF's Results Framework and in particular its Collaborative Outputs is that they are broadly defined and lack specific, measurable indicators:** e.g. Collaborative Output 1.1: "A more efficient, effective and sustainable social protection system is in place that provides increased protection against contingencies throughout the life cycle." This generality limits the ability to track progress, assess performance, and hold entities accountable. Without clear metrics, it becomes difficult to attribute outputs and eventual outcomes to specific UN interventions. Consequently, the evaluation relies more on qualitative methods such as contribution analysis and focuses more on intermediate stages of change rather than on any final outputs or outcomes, making evidence from the stakeholder interviews and surveys critical in assessing the CF's effectiveness.

**At the same time, the findings from the ToC workshops confirm that the CF's overall theory of change is robust, aligned with the intended outcomes across most pathways of change and does not require reconstruction.** The CF's ToC across all four outcomes is generally plausible, with strong linkages between activities, outputs, and targeted outcomes. However, specific areas across the outcomes show relatively weaker plausibility as discussed below:

### *Findings per Outcome*

- **Outcome 1: The linkages between the pathways of change, outputs, and outcomes in the CF's theory of change for Outcome 1 are generally plausible.** The proposed activities are comprehensive and address key structural barriers to equitable social services and social protection as outlined in the CF.

**However, two areas show relatively weaker plausibility: addressing social norm change around gender-based violence (GBV) and preventing non-communicable diseases (NCD), both of which require long-term and complex interventions.** For social norm change, awareness-raising campaigns targeting deeply ingrained societal norms, such as GBV, are difficult to measure and often require long-term efforts to yield visible outcomes. While these campaigns are essential, they may need to be supported by stronger policy enforcement or legislative changes to create more direct linkages to reducing GBV. For NCD prevention, addressing these diseases, which are often linked to lifestyle factors such as diet, exercise, and habits such as smoking, requires not only improvements in healthcare but also large-scale behavioural change interventions, which may be underemphasized in the current pathways. A broader, root cause approach focusing on well-being rather than diseases can effectively prioritize prevention, with a focus on maternal and child nutrition as critical foundations that contribute to long-term health, economic resilience, and reduced healthcare costs. Promoting well-being includes addressing lifestyle-related risk factors such as diet, physical activity, and other habits

require effective strategies that encourage sustainable behaviour change. External factors, such as economic inequalities or unequal access to healthcare services exacerbate health disparities. Systemic reforms, strategic policies, and targeted community-based interventions can effectively disrupt cycles of disadvantage across maternal, child, and ageing populations, enhancing health outcomes, particularly in marginalized communities.

- **Outcome 2: The ToC for Outcome 2 is generally plausible and well-structured to support Malaysia's path toward environmental sustainability.** The outputs and pathways focus on key areas such as decarbonization, biodiversity conservation, and disaster risk reduction. These are critical for achieving the outcome indicators as set in the CF results framework. Each output is linked to well-targeted activities that address major environmental challenges.

**At the same time, while the pathways of change for disaster risk reduction (DRR) focus on climate change adaptation and addressing impacts on the vulnerable groups, there may be gaps in how these policies are operationalized and implemented at the community level.** The corresponding output mentions policy formulation and infrastructure development, but the actual preparedness and resilience-building for vulnerable communities may be under-emphasized. The success of a national disaster risk management policy depends not just on policy formulation but also on robust, ground-level implementation. Without strong mechanisms to translate policies into community-level actions, the impact of these policies on actual disaster preparedness may be limited. These could include more targeted interventions to integrate disaster preparedness into local development planning, improve early warning systems, and enhance community engagement in disaster risk reduction efforts. This finding echoes a more general finding on the frequent gaps between policy formulation and execution.

- **Outcome 3: The overall ToC for Outcome 3 is generally plausible,** with well-aligned activities addressing the key outcome indicators, as specified in the CF's results framework, and well-targeted toward fostering inclusive, innovative, and sustainable economic growth. The outputs and pathways largely focus on inclusive growth, gender equality, and sustainable economic development, all of which are crucial to ensuring that Malaysia's economy benefits all segments of the population.

**At the same time, while the pathways for advancing women's participation in the economy are generally well-designed, there is a gap in addressing structural barriers that continue to limit women's entry and retention in the workforce.** Efforts to address the care economy and promote gender equality may require more systemic changes, such as stronger policies and stronger inter-sectoral collaboration to leverage the linkages between the care economy and women's labour force participation for gender equality. Raising the female labour force participation rate requires not only awareness campaigns and empowerment programmes but also significant policy shifts to address ingrained gender norms and structural challenges that disproportionately impact women.

- **Outcome 4: The ToC for Outcome 4 is generally strong and plausible, with well-aligned activities aimed at promoting social cohesion, good governance, and fundamental freedoms.** The pathways target key areas such as reducing discrimination,

increasing women's political representation, improving governance systems, and combating corruption. These areas are crucial for fostering peace and inclusive governance.

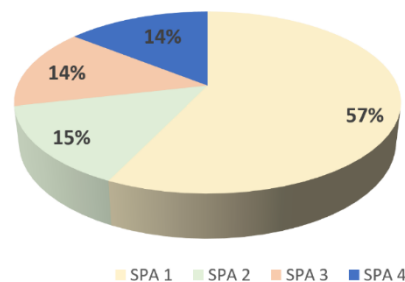
**At the same time, while efforts to foster inter-ethnic dialogue and assess laws for social cohesion are essential, the linkages between dialogue and tangible reductions in discrimination are somewhat indirect and would require long-term efforts beyond the CF duration.** In addition, with respect to anti-corruption, the efforts to improve governance and reduce corruption align well with the respective CF outcome indicators, but systemic improvements in these areas may require a longer time to show visible improvements on the Corruption Perception Index. While the pathways focus on institutional strengthening and anti-corruption frameworks, achieving measurable improvements in perceptions of corruption within a few years may be difficult.

**Although the CF's ToC is generally robust, there appear some gaps in the agency coverage of the ToC's pathways of change, particularly in SPA 1,** where pathways related to improving service quality through sectoral planning and training service providers remain uncovered, which could hinder progress in health and education linkages. Furthermore, assessment of pathways in SPA 4 was limited, probably due to the lack of a functioning results group in this area. Additionally, the merger of SPA Planet and SPA Prosperity two years into the CF cycle suggests a need for potential reconceptualization of the theory of change to ensure coherence across these interconnected thematic areas.

**The rapid assessment conducted during the 2024 UNCT Retreat highlighted that the most significant outcome-level changes under the CF were concentrated in SPA 1 (PEOPLE), which accounted for 57% of the reported outcomes<sup>20</sup>.** This aligns with the UN's emphasis on social protection and equity-focused interventions. SPAs 2, 3, and 4, covering environmental sustainability, inclusive economic growth, and governance, each accounted for 14-15% of the reported changes.

Figure 4. Rapid Assessment of Outcome-Level Results by UNCT

Outcome-Level Results under CF, as highlighted by UNCT, per SPA



**In the perception survey on outcome-level change among the UNCT and UN programme staff, 42% of respondents noted that the CF contributed to a moderate extent, while 26% indicated a large extent of contribution. However, 16% felt the CF contributed only to a small extent, and 11% were unsure of its impact.** These results suggest that while there is broad recognition of the CF's contribution to institutional and legislative changes, a significant portion of respondents perceive either limited impact or are uncertain about the CF's outcomes, reflecting the need for better communication of progress and achievements.

<sup>20</sup> The methodology for this assessment (onsite online poll) had some limitations due to the unannounced nature of the poll, which may have impacted the comprehensiveness of the data collected. However, the UNCT was well represented, and its findings are consistent with the analysis of the other evidence on performance.

Additionally, according to the data from the interviews, UN agencies internally express overall satisfaction with their contributions to **institutional reforms and legislative changes**, particularly under SPA 1 (PEOPLE), where they have successfully expanded social protection, supported national policies for vulnerable groups, and advocated for rights and social norms. Despite these achievements, internal stakeholders note ongoing challenges, especially in ensuring the effective implementation of legislative reforms across various sectors, indicating a gap between policy formulation and execution.

UN agencies also highlight their role in promoting **behavioural and social changes** on key normative issues such as gender equality, human rights, and environmental sustainability. However, institutionalizing these efforts to reach broader and marginalized groups remains a challenge.

### ***Analysis of distribution of activities***

**The analysis of UN activities from 2021 to 2023 shows a clear emphasis on social protection and services for vulnerable populations**, with Output 1.2 receiving the largest share of activities (36%) and a significant portion of the budget. This indicates a strong focus on addressing immediate socio-economic needs, particularly in the post-COVID recovery period and in the context of migration.

**There is less emphasis on activities under Outputs 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 4.1 and 4.3, which focus on inclusive economic growth, environmental sustainability, disaster preparedness, and governance reforms.** Although they do not dominate the total activity distribution, they are pivotal for long-term resilience and inclusive development. The relative emphasis on Output 1.2 over these outputs could signal that while the CF is successfully addressing immediate service needs, it might face limitations in ensuring deeper socioeconomic and environmental systemic reforms or fostering robust governance frameworks.

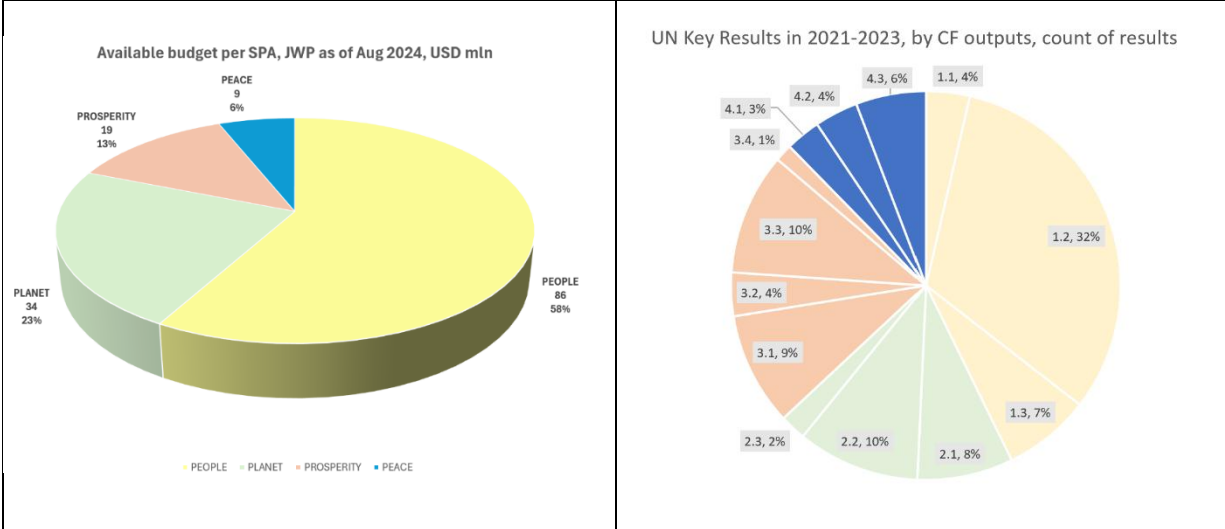
**The least emphasis is on Outputs 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, and 4.2, covering a wide and diverse range of themes**, including gaps in areas, such as women's economic participation, corporate social responsibility, sustainable urban development, and political inclusivity. These gaps may limit the sustainability and inclusivity of broader development efforts. At the same time, this limited focus might not necessarily reflect a lack of engagement but could suggest that the UN's work in these areas is more focused on advocacy, policy dialogue, and indirect influence rather than direct programmatic activities, which may not be fully captured in the activity distribution. Additionally, it is possible that other stakeholders with comparative advantages in these areas are taking the lead, while the UN is concentrating its limited resources on priorities where its expertise and impact are more significant.

### ***Analysis of budget allocation and results reported per outcome***

**The CF budget allocation reflects prioritization towards Outcome 1, with the largest share directed towards SPA PEOPLE (58%, USD 86 million) to address social protection and inclusive services.** SPA PLANET receives the second-largest share (23%, USD 34 million), supporting environmental sustainability initiatives. Smaller allocations to SPA PROSPERITY (13%, USD 19 million) and SPA PEACE (6%, USD 9 million) correspond to a more moderate emphasis on inclusive economic growth and governance activities. This distribution aligns closely with the activity allocations, underscoring the UN's emphasis on social and environmental

priorities. It is important to note, however, that in an upper-middle-income country such as Malaysia, the UN's work often focuses on technical support, policy advice, and advocacy, which may involve relatively low or no direct costs.

Figure 5. Available Budget per SPA and Key Results in 2021-2023



**The distribution of the results reported for 2021 to 2023 largely aligns with the budget and activity allocations, but with some distinctions.** Output 1.2 remains dominant (32%), mirroring its significant budget share (58%) and activity concentration (36%), confirming a strong focus on social protection and service delivery. However, Output 3.2 on women’s economic equality shows higher-than-expected results (4%), indicating potential efficiency despite limited investment. Conversely, Output 3.4 continues to underperform and has low results (1%), indicating possible inefficiencies in sustainable urban development efforts, and suggesting a need for reassessment. The key results from 2021 to 2023 predominantly fall under Capacity Development and Advisory Assistance, which together comprise 79% of all results. This includes Capacity Development/Technical Assistance (61%), Data Collection and Analysis (9%), Policy Advice and Thought Leadership (7%), and Normative Support (2%).

**External views on UN performance**

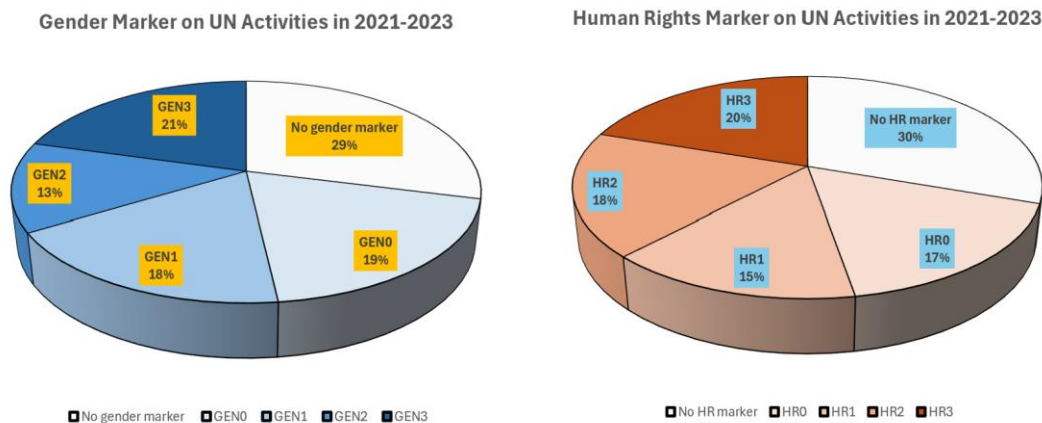
Externally, both governmental and non-governmental organizations view the UN’s work positively, particularly for its support to vulnerable groups, in achieving the SDGs and aligning Malaysia’s national development with international commitments. The UN is valued for its technical assistance and fostering partnerships. However, there are also calls for more structured dialogues on policy issues to improve efficiency and impact. External stakeholders also commend the UN’s alignment with the SDGs and its contributions to governance and sustainability, while emphasizing the need for deeper engagement with local governance structures and communities to ensure SDG initiatives are effectively localized and implemented. As Malaysia approaches high-income status and consolidates its sustainable development gains, stakeholders expect the UN to adapt its focus to advanced social and economic challenges, including the need for innovations, stronger efforts to address income inequality, and a focus on population ageing. They also highlight the importance of engaging the private sector to enhance the UN’s role in addressing these evolving national priorities.

### **Integration of normative dimensions**

**The perception survey on the integration of the normative dimensions of gender equality and human rights revealed mixed responses.** While over one-third of respondents recognized significant integration of gender equality, 21% felt it was only moderately integrated, and 11% were unsure. Similarly, 37% saw human rights as largely integrated, but some uncertainty remained among respondents. These results suggest that while there has been progress in normative integration, there is still room for improvement in fully mainstreaming these dimensions into the CF's activities. The findings on the integration of gender equality and women's empowerment echo the results of the 2023 UNCT SWAP Gender Scorecard, which highlighted the areas for improvement such as the need for better gender equality mainstreaming in the CF outcomes, for better measurement of progress in gender equality, and for adequate capacities for gender equality mainstreaming.

**The gender and human rights marker analysis further reveals inconsistencies in the application of these markers in the Joint Work Plans.** Nearly 50% of activities either lack a gender marker or are classified as GEN0, with some GEN3 activities incorrectly categorized. A similar issue was observed with the human rights marker, indicating a need for additional capacity development to ensure more accurate and robust integration of these normative dimensions across UN activities.

Figure 6. Gender and Human Rights Markers of UN Activities in 2021-2023



**The perception survey on disability inclusion also showed mixed views.** While 37% of respondents felt that disability inclusion had been integrated to a moderate extent and 21% to a large extent, an equal percentage (21%) indicated it had only been integrated to a small extent, and 16% were unsure. Furthermore, 5% of respondents reported no integration of disability inclusion at all. These findings suggest moderate progress in disability inclusion but highlight significant gaps or uncertainties about how effectively this aspect is being mainstreamed. This calls for clearer strategies, stronger efforts, and better visibility of disability-related initiatives to ensure full inclusion in the development agenda.

**Similarly, environmental sustainability shows a varied perception among respondents,** with 32% indicating it had been integrated to a small extent, and 21% each noting moderate and large extents of integration. A small proportion (5%) saw a very large integration, while 11% found it difficult to say, and another 11% reported no integration at all. While some progress has been made, these results indicate that environmental sustainability has not been fully embedded across all SPAs, pointing to the need for more consistent and visible efforts to integrate environmental sustainability throughout the CF's programming.

### ***Youth: A Cross-Cutting Driver of Sustainable Development***

In addition to the core normative areas, youth emerge as a vital cross-cutting theme in the CF, recognized as a critical demographic for Malaysia's sustainable future. Youth are prominently reflected in the SPAs, particularly in SPA 1, focusing on equitable access to education and social protection; SPA 2, targeting the potential of youth for climate action; and SPA 3, addressing unemployment and skills development. Youth are positioned in the CF as both key agents of change and beneficiaries, with particular emphasis on the needs and inclusion of vulnerable youth categories.

Various UN agencies are actively implementing programmatic work targeting youth from their thematic perspectives, including education, employment, access to services, and environmental sustainability. The RCO complements these efforts through advocacy that highlights the critical role of youth in driving sustainable development. Additionally, the CF prioritizes youth engagement in decision-making processes, including their involvement in consultations that shaped the CF's priorities. Looking ahead, the programmatic and advocacy foundations established under CF1 provide a strong platform to further enhance and scale up youth-focused efforts in CF2, solidifying their role as both drivers and beneficiaries of Malaysia's sustainable development trajectory.

### **EQ5: To what extent have CF results contributed to sound and sustainable progress towards the achievement of national SDG targets?**

**Internal stakeholders acknowledge the UN's alignment with national SDG targets but highlight difficulties in measuring contributions due to the absence of clear national targets for several SDGs.** This lack of baseline data complicates efforts to demonstrate impact, although UN coordination has improved in terms of mainstreaming SDGs into national plans. However, internal concerns persist about whether these efforts are translating into concrete outcomes. External stakeholders, particularly from civil society, appreciate the UN's role in contributing to alignment of national policies with SDG priorities, particularly in areas such as environmental sustainability and gender equity. However, they also emphasize challenges in converting grassroots engagements into actionable policies and translating national policies into effective local-level implementation.

**Zooming in on measurable SDG impact:**

The CF results framework incorporates 22 outcome indicators, of which 45% are SDG indicators, spanning SDGs 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 12, 14, and 16. A midline analysis done by the evaluation team in 2024 has revealed significant data issues in terms quality, accuracy and availability, including missing baselines for 30% of SDG indicators and outdated or incomplete data for others. These limitations hinder the UN’s ability to accurately monitor and demonstrate progress toward SDG targets. For example, some indicators, such as those for urban policy (11.a.1), lack sufficient activity and data to show progress. While some targets were surpassed much earlier than expected, the general gaps in data availability and accuracy suggest a need for enhanced coordination and monitoring. Despite these challenges, it is important to note that the CF’s contributions go beyond the measurable SDG indicators, addressing broader aspects of sustainable development (e.g. LNOB) through various related activities.

**The perception survey results show that 58% of UN programme staff believe the CF has contributed to Malaysia’s SDG progress to a moderate extent, while 21% perceive a larger impact, and 11% remain uncertain.** These mixed perceptions likely reflect the earlier noted data issues, including missing baselines and inaccurate data, which affect confidence in the CF’s contributions to measurable SDG outcomes. When asked whether the CF results provide a strong foundation for continued SDG progress, 42% agreed, while 32% felt this was true to a moderate extent. A smaller proportion (20%) expressed scepticism about the sustainability of these results. The overall perceptions reflect both optimism and reservations about the long-term impact of the CF’s achievements.

**EQ6: How has the CF facilitated the identification of and access to new financing flows at scale for national partners?**

**Between 2021 and 2023, the CF successfully mobilized USD 130 million, mostly from domestic public sector and international donors, with a delivery rate improving to 89% in 2023, indicating increasing operational efficiency.** However, to meet the full budget requirement of USD 225 million for the 2021-2025 period, a stronger focus on resource mobilization is necessary in the remaining period of the CF. The current funding landscape is diverse, involving domestic public sector support, including government cost-sharing and the Malaysia-

UN SDG Trust Fund, and international multilateral and bilateral donors. There are 9 domestic public funding partners, and 20 international public donors (14 bilateral and 6 multilateral); there are 2 domestic private donors + unidentified ones, and 2 international private donors. While the domestic contributions show strong local ownership of SDG initiatives, the involvement of

Table 6. CF Funding Landscape.

CURRENT CF FUNDING LANDSCAPE	
DOMESTIC PUBLIC	INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC
Malaysia Ministry of Finance, Malaysian Research Institute on Ageing, Malaysia Ministry of Human Resources, Malaysia Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, Malaysia Ministry of Economy, Malaysia National Population and Family Development Board, Malaysia Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sarawak State Government, Malaysia Penang State Government	<b>Bilateral:</b> Australia, Canada, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, UK, USA  <b>Multilateral:</b> European Union, Global Environmental Facility, Montreal Protocol, Adaptation Fund, Convention for International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, The Joint SDG Fund
DOMESTIC PRIVATE	INTERNATIONAL PRIVATE
Private donors (unidentified), Amanah Lestari Alam, Consumer goods forum	Resolve to Save Lives, Walmart Foundation

international and domestic private sector actors remains limited, reflecting a potential gap in resource mobilization. In addition, international bilateral and multilateral donors in upper-middle-income countries tend to be more selective in their funding priorities, increasingly prioritizing regional and global public goods rather than conventional country-focused development assistance. This also is evident in the priorities of Joint Programmes, many of which are funded by international multilateral donors.

**Interviews with internal and external stakeholders reveal that the CF has facilitated domestic financing flows through mechanisms such as the Malaysia-UN SDG Trust Fund, which has enabled UN agencies to get access to funding for SDG-related projects, particularly benefitting underserved populations.** While the annual quantum of the fund is relatively small, approximately USD 3.6 million, with only about one-quarter allocated to UN joint programmes in the first round, it is one of the few available and predictable funding sources for the UN in an upper-middle-income country context, where traditional development aid is increasingly scarce. External stakeholders also emphasized the need for more innovative financing mechanisms to support SDG implementation in Malaysia, particularly given its upper-middle-income status. While the UN has been instrumental in providing technical support and aligning national policies with SDG objectives, stakeholders believe that the country requires more diversified and innovative financing solutions, such as blended finance. These approaches are seen as crucial to mobilizing the necessary resources to support national sustainable development efforts, especially as traditional development aid becomes less available for middle-income countries such as Malaysia.

**The perception survey indicates that 32% of respondents confirmed accessing new financing through the CF, primarily through mechanisms such as the Malaysia-UN SDG Trust Fund, while 26% did not, and 37% found it difficult to assess.** This reflects ambiguity in attributing financing outcomes directly to the CF, possibly due to unclear communication on financing opportunities. The results suggest that while the CF has enabled some agencies to secure new financial resources, significant challenges and uncertainties remain, emphasizing the need for clearer guidance and communication on how the CF can support further access to new financing flows.

### 5.3 Coordination and Coherence

**EQ7: To what extent have the CF coordination mechanisms (for example, the Results Groups, Thematic Working Groups, Operations Management Team, and the Communications Group) contributed to coherent and increased synergies between agencies?**

#### *UNCT configuration*

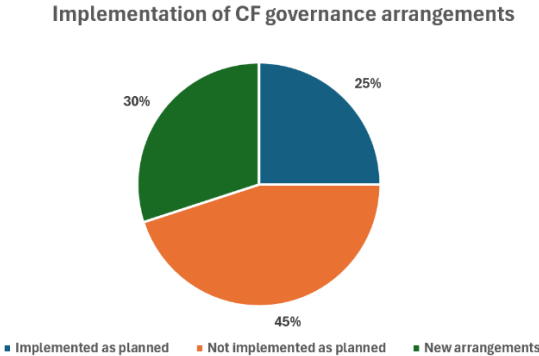
**The UN has a flexible and evolving approach to collaboration and contributions to sustainable development in Malaysia as reflected in the dynamics of the UNCT**, where certain agencies engage despite not being formally assigned roles in the initial Results Framework, suggesting a dynamic operational environment where practical contributions extend beyond formal designations. There are 21 entities that would be CF signatories for 2021-2025, with most designated as contributors to specific collaborative outputs in the Results Framework. However, some signatory agencies are not assigned to any collaborative outputs, while two non-

signatory agencies (FAO and UNOCT) contribute to the Joint Workplans, despite not appearing in the Results Framework. Additionally, two signatory entities (UN Women and UNCDF), though unassigned to collaborative outputs in the Results Framework, are also contributing to the JWP in practice. At the same time, this situation also suggests a certain degree of disconnect between formal designations and actual contributions, indicating the need for better alignment, stronger accountability and clearer communication of agency roles within the CF to ensure coherence and recognition of contributions.

**Governance structures**

**The UNCT has shown significant agility by establishing new governance structures that were not originally planned, such as merging groups or creating new sub-groups (e.g. for Social Protection and Disability Inclusion).** This reflects the UN’s ability to adapt its coordination mechanisms to meet emerging needs and ensure better alignment with operational realities. About 25% of the governance arrangements were implemented as planned, indicating a quarter of the structures are functioning as originally intended, and 30% represented new arrangements, suggesting adaptive adjustments to the governance structure, such as merging groups or introducing new bodies.

Figure 7. CF Governance Arrangements: Planned vs. Implemented.



**At the same time, a significant share of the planned governance and implementation arrangements, including the Steering Committee and some groups, have not been fully implemented or are inactive and/or ineffective.** Forty-five percent were not implemented as planned, indicating significant deviations, such as inactive or underperforming groups. This lack of operationalization hinders strategic oversight, performance monitoring, and the ability to effectively steer UN activities toward the CF objectives. Specifically, the dormancy of the Results Group on SPA PEACE and the absence of a Monitoring and Evaluation Group have left gaps in structured sectoral coordination in the field of governance and effective performance tracking and evidence-based decision-making across all priority areas.

**Although some Results Groups have been more successful than others, there is a widely shared perception that their performance could be improved.** These groups are often seen as compliance-driven mechanisms rather than dynamic platforms for meaningful collaboration, which has resulted in limited progress in fostering sustained synergies across the agencies. Specific Results Groups, such as those for SPA PLANET and SPA PROSPERITY, have faced leadership and operational challenges. Feedback from the members of the groups suggests that while they recognize the importance of coordination, the structures may not fully align with their immediate agency priorities or capacities, leading to challenges in fully leveraging their potential. Additionally, the limited time and capacities of individual agencies can make it difficult to prioritize participation in cross-agency mechanisms without clear benefits, incentives, or a sense of shared accountability. In contrast, smaller and more focused thematic working groups have been highlighted as more effective in deepening knowledge and fostering practical and operational

synergies. Their narrower scope and operational focus allow agencies to collaborate more efficiently on specific priorities with tangible outcomes.

**In addition, despite plans to engage the private sector through the Business Sector Advisory Group, this group has not been established.** This missed opportunity to engage the private sector more systematically limits the UN's ability to mobilize SDG financing and foster innovation, which is key in the Malaysian upper-middle-income context.

### ***Joint initiatives and programming***

**Despite various challenges, numerous joint initiatives and joint programming efforts are underway among UN agencies, although they represent a relatively small share of overall activities and budget.** Joint initiatives, which feature informal, flexible collaboration without formal agreements, are often quickly mobilized to address immediate issues, such as COVID-19, refugee resettlement, and human rights, and involve fewer agencies for rapid coordination. In contrast, formal joint programmes include structured agreements, common work plans, and budgets, engaging a broader set of agencies to support longer-term goals such as SDG financing, violent extremism, and various health-related interventions. Funding partners, notably the European Union and global trust funds, highlight a shift towards supporting global and regional public goods. At the same time, the UN-Malaysia SDG Trust Fund, enabling UN agencies to get access to funding for their joint programmes, provides a unique platform for addressing specific national priorities, enhancing synergy and focus on programmatic efforts.

### **EQ8: Post UN reform, to what extent have UN agency programmes and work plans been effectively and meaningfully derived from the CF both in design and implementation?**

**The alignment of the UN agency programmes and work plans with the CF is generally strong but there are opportunities to enhance coherence and ensure all agencies fully leverage the CF for programmatic alignment.** Most of the UN agencies that do have a formal role in the CF report that their programmes and strategies are aligned with the CF, and they use it as a guiding structure for the alignment with the national and UN priorities. However, non-resident agencies or those with global mandates sometimes struggle to fully align due to limited in-country capacities or competing priorities. Some internal stakeholders also expressed concern that the broad and general nature of the CF's collaborative outputs hinders clear accountability and tracking of contributions.

**A notable share of respondents (47%) in the internal perception survey indicated that their programmes are fully derived or aligned with the CF, reflecting strong coherence with the overall strategic framework, and 42% of respondents stated that their programmes are partially derived or aligned with the CF,** indicating that while there is some level of alignment, it may not be comprehensive or fully embedded in the agencies' operational plans. Just a small portion of 5% of respondents indicated that their programmes are not derived or aligned with the CF, and another 5% found the question not relevant because they do not have country-specific strategies.

**EQ9: To what extent did the post-UNDS reform Resident Coordinator Office's roles and responsibilities enable positive UNCT's joint convening power and better coherence of the country team?**

**With respect to the role of the Resident Coordinator, both internal and external stakeholders praised the RC for effectively convening agencies and stakeholders towards joint initiatives, fostering collaboration across agencies, and promoting joint programming.** The RC and the RC Office are widely acknowledged for advancing key issues such as human rights and SDGs through high-level advocacy and policy dialogue, including through engagements with civil society. External stakeholders commended the RC's ability to bridge gaps between the UN, Government, and other stakeholders, influencing discussions on sensitive topics. The RCO is widely regarded as an essential coordinating body, with stakeholders acknowledging its ability to bring UN agencies together for joint projects and strategic initiatives, particularly in advancing the SDGs, building bridges to various stakeholders of the development process, including, in addition to the ones mentioned above, youth and academia, and supporting the country in implementing its international commitments.

**While the RC's leadership in high-level coordination is well-regarded, several external stakeholders pointed out gaps in the visibility and direct involvement of the RC Office at the operational level.** UN agencies were seen as more visible and directly engaged in implementation compared to the RC Office, which was perceived as more focused on oversight. This has sometimes led to a weaker perception of the RC's role in delivering tangible results and showing its added value. It is important to note, however, that the RCO's primary mandate is to provide strategic coordination and oversight to ensure coherence and alignment of UN efforts with the national priorities, rather than direct implementation, which is the responsibility of individual agencies. Moreover, the RC Office was perceived to have limited engagement with some sectors, in particular highlighting fragmented engagement with the private sector and calling for a stronger emphasis on grassroots engagement at the local level. There is also a perception among some external stakeholders that the CF is a much less known and understood strategic planning framework compared to individual agency programmes, which can be attributed to the CF's being the first such document in Malaysia and its unsigned status. This highlights the need for future communications once the CF is formally signed with the Government. In addition, although the RCO has played an important role in securing funding for SDG-related activities, including coordinating initiatives such as the Malaysia-UN SDG Trust Fund, the stakeholders called for stronger strategic guidance from the RC Office to ensure that UN efforts, particularly around SDG implementation, are better resourced.

**The survey results show varied perceptions of the effectiveness of the RCO in enhancing the UNCT's convening power and improving coherence among UN agencies.** While 47% of survey respondents rated the RCO as very or extremely effective in enhancing UNCT's convening power and being facilitator for improving agency coherence, a significant proportion (21%) viewed it as only slightly effective and another 5% found it difficult to assess. 26% of respondents rated the RCO as moderately effective. Thus, there remains a need to address the concerns of those who see its role as only slightly effective or moderately effective to ensure more consistent and impactful coordination across the UN system.

## 6. Conclusions

**Conclusion 1:** The UN has maintained relevance by aligning the CF with the national priorities and ensuring consistency with the country's key strategic policy frameworks, effectively adapting to the evolving context, responding to the needs and providing strong normative complementarity. At the same time, as Malaysia navigates its development journey within the context of an upper middle-income country, with aspirations for high-income status, the UN can be better positioned to support an integrated approach that addresses both the priorities that are central to this development journey and the work on the remaining, complex "last mile" socioeconomic and environmental challenges. These priorities encompass several areas: i) providing support to specific thematic policy areas, ii) advancing innovative SDG financing mechanisms to expand the resource base for SDG achievement, iii) fostering private sector collaboration in development initiatives aligned with the SDGs, and iv) promoting data-driven, evidence-based policymaking. The latter would ensure that policies are informed by evidence of their socioeconomic benefits while also demonstrating the intrinsic value and practical advantages of integrating normative dimensions into the respective development initiatives. By enhancing its strategic adaptability in these areas, the UN can play a more transformative role in Malaysia's high-income transition and further support sustainable development across all priority sectors.

**Conclusion 2:** The CF contributes significantly to institutional, legislative, and behavioural changes in Malaysia, particularly within the SPA 1 (PEOPLE) and SPA 2 (PLANET) domains, and provides ongoing technical assistance and policy advisory support under SPA 3 (PROSPERITY) and SPA 4 (PEACE), where progress has been more limited. The particularly strong emphasis on SPA 1 may signal that, while the UN is addressing immediate service needs and ensuring the LNOB aspect, it might be facing limitations in contributing to deeper socioeconomic and governance reforms needed for sustained, transformative change. Several key challenges are also affecting the CF's ability to maximize its impact, particularly in performance measurement and accountability. The lack of specific, output-level indicators and the intermediate outcome nature of the outputs hinder accurate tracking of progress, including with respect to SDG indicators, complicating efforts to attribute changes directly to the CF interventions. This issue is further amplified by the instability and limited functionality in the Results Groups on SPA 2 (PLANET), SPA 3 (PROSPERITY) and SPA 4 (PEACE). Additionally, while the CF has supported significant legislative reforms, there remains a persistent gap between policy formulation and its practical execution, including at the local level and with respect to various national action plans. To improve impact orientation, the ongoing UN engagement at the grassroots level could help bridge federal policies with local needs and narrow the policy-implementation gap, helping to ensure that policy frameworks are directly relevant and impactful for communities across all regions and that local pilots and innovations feed back into the federal policymaking.

**Conclusion 3:** To support its operations financially, the UN has successfully mobilized resources, reaching the expenditure close to 60% of the CF total estimated resource needs by the end of 2023. The current funding landscape, which includes both domestic and international public donors, reflects a commitment to SDG initiatives and strong local ownership. Yet, limited engagement from the private sector highlights a potential gap in resource mobilization and unlocking of new financing models, underscoring the need for more innovative and diversified financing strategies, particularly as international donors in upper-middle-income countries increasingly prioritize regional and global public goods over traditional country-specific aid. Mechanisms such as Malaysia-UN SDG Trust Fund provides a unique platform for addressing specific national priorities, enhancing synergy and focus on programmatic efforts. To fully leverage this platform and maximize its opportunities, it is important to ensure the high quality of submitted Joint Programme proposals at the design stage. This not only ensures a smooth transition from design to implementation but also demonstrates the UN's

expertise and mastery in delivering substantively robust and well-conceived project designs. As Malaysia moves forward, more diversified financing mechanisms and strategic private sector engagement are crucial in bridging resource gaps and ensuring sustainable, long-term development.

**Conclusion 4: The CF successfully integrates considerations of human rights, gender equality, disability inclusion, and environmental sustainability across its strategic priorities.** The UN's rights-based approach is widely valued, especially its focus on social protections and services for vulnerable groups and on inclusive growth. It is important that the UN continues to work on these issues not only from a rights-based perspective but also because addressing challenges such as poverty, regional differences, and LNOB is essential for the country to achieve its high-income aspiration while ensuring social cohesion and stability. Additionally, opportunities exist to enhance the rights agenda by strengthening emphasis on marginalized groups such as indigenous people, older persons, and those with disabilities in addition to the vulnerable people that the UN has a continuous focus on such as stateless, undocumented, migrant and refugee populations, and by broadening the scope to encompass cultural rights. While gender equality and disability inclusion are well integrated into the CF's design and theory of change, the effectiveness of implementation could be enhanced by placing greater emphasis on female economic participation, particularly in the context of the care economy, and by adopting a more comprehensive approach to disability rights across initiatives, both in terms of targeted actions and mainstreaming. In addition, continuous staff capacity development is essential to ensure the effective integration of normative dimensions into day-to-day programme and operations work, particularly in the accurate use of tools such as gender equality and human rights markers as mainstreaming trackers. Strengthening capacities in this area will help address inconsistencies and promote a more systematic approach to embedding these critical principles across UN activities.

**Conclusion 5: The governance and implementation arrangements of the CF have demonstrated notable strengths, contributing to enhanced synergy between UN agencies and fostering collaboration through joint initiatives and joint programmes.** The UNCT operates as a fully functional platform for internal UN coordination, providing a regular space for collective decision-making and strategic alignment across agencies. The UN's flexibility in dynamically configuring agency contributions beyond formal designations in the CF Results Framework also highlights its adaptability in addressing emerging needs. Joint programmes, in particular, have proven effective in addressing regional and global public goods, aligning with the UN's strategic focus on shared benefits and transboundary challenges. Additionally, smaller, thematic working groups have shown success in fostering substantive knowledge and operational synergies, demonstrating that narrower scopes and more focused efforts enhance collaboration.

**However, significant areas for improvement remain.** Considerable gaps in governance and coordination mechanisms hinder the CF's full effectiveness. The absence of formal endorsement by the Government, including the non-establishment of a Joint Steering Committee, has impeded high-level strategic coordination and had some cascading effects on other governance elements, leading to less structured alignment of priorities and reduced agility in addressing emerging needs. This gap, coupled with challenges in the performance of Results Groups, particularly for SPA PLANET, SPA PROSPERITY, and SPA PEACE, and the lack of a Monitoring and Evaluation Group, has limited the CF's ability to foster cross-agency collaboration, avoid siloed approaches, and ensure robust performance tracking and assessment of both UN and government programmes, including through capacity building initiatives. The lack of a Business Sector Advisory Group has missed opportunities to engage the private sector in mobilizing SDG financing and driving innovation.

These areas for improvements highlight the need for recalibrating the CF's coordination mechanisms, emphasizing streamlined, purpose-driven structures aligning with agency capacities while fostering collective accountability and solidarity across the UN system. Results Groups play a central role in aligning individual UN agency efforts with the broader CF objectives and SDG targets. Strengthening leadership mandates and incentivizing active participation will enhance their effectiveness in ensuring coherence across programmatic and advocacy efforts, including for resource mobilization purposes. In the same vein, Results Groups and/or Monitoring and Evaluation Group need to take a stronger role in tracking progress toward the CF outcomes by leveraging UNINFORM as a primary reporting and accountability platform, ensuring data-driven decision-making.

The findings on UNCT configuration highlight the need to strengthen accountability and coherence among UN agencies to ensure their roles are more substantively aligned with the RRF. A more structured alignment of agency roles, responsibilities, and contributions to the RRF is essential to maximize the collective impact of the UNCT. Fostering stronger mechanisms for mutual accountability and transparent communication as part of the UNCT configuration can ensure that all agencies actively contribute to delivering tangible results, thereby reinforcing the credibility of the CF and positioning the UN as a leader in delivering high-quality, results-driven development solutions.

Strengthening formal governance structures, incentivizing meaningful participation, promoting shared accountability for UN-wide results, and addressing operational inefficiencies will be crucial to ensuring that the CF remains a dynamic and impactful framework for advancing Malaysia's development priorities. Formalizing the CF, including its governance provisions, is essential to establishing the high-level coordination structures required to support the system's overall effectiveness.

**Conclusion 6: The post-UNDS reform's role of the RC and the RCO has been instrumental in enhancing the UNCT joint convening power, fostering greater coherence among UN agencies, leading advocacy on the normative aspects of sustainable development, facilitating policy dialogue, and bridging gaps between the UN, Government, and other stakeholders, positively influencing discussions on sensitive topics.** At the same time, externally, there is at times limited familiarity with the RCO's distinct coordination role within the UN system, likely due to its focus on facilitating collaboration rather than direct implementation, the function which is more commonly associated with the operational mandates of individual UN agencies. Similarly, awareness of the CF as the overarching strategic planning document for the UN's work in Malaysia remains relatively low, partly due to the CF's unsigned status and its novelty as the first framework of its kind in the country. This highlights the need for enhanced communication efforts, particularly following the CF's formal signing, to reinforce its strategic purpose and strengthen stakeholder understanding of its role in guiding the UN's collective contributions to Malaysia's development priorities.

## 7. Recommendations

The recommendations in this section aim to provide a forward-looking roadmap for strengthening the UN's strategic engagement and impact in Malaysia. While the primary focus is on leveraging the lessons learned from CF1 to inform the design and implementation of CF2, it is equally important to utilize the remaining year of CF1 to make meaningful improvements wherever feasible. These efforts can help set a stronger foundation for the next CF cycle.

#	Recommendations and indicative actions	Priority	Timeframe	Responsibility
R1.	<p><b>Revitalize the coordination and accountability model for the CF's implementation and governance:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritize advocacy and dialogue with the Government to secure the formal signing of the CF and emphasize its importance as a strategic framework for planning, financing, implementation, monitoring and reporting.</li> <li>• Establish and operationalize a Joint Steering Committee, a critical element in the entire structure of the CF implementation and governance.</li> <li>• Ensure the full functionality of the Results Groups through a manageable thematic focus, clear mandates, incentivized participation, stronger leadership, as well as structured rules of procedure that can help facilitate and institutionalize these structures.</li> <li>• Foster a culture of collective accountability to strengthen coordination and UN-wide coherence in achieving the CF's objectives through these coordination structures. This includes strengthening mechanisms for mutual accountability and transparent communication to ensure that the UNCT configuration is commensurate with the scope and ambition of the CF, aligning agency roles, responsibilities, and contributions to the RRF effectively.</li> <li>• Consider integrating the respective arrangements and accountabilities already at the stage of the CF design, and/or solidifying them through a country-level UNCT compact, operationalizing the Management and Accountability Framework and reflecting the CF needs.</li> </ul>	High	Short-term (6-12 months)	RCO, Government, UNCT
R2.	<p><b>Improve performance monitoring and accountability for output and outcome level results of the CF:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen the results framework through 1) creating specific, output-level indicators to facilitate more accurate tracking and performance attribution, 2) establishing a Monitoring and Evaluation Group to lead on CF-related data management, monitoring and evaluation as well as on relevant capacity-building, and 3) enhancing outcome-level SDG indicators by working with the relevant governmental and non-governmental institutions to improve the availability, quality, timeliness and accuracy of related data, allowing for consistent and comprehensive SDG monitoring.</li> <li>• Leverage this strengthened approach to CF-related data management to build more robust, data-driven narratives that span all priority areas, supporting evidence-based policy reforms and highlighting the socioeconomic and normative benefits of development initiatives and legislative proposals.</li> </ul>	Medium-High	Short-term (6-12 months)	RCO, UNCT, Results Groups
R3.	<p><b>Expand SDG funding and financing approaches and foster private sector engagement:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop strategies to enhance SDG funding and financing by unlocking resources for both UN initiatives and national partners through innovative modalities such as blended finance.</li> </ul>	Medium-High	Medium-term (1-2 years)	RCO, UNCT

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a platform for structured coordination between the UN, private sector, international financial institutions, and other partners to facilitate collaboration, innovation, and financing.</li> <li>Leverage the private sector as a driver of innovation to support sustainable development solutions.</li> </ul>			
R4.	<p><b>Promote integrated programming for Malaysia’s transition to high-income status while respecting the LNOB principles in order to ensure equitable growth and social cohesion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support integrated approaches that address both high-income transition priorities, such as digitalization, innovation, and energy transition among others, and “last mile” challenges in socioeconomic and environmental development.</li> <li>Continue ensuring these approaches align with national priorities while maintaining the UN’s focus on inclusivity and normative dimensions.</li> </ul>	Medium	Medium-term (1-2 years)	UNCT, Results Groups
R5.	<p><b>Facilitate global knowledge exchange and partnerships to leverage best practices and experiences from countries navigating similar transitions or having achieved high-income status:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leverage existing platforms such as Issue-based Coalitions at the regional level and/or establish new, country-level platforms for UNCT engagement with global and regional experts, participating in South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives, and accessing technical expertise from other UN Country Teams. This approach will help Malaysia address emerging challenges, such as diversifying financing strategies, fostering private sector engagement, mitigating inequalities and vulnerabilities, addressing governance reforms, and promoting innovation for sustainable development.</li> </ul>	Medium	Medium-term (1-2 years)	RCO, UNCT
R6.	<p><b>Enhance impact orientation by strengthening comprehensive rights-based approaches and deepening local engagement to bridge policy-implementation gaps:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen programming to further address the needs of marginalized groups, including indigenous peoples, older persons, and persons with disabilities, alongside stateless, undocumented, migrant, and refugee populations.</li> <li>Where gaps exist, consider expanding efforts to ensure that all vulnerable groups are adequately supported through a rights-based approach.</li> <li>Strengthen integration of cultural rights and promote female economic participation, particularly in the context of the care economy, while ensuring disability inclusion through both targeted and mainstreaming initiatives.</li> <li>Complement these efforts with strengthened grassroots-level engagement to help bridge federal policies with local needs and narrow the policy-implementation gap, ensuring that policy frameworks, including the ones that are directly supported by the UN, are relevant and impactful for communities across all regions and that local pilots and innovations feed into the federal policymaking.</li> <li>Consider developing scalable pilot initiatives that address community-specific challenges and feed successful models back into federal policymaking to align local and national strategies, maximizing the impact and inclusivity of UN activities.</li> </ul>	Medium	Medium-term (1-2 years)	UNCT
R7.	<p><b>Leverage the RC and RCO’s convening power for advocacy and communication:</b></p>	Medium-low	Short-term (6-12 months)	RCO

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the RC and RCO's established credibility to enhance external awareness of the CF and the RCO's coordination role.</li> <li>• Leveraging the UNCT Communication Group's know-how, conduct a high-profile communication campaign following the CF's formal signing, highlighting its strategic purpose and the UN's contributions to Malaysia's development.</li> <li>• Continue fostering platforms for dialogue to engage stakeholders and promote collaboration.</li> </ul>			
R8.	<p><b>Increase staff capacity for normative integration:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement continuous training for UN staff to improve the use of mainstreaming tools such as gender equality and human rights markers.</li> <li>• Include practical guidance on effectively integrating normative dimensions into day-to-day programming and operational work. This will address inconsistencies, enhance staff understanding of these principles, and foster a more systematic and impactful approach to embedding normative dimensions across UN activities.</li> </ul>	Medium-low	Short-term (6-12 months) and ongoing	RCO, UNCT

## 8. Limitations and Lessons Learned

### Limitations and mitigation measures

**One of the primary limitations of this evaluation is the limited scope arising from the fact that the CF has not (yet) been formally signed, making it a de-facto document rather than a binding agreement endorsed by all stakeholders.** Despite the fact that the Results and Resource Framework of the CF was endorsed by the Government, the lack of formal endorsement of the entire document and its institutional governance and implementation architecture may have affected the degree of accountability and may have influenced the willingness of some stakeholders to fully engage with the evaluation process. It might have also led to varied interpretations of the CF's objectives and outcomes, complicating the assessment of its coherence and effectiveness. Additionally, the lack of formal endorsement also had implications for the evaluation's sampling strategy and stakeholder engagement, particularly at the local level.

**To address this limitation, the evaluation team implemented measures to foster stakeholder engagement and ensure clarity in understanding the CF's objectives.** These included clear communication about the purpose of the evaluation and its potential benefits for stakeholders, as well as the use of semi-structured interviews and participatory workshops to gather diverse perspectives. The key informants included the co-chairs of a large-scale CSO alliance representing more than 90 civil society organizations, many of which work directly with beneficiaries at the local level, ensuring that community perspectives were captured indirectly through civil society organizations actively involved in CF-related work.

Furthermore, iterative analysis and triangulation of data from multiple sources helped to mitigate the impact of the varied interpretations, ensuring a balanced and inclusive assessment of the CF's performance. These efforts supported the production of credible and actionable findings despite the challenges posed by the CF's informal status.

**Another key limitation identified in the review of the CF's Results Framework is the broad nature of its Collaborative Outputs, which lacked specific, measurable indicators.** This generality constrained the ability to track progress, use quantitative analysis methods and attribute outcomes to specific UN interventions. To mitigate this, the evaluation relied on qualitative approaches, such as contribution analysis and key informant interviews, to assess causal pathways and intermediate stages of change. The evaluation also leveraged stakeholder interviews and surveys to gather critical insights, complemented by rigorous triangulation of data from various sources to validate findings and maintain methodological rigor despite these challenges.

**The online perception survey conducted as part of this evaluation was limited to internal stakeholders, primarily UNCT members and programme staff, as the unsigned status of the CF prevented broader engagement with external stakeholders.** To address this limitation, similar questions were included in interviews with external stakeholders, providing complementary perspectives and enriching the findings. While the survey's response rate was comparable to similar internal surveys, higher participation would have further strengthened its representativeness. Nonetheless, the responses captured a diverse cross-section of internal views, ensuring a reasonable degree of methodological robustness. To mitigate any remaining gaps, the same thematic areas were explored through in-depth discussions with key informants, ensuring a more comprehensive and balanced assessment of stakeholder perceptions across internal and external groups. Additionally, efforts were made to triangulate survey findings with other data sources to ensure reliability and depth in the analysis.

### Lessons learned for future evaluations

**Importance of formalizing the CF:** The absence of a formalized and signed CF with clear governance provisions impacted the evaluation's ability to assess high-level coordination mechanisms, such as the Joint Steering Committee. Formal endorsement is crucial to ensure

accountability, establish functional governance structures, and strengthen the CF's role as a guiding framework for the UN's collective contributions.

**Need for wider stakeholder engagement:** Limited familiarity with the CF and its strategic purpose among some external stakeholders highlighted gaps in communication and engagement. Broader and more consistent stakeholder involvement, including civil society, private sector, and local communities, is essential to enhance the CF's relevance, foster ownership, and ensure evaluations are informed by diverse perspectives.

**Broader use of evaluation instruments:** The evaluation relied primarily on qualitative methods due to data availability issues and gaps in measurable indicators. Expanding the use of quantitative tools, such as surveys and statistical analyses, would enable more robust and objective assessments of the CF's progress and impact, providing a stronger evidence base for future evaluations.

**Value of evaluability assessments:** The lack of specific, output-level indicators and baseline data underscored the importance of conducting an evaluability assessment at the design stage or early in the CF's implementation. Such assessments can identify data gaps, refine monitoring frameworks, and ensure the CF is designed for effective evaluation and learning throughout its lifecycle.

## 9. Annexes

[Annex 1. Terms of Reference for the Evaluation of the UN-Malaysia Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2021-2025.](#)

[Annex 1A. Signed UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN](#)

[Annex 2. Overview of CF Results Framework and Linkages to SDGs and National Priorities.](#)

[Annex 3. Summaries of CF's Four Nested Theories of Change.](#)

[Annex 3A. Synoptic Table for the Analysis of the Theory of Change.](#)

[Annex 4. Stakeholder Mapping.](#)

[Annex 4A. Stakeholders Interviewed.](#)

[Annex 5. Documentation Reviewed.](#)

[Annex 6. Survey Questions and Interview Guides.](#)

[Annex 7. Evaluation Design Matrix.](#)

## Annex 1. Terms of Reference.

### Terms of Reference Professional Service Evaluation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (CF) 2021-2025 in Malaysia

April 2024

#### Project Information

Assignment Title:	Evaluation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (CF) 2021-2025 in Malaysia
Hiring office:	United Nations Resident Coordinator Office (UNRCO)
Evaluation Manager:	Juanita Joseph, Head of RCO and Strategic Planner
Cluster/Project:	Evaluation
Assignment Location:	Home-based with field missions to Malaysia: Putrajaya and areas selected for data collection
Assignment Duration	60 working days from 1 July 2024 to 31 December 2024

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (CF) 2021- 2025 is the most important instrument for United Nations operations and programming in a country, including the planning and implementation of UN programming and advocacy. The CF 2021-2025 spans the work of all UN entities, resident and non-resident in Malaysia and 2024 marks the penultimate year of its implementation.

In line with the [CF Evaluation Guidance](#) to ensure accountability, support learning and inform the development and implementation of the new CF for the period 2026-2030, the Malaysia United Nations Country Team (UNCT) is to commission a CF Evaluation in 2024. This assignment will be conducted by an independent evaluation consulting team [the Evaluation Team] in an inclusive manner, promoting national ownership through the meaningful engagement of relevant national partners. The UN in Malaysia is seeking a lead evaluator and additional team members (as required) with a strong background in evaluation of development effectiveness to undertake this assignment. The evaluation planning is expected to start in April 2024, and the evaluation to be completed by November 2024.

At the outset, it is important to note that while the Government of Malaysia had endorsed the content of the CF 2021-2025, the CF remains unsigned due to protracted negotiations on its Legal Annex. As a result, the specified oversight and joint CF governance arrangements have not been initiated. However, the CF is still the *de facto* framework that guides the work of UN entities working in Malaysia and forms the basis of (approved) agency programming documents. Crucially also, the Results and Resources Framework (RRF) and hence the associated theory of change has been accepted and agreed by the Government.

In light of the above, the scope of the evaluation will be narrowed and the evaluation criteria adjusted accordingly. Rooted in UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards, the evaluation will focus on the theory of change depicted in the RRF, as mapped out by the meta objectives and Strategic Priorities Areas (SPAs). The main CF text therefore provides the context and underpinning justification. Care should also be taken in approaching external partners (particularly the Government) to recognize that the CF has yet to be formally adopted, and to date, the governance arrangements have not been operational. This will likely require that a limited number of official consultees are selected, and that all consultees, government and civil society and others, are sensitized on the CF's status.

This document presents the purpose, objectives and scope of the evaluation, proposed approach, and methodological options for the team who will conduct the evaluation under the supervision and guidance of the evaluation manager, and DCO staff at regional and headquarters level.

## 2. COUNTRY CONTEXT AND CF HIGHLIGHTS

### Country Context

Malaysia, an upper-middle-income country approaching high income status (HIC), has made significant strides since its independence. It has successfully transitioned from a commodity-based economy to a diversified and industrialized one. This economic transformation has been accompanied by a significant increase in GDP per capita and near eradication of hardcore poverty. Socio-economic indicators such as life expectancy<sup>21</sup> and infant mortality<sup>22</sup> rates have also improved considerably, reflecting the country's commitment to enhancing the quality of life for its citizens.

The country's national vision and development strategy aligns with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as reflected in key policy documents such as the Shared Prosperity Vision (SPV) (2019), the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Malaysia Plan (2021), and Malaysia Madani (2022). Additionally, Malaysia's Voluntary National Review (VNR) of SDG progress undertaken in 2021 and its National SDG Roadmaps Phase I and II, underscore its commitment to the SDGs. Malaysia has also entered the 4<sup>th</sup> cycle of its Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and has put in place a good UPR monitoring and implementation mechanism.

The following section provides a snapshot of Malaysia's progress. It is based on the Voluntary National Review (2021) and a more recent UN in-house SDG assessment exercise carried out in 2023, as reported in the latest Common Country Analysis<sup>23</sup>.

SDG Group	Progress
People (SDG 1-6)	Significant progress in reducing poverty and improving health and education outcomes. However, challenges remain in areas such as gender equality and access to clean water and sanitation. The exclusion of certain marginalized groups – notably refugees, migrants, and undocumented persons – is a key issue.
Prosperity (SDG 7-10)	Successful economic transformation has taken place alongside generally inclusive growth. However, environmental sustainability has not been secured, and income inequality and group/ regional disparities are high and persist.
Planet (SDG 11-15)	Commitment to achieving net-zero emissions and addressing environmental degradation. However, challenges remain in areas such as sustainable urbanization, production and consumption, and biodiversity conservation.
Peace (SDG 16)	Strong community relations and institutional strengthening. However, challenges remain in areas such as corruption and access to justice.
Partnerships (SDG 17)	Active engagement in regional and global partnerships. However, more needs to be done to enhance the effectiveness of these partnerships.

In relation to international human rights conventions, Malaysia has to date ratified three of the nine human rights treaties and is party to several ILO conventions. However, localization of such international norms and standards would benefit from greater adoption via domestic legal frameworks and policies. In January 2024, Malaysia entered its fourth Universal Periodic Review (UPR) cycle. The reported human rights progress noted several ongoing challenges in Malaysia, related to both systemic issues and specific groups facing rights deprivations.

Crucially, Malaysia faces challenges in ensuring no one is left behind, particularly among the most vulnerable. These include marginal and excluded groups (e.g., informal sector workers, the poor and vulnerable in peripheral regions including indigenous peoples, migrants and refugees, undocumented persons, and people with disabilities) face barriers to full participation in society, including access to basic services. These barriers are rooted in various institutional and governance issues, socio-economic status, geography, and associated vulnerabilities. Addressing these barriers requires a comprehensive approach that addresses the root causes and ensures the full realization of human rights.

The country's social development is marked by significant achievements in education and health. However, social protection schemes need to be strengthened, especially for informal workers and vulnerable groups. While economic transformation has been successful, more needs to be done to ensure shared prosperity and decent work for all.

<sup>21</sup> Life expectancy for Malaysia is 74.8 years with 72.5 years for males and 77.4 years for females. Source: <https://open.dosm.gov.my/dashboard/life-expectancy>

<sup>22</sup> The under-five mortality rate for Malaysia is 7.8 deaths per 1,000 lives births. Source: <https://data.unicef.org/country/mys/>

<sup>23</sup> VNR: [https://www.ekonomi.gov.my/sites/default/files/2021-07/Malaysia\\_Voluntary\\_National\\_Review\\_%28VNR%29\\_2021.pdf](https://www.ekonomi.gov.my/sites/default/files/2021-07/Malaysia_Voluntary_National_Review_%28VNR%29_2021.pdf)

Malaysia faces serious environmental challenges, including climate change and biodiversity loss. The Government has shown commitment to addressing these issues, including a pledge to achieve net-zero emissions. Yet effective implementation of these measures remains lacking.

The country's overall financial resource base is robust, but the tax base is too limited and there is a need for more resources for development investment and to ensure SDG delivery. Questions have also been raised regarding Malaysia's adoption of the Addis Ababa agenda, specifically the extent to which private sector resources are influenced and channelled to support the SDGs and within this, more inclusive and sustainable growth.

Malaysia has made significant progress in its development journey towards high-income status. However, it faces challenges, many of which are related to addressing its last mile objectives including those related to the realization of human rights including gender equality; wide and persistent inequalities in several dimensions; and its commitment to environmental sustainability, including climate change. Addressing these will be crucial for Malaysia to achieve the SDGs and ensure that no one is left behind.

## **CF 2021-2025 HIGHLIGHTS**

The Cooperation Framework 2021-2025 is the country's first framework agreed between the UN and the Government and aims essentially to support Malaysia's efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Malaysia is among the first cohort of countries to develop a UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework post UNDS reform. It has never had a UNDAF. The CF evaluation therefore breaks new ground for UN practice in the country. The fact that the CF document has not yet been formally adopted, due to lengthy negotiations of the Legal Annex, also needs to be considered. Nevertheless, the RRF has been endorsed by Government, and by implication, the substantive content of the CF has been endorsed as well.

The CF 2021- 2025 reflects the UN system's collective approach in support of Malaysia's priorities and needs, as articulated through national development priorities and plans, including the 11th and 12th Malaysia Plans<sup>24</sup> (11MP and 12MP). In the following text we relate the CF's four Strategic Priority Areas (SPAs) to individual SDGs, and to the 12MP's Game Changers, which are akin to the Plan's priorities for action (these are also reported in Appendix C of this text).

We note specifically that while awaiting signature, the CF has been updated several times since 2020, upon the request of the government. This has allowed the CF to be kept current and to reflect the latest national priorities and directions including the current government's Malaysia MADANI Framework<sup>25</sup>.

The CF is shaped according to the fundamental SDG themes (People, Planet, Prosperity, and Peace) which provide the four SPAs, plus a fifth cross-cutting pillar that supports these (Partnership). The SPAs are further disaggregated into 16 collaborative outputs as follows:

### **Pillar 1/ SPA 1 People: Leaving No One Behind – Ensuring a prosperous nation through inclusivity and well-being for all**

By 2025, poor and vulnerable groups living in Malaysia benefit from more equity-focused and high-quality social services as well as a social protection system that ensures all have an adequate standard of living.

Note that the UN response within SPA 1 is related to SDG 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 10, and linked to Game Changers 5 and 6 of the 12MP.

### **Pillar 2/ SPA 2: Environment, Climate Change and Resilience**

By 2025, environmental sustainability and resilience are mainstreamed as priorities within the national development agenda, across all sectors and levels of society.

The UN response within SPA 2 is related to SDG 7, 12, 13, 14, and 15 linked to Game Changers 8 and 9 of the 12MP.

### **Pillar 3/ SPA 3: Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth**

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<sup>24</sup> <https://mke12.ekonomi.gov.my/en/documents/twelfth-plan>

<sup>25</sup> <https://malaysiamadani.gov.my/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Brochure-BI-Ekonomi-MADANI-A-2.pdf>

By 2025, Malaysia is making meaningful progress towards an economy that is inclusive, innovative, and sustainable across all income groups and productive sectors.

The UN response within SPA 3 is related to SDG 1, 5, 8, 9, 10, and 12 linked to Game Changers 2, 3, 7, 10, 11, 12 and 13 of the 12MP.

**SPA 4: Social Cohesion, Governance and Human Rights**

By 2025, Malaysia has strengthened democratic governance, and all people living in Malaysia benefit from a more cohesive society, strengthened governance and participation.

The UN response within SPA 4 is related to SDG 1, 10 and 16 linked to Game Changers 1, 4 and 14 of the 12<sup>th</sup> Malaysia Plan.

**Pillar 5: Partnerships: Collaborative Implementation Modality**

Enhancing results through coordination and partnerships. Noting that as this does not constitute a distinct SPA, there are no specified collaborative outputs, but there are 5 process indicators.

This pillar aims to accelerate progress on SDG17 and ensure an integrated approach by addressing means of implementation (MoI) questions, supporting institutional reform, strengthening statistical systems, and ensuring full alignment with all 12MP Game changers.

**CF Governance**

The CF governance structure is shown in the diagram below. However, given that the CF is yet to be signed, the Steering Committee and its external subgroups – the CSO and Academic Advisory Group and the Business Sector Advisory Group have not been formally operationalized. This has implications for the scope of the evaluation. Additionally, we note that the Planet and Prosperity Results Groups have been merged to enable more streamlined and joined-up delivery and reporting (see purple box on diagram).

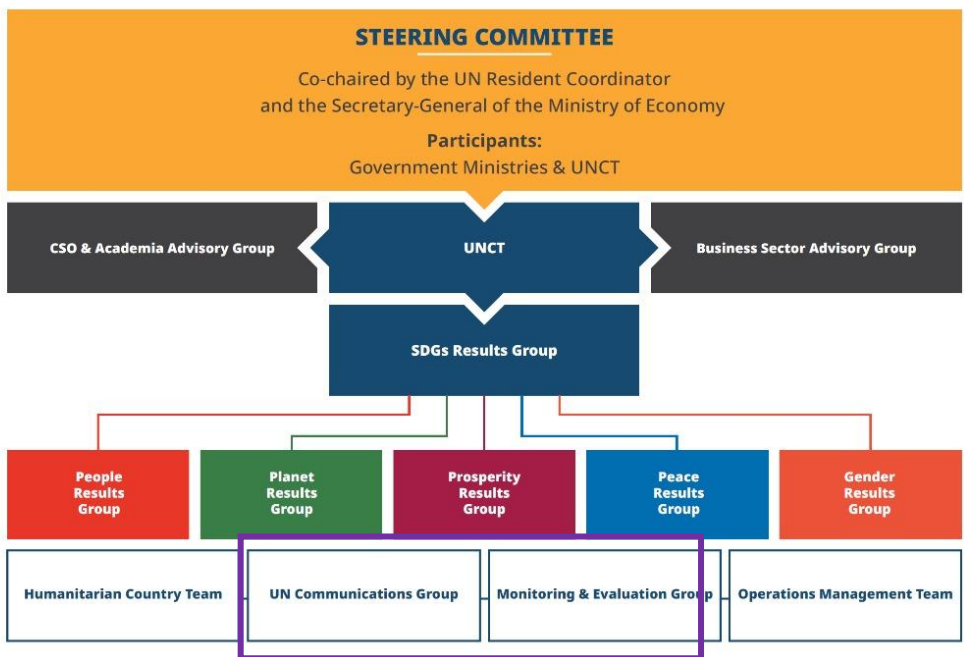


Diagram 3

The overall estimated budget to deliver the CF was given as approximately \$225 million. It was projected at the start of the implementation in 2021 that about \$105 million (47 per cent) would be available, leaving \$120 million (53 per cent) to be mobilized during CF implementation.

**3. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION**

The overall purpose of the CF Evaluation is to provide an independent, transparent and participatory tool for learning and dialogue with stakeholders about what worked, what didn't work and why - in delivery of the CF outcomes. It will provide inputs for strengthening programming and results at the country level, specifically informing the planning and decision-making for the new CF 2026-2030 and for improving coordination across UN agencies and at the country level. Additionally, it aims to support greater accountability of the UNCT to CF national stakeholders, and to sensitize others on the work and role of the UNCT in Malaysia.

The **objectives** of the evaluation are as follows:

1. To assess the **contribution of the CF** to national development results through evidence-based judgements using evaluation criteria to the extent possible, taking into consideration that the CF has yet to be signed by the government.
2. Identify **factors** that have **affected the CF's contribution**; answering the question of why the performance is as it is; and explaining the enabling factors and bottlenecks (learning).
3. Reach **conclusions** concerning the **UN's contribution** across the scope being examined.
4. Provide **actionable recommendations** for improving the CF's contribution, especially for **incorporation into the new CF** programming cycle. These recommendations should be logically linked to the conclusions and findings of the evaluation and should draw upon lessons learned identified through the evaluation.

## Evaluation Scope

### Special considerations:

As noted, the CF's delayed official signing imposes some constraints on this evaluation exercise, and as such the scope will be more limited than as set out in the guidance provided by UNEG. There are three key implications:

- First, **the evaluation shall focus on the RRF** as endorsed by Government. Additionally, it is noted that:
  - (a) the RRF implicitly conveys the CF's overall mission (i.e., delivering national prosperity and HIC status, alongside sustainable and inclusive and resilient development based on good governance, and achievement of the SDGs through a whole of government and whole of society approach<sup>26</sup>);
  - (b) the four SPAs include embedded Theories of Change (ToC) and these provide the basis for evaluation.
- Second, as a result, focus will be on **UN agency programmatic activities and advocacy to the extent that these align with the RRF and its implicit ToCs and the delivery of the SPAs**. Noting that this underlines the need to link to the ongoing evaluations of UN agency programmes.
- Third, as the CF governance structures have not been formally operationalized, **the extent of stakeholder engagement has been limited and this will be reflected in the evaluation process**.

### Focus of the CF evaluation:

The evaluation will assess the contributions of all members of the UNCT<sup>27</sup> to the CF 2021-2025 outcomes through their individual as well as joint programmes/projects and advocacy. It will also examine CF cross-cutting themes and global UN programming principles (e.g., leaving no one behind, human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment, disability inclusion, and environmental sustainability and resilience, and accountability).

**The evaluation will also consider exceptional issues which emerged during the CF cycle**, notably: political changes and the COVID-19 pandemic. This is both in the evaluation context (e.g., the UNCT's responsiveness, adaptation, and reprioritization) and in operations (e.g., delivery constraints, and methods for managing stakeholder participation and inclusiveness).

As noted, **the evaluation will not evaluate individual UN agencies' programmes but only focus on their**

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<sup>26</sup> This paraphrases the opening paragraph of the CF text - in full: *The Government of Malaysia and the United Nations in Malaysia commit to work together under the UNSDCF 2021-2025 in support of Malaysia's transformation to a high-income and advanced nation, securing for its people a future that is inclusive, sustainable and resilient; that assures the well-being and prosperity of all people living in the country; and that is grounded in active citizen participation, transparency and accountability towards achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by fostering a whole-of-nation approach.*

<sup>27</sup> The UNCT comprises of the following agencies, whereby Resident Entities are UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNFPA, WHO, WFP-UNHRD, IOM, UNU-IIGH, UNDSS; while Non-resident Entities are OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNIDO, ILO, UN Women, UNDRR, UNEP, UNCDF (represented by UNDP), UN-Habitat, ITC, UNODC, ITU.

## contributions to CF outcomes, SPAs and the CF wider mission.

The Evaluation Team may suggest prioritizing specific thematic areas/outputs for review, after consultation with the main stakeholders.

### Geographic scope:

The evaluation will be conducted mainly at locations in Kuala Lumpur, Selangor and Putrajaya. However, the Evaluation Team may also propose to include field visits to other parts of the Peninsula and East Malaysia in their methodology. Suggestions for field visits should be proposed by the Evaluation Team in the Inception Report for consideration by the Evaluation Steering Committee (see governance structure below).

### Timeframe:

The evaluation shall focus on the current CF 2021-2025 and be undertaken in 2024, covering the period from XX 2021 through June 2024. Three UN Agencies (UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF) will also be conducting programme evaluations during this period. Efforts should be made to synchronize schedules and minimize replication to the extent possible.

### Key users and intended use

The primary users of the evaluation are the UNCT, the Government of Malaysia - Ministry of Economy in particular as the UNCT's main counterpart, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, other line ministries as relevant. Civil society organizations, and other stakeholders could also benefit from the findings. In addition, bilateral and multilateral donors, and other development partners are also potential users. The following table list primary and potential users:

User	Intended use
<b>Primary Users</b>	
UNCT Malaysia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Accountability and learning from the CF 2021-2025 to inform the development and implementation the new CF 2026-2030 and the engagement of UNCT members in related coordination mechanisms.</li></ul>
UN entities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Findings and recommendations to feed into the development and delivery of Country Programmes and/or other programmatic frameworks.</li></ul>
Government of Malaysia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Guide the development of the new CF 2026-2030, including areas that need further UN support to address national development priorities in line with national plans, the 2030 Agenda and Malaysia's international commitments.</li></ul>
<b>Potential Users</b>	
CSOs, private sector and other non-government stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Insights towards more effective engagement in the new CF design and implementation.</li></ul>
Donors and development partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Entry points for cooperation with the UN in support of CF implementation.</li></ul>

## 4. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND EVALUATION QUESTIONS

In line with the scope defined above, the CF evaluation will focus on criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, coordination, sustainability, and orientation toward impact. **The Evaluation Team may adapt the criteria and questions following the Theory of Change (ToC) in consultation with the Evaluation Manager and Evaluation Steering Committee.** The Inception Report, including the evaluation questions and Design Matrix is then submitted to the Evaluation Steering Committee for feedback and finalization.

### Relevance and adaptability

1. To what extent are the CF's SPAs consistent with the country's evolving needs, national priorities, the country's agreed international and regional commitments?
2. To what extent do the SPAs meet UN normative requirements - including on leaving no one behind, human rights, environmental sustainability, and gender equality and women's empowerment?
3. How resilient, responsive, and strategic was the UNCT in addressing the changing political context and emerging needs, notably in addressing the COVID-19 impacts and in reprioritizing/adapting to provide timely support to the country and ensure the achievement of the CF results?

## Effectiveness and efficiency

4. To what extent has the CF contributed to key institutional, behavioural, and legislative changes that are critical for catalysing progress on the issues identified in the CCA including the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment, human rights, and disability inclusion?
5. To what extent has the CF prioritized activities based on the needs (demand side) rather than on the availability of resources (supply side)? Particularly, how was this achieved in the absence of CF joint governance structures such as the Steering Committee?
6. How has the CF facilitated the identification of and access to new financing flows at scale for national partners?

## Coordination

7. To what extent have the CF coordination mechanisms (for example the Results Groups, Thematic Working Groups, Operations Management Team, and the Communications group) contributed to coherent and increased synergies between agencies?
8. To what extent has the CF coordination structure contributed to ensure ownership and engagement by national counterparts?
9. Post UN reform, to what extent have UN agency programmes and work plans been effectively and meaningfully derived from the CF both in design and implementation?
10. To what extent did the post reform Resident Coordinator office's roles and responsibilities enable positive UNCT's joint convening power and better coherence of the country team?

## Orientation toward impacts

11. To what extent have CF results contributed to sound and sustainable progress towards the achievement of national SDG targets?

## 5. METHODOLOGY, APPROACH, QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ASSESSMENT

### Evaluation Approach:

The evaluation approach will be independent, rigorous, transparent, inclusive, and participatory, as well as gender and human rights responsive with the objective of promoting: (1) ownership by the full UNCT; (2) the integration of evaluation within programming; and (3) accountability for results. The Malaysia CF evaluation will abide by UNEG Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct and consider any other relevant guidelines and ethical codes. During the process, gender-responsive and LNOB-focused analysis shall be integrated to provide a comprehensive understanding of the differential impact of the CF on different segments of the population.

All the processes shall adhere to ethical guidelines throughout the evaluation process, ensuring informed consent, confidentiality, and respect for the rights, privacy, and dignity of participants, and in compliance with Malaysia's laws and regulations.

### Evaluation Methodology:

The evaluation is envisaged to rely on a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, including document reviews, analysis of quantitative secondary data, individual interviews with key informants and focus groups. The Evaluation Team shall be guided by Annex 1 (standard methodology section) of Appendix 2 (Terms of reference) of the [UNSDCF Evaluation Guidelines - Engl - Revised July 2022](#) to develop the evaluation methodology. They shall also develop the necessary tools to collect data and information to answer the overall evaluation questions.

The Evaluation Team will devise and present in the Inception Report, an **Evaluation Design Matrix** to systematically structure and consolidate the data collected for each of the evaluation questions. This matrix will allow them, among other things, to identify the missing data and thus fill these gaps before the end of the collection. This matrix will also help to ensure the validity of the data collected.

### Conceptual and Analytical Framework:

- Theory of Change (ToC) Analysis

During the inception phase or early in the data collection phase, the Evaluation Team will hold ToC meetings with the Results or Thematic Groups to discuss the ToCs for each SPA and the progress that has occurred in programme result chains during implementation and in response to emerging challenges and needs. The Evaluation Team will be guided by section 4.1.1 (Theory of Change analysis) of the [UNSDCF Evaluation Guidelines - English - Revised July 2022](#)

- Finalization of the evaluation questions and assumptions

The Evaluation Team will finalize evaluation questions after consultations with the Evaluation Steering Committee and Results/Thematic Groups within the UNCT.

## Data Collection

The evaluation is free to use quantitative and qualitative approaches, including desk reviews and secondary data analyses, semi-structured interviews, field visits and online perception surveys. The Evaluation Team should include all proposed measures in the initial proposals and in the inception report.

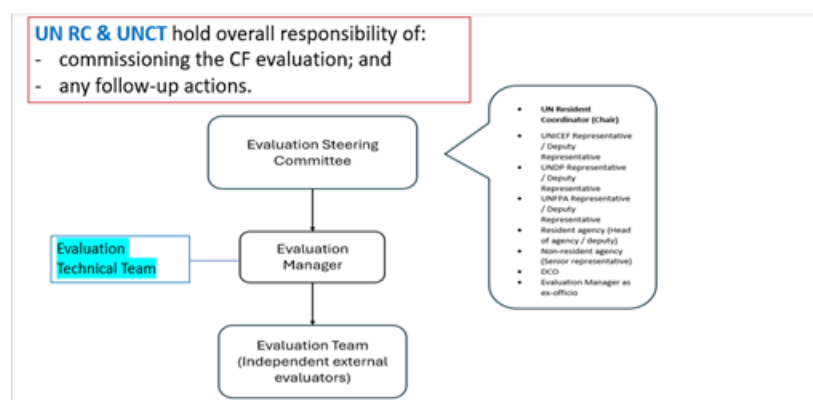
Data collection would necessarily include linking to and drawing on evaluations carried out by UN agencies.

The desk review is expected to be supported by analysis for secondary data such as statistics at national and local levels as well as survey data from UN agencies, and the Department of Statistics Malaysia. The Evaluation Team is expected to engage in semi-structured interviews, including via field visits (as required) to gather insights on the perceptions of various stakeholders regarding the relevance, effectiveness, and impact of the CF interventions.

## 6. Management Arrangements (for discussion and decision: govt participation)

The UN Resident Coordinator (RC) and the UNCT hold the overall responsibility of commissioning the CF evaluation and any follow-up actions. The proposed governance structure is shown in the diagram below:

Figure 8: Proposed CF Evaluation Governance Structure



DCO in headquarters and regional offices will receive and respond to all evaluation products including the TOR, inception report, final report, and other associated products. DCO is also responsible for quality assurance and oversight of and throughout the entire evaluation process. UNEDAP (Evaluation Advisors' Group in Asia Pacific Region) will work collaboratively with DCO to support the independence and quality of the evaluation products.

The Evaluation Steering Committee members and the Evaluation Manager will be appointed from the outset to guide the whole evaluation process.

The Evaluation Team shall be operationally independent but carry out the evaluation under the oversight of Evaluation Manager and the Evaluation Steering Committee. They will be required to sign the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators (2008). It is envisaged that the team would comprise around three members as follows:

- Team leader (An international consultant)
- Team member (An international consultant)
- Short-Term Thematic expert (A national consultant)

The team should have gender balance, and expertise in evaluating gender equality and core cross-cutting issues such as disability, human rights and LNOB.

The Evaluation Team will report on progress to the Evaluation Manager as the day-to-day representative of the Evaluation Steering Committee.

Appendix A provides the link to the CF guidelines which contains further details on management and governance roles and responsibilities.

## 7. PAYMENTS

Payments are tied to deliverables and will be as follows:

No	Deliverables/Outputs	Target Due Dates	Payment
1	Delivery of Inception Report, including the Evaluation Design Matrix (EDM), proposed methodology and tools and final timeline. This will include proposed consultations, including ToC meetings.	July 2024	20 %
2	Submission of the Evaluation findings paper and presentation to the Evaluation Steering Committee and validation workshop conducted.	September 2024	30 %
3	Submission of the second draft of the evaluation report that includes an executive summary, infographics, and draft Evaluation Brief.	October 2024	20 %
4	Submission of Final Evaluation Report (fully proofread and designed) that includes an executive summary, infographics to be used for publication. Finalized Evaluation Brief and presentation for use in dissemination. Workshop on the findings of the CF Evaluation conducted. Assist development of Management Response.	November 2024	30%

The Evaluation Team's indicative level of effort (LoE) is 20 working days. However, the contract is based on payment against deliverables.

### Estimated working days for the Evaluation Team

Deliverables	Estimated working days for the Team Leader	Estimated working days for the International Team Member	Estimated working days for the National Team Member
Inception Phase (initial desk review, methodological meeting, inception report)	5 days	2 days	2 days
Field Phase (secondary desk review, data collection & analysis)	10 days	5 days	5 days
Reporting Phase (first draft, preliminary findings presentation, second draft, final draft, stakeholder workshop)	10 days	5 days	5 days
Total	25 days	15 days	15 days

The anticipated starting date of the evaluation is 1 July 2024, and the evaluation process, until drafting of the initial report, shall be completed in 6 months (sooner will be better). All reports should be full proofread and provided in UN standard English (as per UN Editorial Manual: <https://www.un.org/dgacm/en/content/editorial-manual>).

## 8. EVALUATION PROCESSES AND TIMELINE

The evaluation process and timeframe will be further detailed in the Inception Report following consultations with key stakeholders. The CF evaluation to be conducted in five key phases as below:

Activities	Deliverables	Timeline (completed)
1.1. Mapping of UN Agency Country Programme Evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mapping of UN Agency Country Programme Evaluations completed</li> </ul>	May 2024
1.2. Development of Evaluation Terms of Reference (TOR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TOR for the evaluation approved</li> </ul>	May 2024
1.3. Recruitment of the Evaluation Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation Team recruited</li> </ul>	June 2024
1.4. Identify stakeholders and map development actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholder mapping completed</li> </ul>	June 2024
2.1. Brief the Evaluation Steering Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation Steering Committee briefed</li> </ul>	July, 2024
2.2. Conduct ToC meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SPA ToC meetings conducted</li> <li>ToCs reviewed and agreed</li> </ul>	July 2024
2.4. Prepare Inception Report, including Evaluation Design Matrix (EDM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inception Report including EDM (final proposed questions, tools and timelines) completed and submitted</li> </ul>	July 2024
2.5. Present draft Inception Report to Evaluation Steering Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inception Report, including EDM presented; and subsequently agreed by Evaluation Steering Committee</li> </ul>	July 2024
3.1. Pilot and finalize data collection tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data collection tools piloted and finalized</li> </ul>	August 2024
3.2. Undertake data collection and analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data collection completed</li> <li>Data analysis including triangulation carried out</li> </ul>	August 2024
4.1. Prepare, submit and present initial Evaluation Findings Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial Evaluation Findings Report and presentation completed and presented to Evaluation Steering Committee</li> <li>Feedback received from Evaluation Steering Committee</li> </ul>	September 2024

4.2. Conduct validation workshop with key stakeholders on findings and recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Validation workshop materials shared and presented</li> <li>• Findings and recommendations validated</li> </ul>	September 2024
4.3. Prepare and submit the first draft of the Evaluation Report to the Evaluation Steering Committee for review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First draft Evaluation Report prepared, submitted and presented to Evaluation Steering Committee</li> <li>• Report reviewed and feedback provided by Evaluation Steering Committee</li> </ul>	September 2024
4.4. Prepare and submit of the second draft of the Evaluation Report to the Evaluation Steering Committee, including draft Evaluation Brief, for review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First draft Evaluation Report prepared, submitted and presented to Evaluation Steering Committee</li> <li>• Report reviewed and feedback provided by Evaluation Steering Committee</li> </ul>	October 2024
4.5. Prepare and submit of the final draft of the Evaluation Report to the Evaluation Steering Committee, including executive summary and Evaluation Brief (for dissemination to stakeholders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation Report, including executive summary submitted and presented to Evaluation Steering Committee</li> <li>• Evaluation Brief finalized</li> </ul>	October 2024
5.1. Organize Report Findings Workshop as needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report Findings Workshop conducted as needed</li> </ul>	October 2024
5.2. Disseminate Internal Evaluation Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation Report disseminated via UN global/regional platforms using various measures</li> </ul>	November 2024
5.3. Prepare Management Response and Management Action Plan in response to the CF Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management Response and Management Action Plan to the CF Evaluation prepared and submitted</li> </ul>	December 2024

## 9. Evaluation Deliverables:

The Evaluation Team's key deliverables are given in the UNEG Evaluation Guidelines and templates provided therein. Below is summary of the expected components of the deliverables.

### Inception Report

- A preliminary analysis of the CF Theory of Change (ToC) or, in its absence, reconstruction of the CF ToC.
- Improved/refined evaluation objectives scope and topic selection.
- Improved list of evaluation criteria and questions.
- A proposed list of interventions and stakeholders.
- An elaboration of the evaluation approach and methods
- The management, governance, and quality assurance mechanisms.
- An evaluation plan and timeline.
- Detailed stakeholder mapping and analysis shall be done during the inception phase.
- Dissemination plan to highlight how the evaluation report will be disseminated and shared with stakeholders.

The inception report template can be found [here](#) or in Appendix 4 of CF Evaluation Guideline<sup>28</sup>.

### Preliminary findings

The initial evaluation findings report, and presentation(s) are produced by the Evaluation Team to facilitate the validation workshop. The report should include findings from the desk review and data collection, with triangulation of findings. It should also offer insights for the forthcoming CF cycle. The report should also include appendices, for example, the notes and summaries made during the desk review and transcripts of qualitative data.

### Evaluation Reports

The Evaluation Team shall submit drafts and a final report. These should contain an executive summary, main report with key findings, and a clear set of conclusions and actionable recommendations, written in a clear and concise manner that allow readers to easily follow its logic. The report should not exceed 60 pages, excluding the executive summary and annexes.

The Evaluation Report template can be found [here](#) or in Appendix 4 of the CF Evaluation Guidelines.<sup>29</sup>

The report and related presentations shall be prepared and used by the Evaluation Team in their presentations of findings to the Evaluation Steering committee.

The Evaluation Team will be expected to document responses to the feedback in a matrix to the Evaluation Manager in a transparent and timely manner.

The reports should include an acknowledgement of any limitations faced during the evaluation process, identifying lessons learned for future evaluations and programming shall be covered in the report.

### Summary Performance Rating

A Summary Performance Rating will be submitted by the Evaluation Team with the final CF Evaluation Report. This is to facilitate regional and global performance synthesis. The rating system of CF evaluations is recommended to simplify the identification of levels of performance by decision-makers; to help aggregate results; and enhance the provision of consolidated reporting back to governments in programme countries as well as to governing bodies.

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<sup>28</sup> Guidelines for the Evaluation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2021) <https://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/2972>

<sup>29</sup> Guidelines for the Evaluation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2021) <https://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/2972>

The performance rating scheme is available [here](#) or in Appendix 7 of CF Evaluation Guideline<sup>30</sup>.

## **Evaluation Brief**

Additionally, the Evaluation Team shall submit an Evaluation Brief that can be shared with a range of audiences, including the Government of Malaysia, UN partners, and other key stakeholders.

The Evaluation Brief is a short synthesis report describing the CF Evaluation including introduction, objectives and scope, methodology, findings, and recommendation. The evaluation brief can be provided as an e-book or infographic format as it is intended for a broader and non-technical audience such as government counterparts, development partners, CSOs, at national and subnational level. Efforts should be made to provide the Evaluation Brief using disability accessible and inclusive formats.

## **Appendix A. Governance roles and responsibilities**

The corporate and approved guidance to conduct the CF evaluation can be found here: <https://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/2972>. These guidelines are an integral part of this ToR.

## **Appendix B. Qualification of the Evaluation Team**

These Terms of Reference call for the recruitment of an Evaluation Team for the CF, which is envisaged to comprise of a set of consultant(s) and / or a firm that employs team members as required.

To illustrate, the roles, responsibilities and requirements for the Evaluation Team (based on a possible Team of 3) follow below:

### **Evaluation Team Leader**

The Evaluation Team leader is a critical role in ensuring the success of the evaluation process. The responsibilities of an Evaluation Team leader:

- Overall responsibility for the technical quality and relevance of the evaluation. This includes ensuring that the evaluation is well-designed, methodologically sound, and produces results that are useful to the UN Country Team and other stakeholders.
- Responsibility for the methodological aspects of the evaluation. This includes developing the evaluation framework, designing the data collection instruments, and overseeing the data analysis.
- Responsibility for the organization and coordination of work. This includes developing the work plan, liaising with stakeholders, providing technical guidance to the Evaluation Team and ensuring that the evaluation is completed on time and within budget.
- Overall consistency of the evaluation process. This includes ensuring that the evaluation is conducted in a fair, impartial, and transparent manner.
- Quality assurance. This includes ensuring that the evaluation meets the highest standards of quality and that the findings are reliable and credible.
- Internal consistency of the team. This includes ensuring that the Evaluation Team works together effectively and that the findings are consistent with the evidence.
- Provision of all expected deliverables. This includes the final evaluation report, as well as any other products or outputs that are required.
- Overseeing the dissemination of the evaluation findings.

The individual in this role must have strong technical evaluation skills, as well as the ability to manage and coordinate a complex evaluation project. They must also be able to work effectively with a variety of stakeholders, including UN agencies, government officials, and civil society organizations. The academic, professional and technical requirements for the Evaluation Team leader are as follows:

#### *Academic*

- Master's degree in a relevant field, such as evaluation, development studies, or public policy.
- PhD in a relevant field is preferred.

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<sup>30</sup> Guidelines for the Evaluation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2021) <https://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/2972>

### *Professional*

- At least 8 years of experience in evaluation, preferably in the development sector.
- Experience in leading and managing complex evaluation projects.
- Strong analytical and research skills.
- Excellent written and oral communication skills.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
- Sound judgment and decision-making skills.
- Commitment to high ethical standards.
- Experience with evaluation within the UN system.
- Experience in CF, UNDAF or UNPDF Evaluation is a plus.
- Experience working in Malaysia is a plus.

### *Technical*

- Proficiency in the use of evaluation methods and tools.
- Ability to write clear and concise reports.
- Ability to present findings to stakeholders in a clear and concise manner.
- Experience with the CF, UNFPF or UNDAF evaluation is a plus.
- Fluency in English is required. Fluency in Bahasa Malaysia is desirable.

### **Evaluation Team Member**

The Evaluation Team member is an important part of the evaluation process. The responsibilities of an Evaluation Team member will vary depending on the specific needs of the evaluation. However, the team member plays an important role in the evaluation. The general responsibilities of the Evaluation Team member are as follows:

- Contribute to the development of the evaluation framework and methodology.
- Collect and analyse data.
  - Conducting interviews and focus groups.
  - Reviewing documents and reports.
  - Gathering and analysing quantitative data.
- Write and edit reports.
  - Interpreting and presenting findings.
  - Writing and editing technical reports.
- Present findings to stakeholders.
- Support the team leader in the overall coordination and management of the evaluation process.
- Providing technical support to the team leader.

The individual in this role must have strong research and analytical skills, as well as the ability to write and communicate effectively. They must also be able to work effectively as part of a team and be sensitive to the needs of different stakeholders. Below the detailed requirement criteria for an Evaluation Team member.

### *Academic*

- Bachelor's degree in a relevant field, such as evaluation, development studies, or public policy.
- Master's degree in a relevant field is preferred.

### *Professional*

- At least 5 years of experience in evaluation, preferably in the development sector.
- Experience in conducting research and collecting data.
- Strong analytical and writing skills.
- Excellent oral communication skills.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
- Commitment to high ethical standards.
- Familiarity with the UN system is a plus

### Technical

- Able to speak English and Bahasa Malaysia
- Proficiency in using Microsoft Office Suite.
- Knowledge of the CF and the development sector.
- Ability to use basic statistical software.
- Ability to present findings to stakeholders in a clear and concise manner.

### Thematic Expert

The thematic expert is responsible to support the Evaluation Team in selected areas, for example, labour migration/social protection/environment and climate change/gender responsive evaluation, disability and human rights inclusion in evaluations.

The individual in this role must have strong research and analytical skills, as well as the ability to write and communicate effectively. They must also be able to work effectively as part of a team and be sensitive to the needs of different stakeholders. The responsibilities of a thematic expert relate to the following tasks:

- Contribute to the development of the evaluation framework and methodology.
- Contribute to data analysis
- Contribute to report writing and editing reports, including interpreting and presenting findings, and writing and editing technical reports.

Below the detailed requirement criteria for a thematic expert.

### Academic

- Bachelor's degree in thematic areas.
- Master's degree in a relevant field is preferred.

### Professional

- At least 5 years of experience of doing research or evaluation in relevant thematic area.
- Experience in conducting research and collecting data.
- Strong analytical and writing skills.
- Excellent oral communication skills.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
- Commitment to high ethical standards.
- Familiarity with the UN system is a plus.

### Technical

- Able to speak English and Bahasa Malaysia
- Proficiency in using Microsoft Office Suite.
- Knowledge of the CF and the development sector.
- Ability to present findings to stakeholders in a clear and concise manner.

## Appendix C. 12<sup>th</sup> Malaysia Plan game changers



# Annex 1A. Signed UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN.

## United Nations Evaluation Group Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System

### Evaluation Consultants Agreement Form

*To be signed by all consultants as individuals (not by or on behalf of a consultancy company) before a contract can be issued.*

#### Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System

Name of Consultant: **Viacheslav Shelegeiko**

Name of Consultancy Organisation (where relevant): **N/A**

**I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.**

Signed at (place) on (date)

**Copenhagen, 9 August 2024**

Signature: 

## United Nations Evaluation Group Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System

### Evaluation Consultants Agreement Form

*To be signed by all consultants as individuals (not by or on behalf of a consultancy company) before a contract can be issued.*

#### Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System

Name of Consultant: **Rima Al-Azar**

Name of Consultancy Organisation (where relevant): **N/A**

**I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.**

Signed at (place) on (date): **Rome, 4 September 2024**

Signature: 

## United Nations Evaluation Group Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System

### Evaluation Consultants Agreement Form

*To be signed by all consultants as individuals (not by or on behalf of a consultancy company) before a contract can be issued.*

#### Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System

Name of Consultant: **Lim Su-Jin**

Name of Consultancy Organisation (where relevant): **N/A**

**I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.**

Signed at **Kuala Lumpur** on **6 September 2024**

Signature:   
Lim Su-Jin

## Annex 2. Overview of CF Results Framework, Linkages to SDGs and National Priorities.

SPA	Outcomes	Collaborative Outputs	SDG	12MP Game Changers	Participating Agencies	Estimated budget
Pillar 1/ SPA 1 People: Leaving No One Behind – Ensuring a prosperous nation through inclusivity and well-being for all	By 2025, poor and vulnerable groups living in Malaysia benefit from more equity-focused and high-quality social services as well as a social protection system that ensures all have an adequate standard of living.	1.1: A more efficient, effective and sustainable social protection system is in place that provides increased protection against contingencies throughout the life cycle. 1.2: Social services are strengthened to ensure access to high-quality, equity-focused provision that promotes the well-being of all. 1.3: Increased adoption of inclusive social norms and values and rejection of harmful practices, particularly against women and girls, and the creation of demand for services.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 10	5 and 6	UNICEF, UNDP, WHO, UNFPA, UNHCR, IOM, ILO, UN-HABITAT, UNAIDS	USD 131 million
Pillar 2/ SPA 2: Environment, Climate Change and Resilience	By 2025, environmental sustainability and resilience are mainstreamed as priorities within the national development agenda, across all sectors and levels of society.	2.1: Transitioning national development towards a decarbonized pathway and a resource-efficient economy through the adoption of green growth strategies and practices across all sectors. 2.2: Natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems are sustainably managed, adequately protected and conserved for long-term economic and environmental sustainability. 2.3: Preparedness and resilience (especially of indigenous, poor and vulnerable groups) against climate change, natural hazards, and disaster risks are strengthened.	7, 12, 13, 14, and 15	8 and 9	UNDP, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNESCO, UNDRR, UNEP, UN-HABITAT	USD 47 million

Pillar 3/ SPA 3: Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth	By 2025, Malaysia is making meaningful progress towards an economy that is inclusive, innovative, and sustainable across all income groups and productive sectors.	3.1: Inclusive growth and decent work also tap into new sources of economic growth and the Future of Work trends. 3.2: Further advances are made towards women’s equality in the economy. 3.3: Adoption of corporate practices that are aligned to SDGs and international standards of upholding principles of social justice, transparency, accountability and sustainability while promoting economic development. 3.4: Competitive, sustainable and inclusive urban development that supports social and economic well-being for the population.	1, 5, 8, 9, 10, and 12	2, 3, 7, 10, 11, 12 and 13	UNDP, UNFPA, UNIDO, UNESCO, ILO, ITC, UN-HABITAT, ITU	USD 16.5 million
Pillar 4/SPA 4: Social Cohesion, Governance and Human Rights	By 2025, Malaysia has strengthened democratic governance, and all people living in Malaysia benefit from a more cohesive society, strengthened governance and participation.	4.1: Malaysia makes significant progress towards inter-ethnic and cultural harmony and cohesion. 4.2: Institutions are more capable of undertaking inclusive political processes and are more citizen-centric and protective of fundamental freedoms. 4.3: The system of checks and balances across branches of government is strengthened at national and subnational levels, core government functions are more responsive and efficient, and people have better access to services.	1, 10 and 16	1, 4 and 14	UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR, OHCHR, UNESCO, UNODC, UN-HABITAT	USD 11.5 million
Pillar 5: Partnerships: Collaborative Implementation Modality	By enhancing results through coordination and partnerships, this pillar aims to accelerate progress on SDG17 and ensure an integrated approach by addressing means of implementation questions, supporting institutional reform, strengthening statistical systems, and ensuring full alignment with all 12MP Game changers. <i>Note: this pillar does not constitute a distinct SPA; there are no specified collaborative outputs, but there are 5 process indicators.</i>					

## Annex 3. Summaries of CF's Four Nested Theories of Change

*These are short summaries of four nested TOCs; pathways of change are detailed in the CF.*

### **Strategic Priority Area 1: PEOPLE (Leave No One Behind – inclusion and well-being for all)**

Participating agencies: UNICEF, UNDP, WHO, UNFPA, UNHCR, IOM, ILO, UN-HABITAT

Estimated budget: USD 131 million

IF support to the design and adoption of laws and policies is provided, AND national and sub-national policymaking functions are strengthened; AND national health, social and socio-economic statistical systems are developed AND evidence, including at community level-data, is strengthened through analysis, monitoring, and evaluation; AND social services are enhanced; AND training for service providers is offered; AND awareness is raised by engaging with religious leaders and youth groups;

THEN a more efficient, effective and sustainable social protection system will be established, providing greater protection against life cycle contingencies; AND social services will be improved to ensure access to high-quality services that promote the well-being of all; AND inclusive social norms will be adopted, harmful practices - particularly against women and girls will be reduced and demand for social services will increase.

THEREFORE, by 2025, poor and vulnerable groups living in Malaysia benefit from more equity-focused and high-quality social services as well as a social protection system that ensures all have an adequate standard of living.

### **Strategic Priority Area 2: PLANET (environment, climate change and resilience)**

Participating agencies: UNDP, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNESCO, UNDRR, UNEP, UN-HABITAT

Estimated budget: USD 47 million

IF support is provided to mainstream green economy approaches into national and subnational policies, AND collaboration with the private sector and civil society is promoted to embed circular economy practices into decision-making; AND assistance is given to implement climate change and ozone layer mitigation strategies, AND mechanisms are created to promote transformative behaviour changes and societal awareness of green growth benefits, AND biodiversity conservation is integrated into development agendas, AND policies and regulations are strengthened to secure protected areas, including advocacy for sustainable resource management, and focus on the rights and needs of local communities, AND rights-based, inclusive conservation financing mechanisms are designed and scaled, AND compliance with environmental laws and policies is monitored to ensure sustainable supply chains and ecosystem service valuation; AND regional and South-South cooperation on climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction is facilitated, while supporting evidence generation mainstreaming into infrastructure and land-use planning;

THEN Malaysia's development will transition towards a decarbonized, resource-efficient economy; AND natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems will be sustainably managed, and conserved for long-term economic and environmental sustainability; AND resilience to climate change, natural hazards, and disaster risks - especially for indigenous, poor and vulnerable groups will be strengthened;

THEREFORE, by 2025, environmental sustainability and resilience will be mainstreamed as priorities within Malaysia's development agenda across all sectors and levels of society.

### **Strategic Priority Area 3: PROSPERITY (inclusive and sustainable economic growth)**

Participating agencies: UNDP, UNFPA, UNIDO, UNESCO, ILO, ITC, UN-HABITAT, ITU

Estimated budget: USD 16.5 million

IF support is provided to design and implement policies and programmes that facilitate the transition to Industry 4.0, and the Future of Work, AND sustainable practices are promoted, AND reskilling programmes are developed to ensure inclusivity and decent work opportunities for vulnerable groups, including the poor, refugees and youth; AND efforts are made to recognize and invest in the care economy, strengthen policies and institutions for gender equality, and promote women's economic empowerment through gender-responsive budgeting; AND corporate practices align with international standards and the SDGs, focusing on social justice, transparency, and sustainability, including the elimination of forced labour; AND local authorities are empowered to promote competitive, sustainable, and inclusive urban development through evidence-based spatial planning, innovative financing, and improved connectivity;

THEN inclusive growth will tap into new economic opportunities; AND decent work will be available to more people, AND gender equality in the economy will advance; AND corporate practices aligned with SDGs and international standards will be adopted; AND sustainable urban development will support social and economic well-being;

THEREFORE, by 2025, Malaysia is making meaningful progress towards an economy that is inclusive, innovative and sustainable across all income groups and productive sectors.

### **Strategic Priority Area 4: PEACE (social, cohesion, governance and human rights)**

Participating agencies: UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR, OHCHR, UNESCO, UNODC, UN-HABITAT

Estimated budget: USD 11.5 million

IF technical assistance is provided to assess laws and policies for coherence with international standards, AND dialogue spaces are established to facilitate understanding among diverse population groups, AND efforts to prevent violent extremism are enhanced; AND electoral reforms are supported, AND mutual understanding between government branches is facilitated, AND institutional capacities are strengthened to promote citizen empowerment and protect fundamental freedoms; AND justice sector institutions are strengthened, AND collaboration with law enforcement is enhanced, AND government responsiveness and service delivery are improved at national and subnational levels;

THEN Malaysia will make significant progress towards inter-ethnic and cultural harmony; AND institutions will become more inclusive and citizen-centric; AND the system of checks and balances will be strengthened, resulting in more responsive governance and better access to services for the population.

THEREFORE by 2025, Malaysia will have strengthened democratic governance, and all people living in Malaysia benefit from a more cohesive society, strengthened governance and participation.

## OVERVIEW OF RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

### Risks

**Political Risks:** Malaysia's new unity government, elected in November 2022, faces challenges in maintaining political stability, particularly with regard to corruption, political polarization, and the protection of democratic space and the rule of law. Any changes in government could shift focus away from critical SDG principles such as equity and inclusion, posing risks to ongoing progress.

**Economic Risks:** Despite its diversified, Malaysia's economy remains vulnerable to global economic shocks, such as those caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the conflict in Ukraine, which have triggered recession, inflation, and disrupted economic recovery. Additionally, adverse weather events, including floods, further threaten economic stability and progress toward SDG goals.

**Social Risks:** Social cohesion is at risk due to ongoing inequities, particularly affecting marginalized groups such as migrants and refugees who often lack access to essential services like healthcare and education. The pandemic has exacerbated these challenges, creating an urgent need to address deficits in health and education, manage ethnic tensions, and eliminate discrimination to make meaningful progress towards the SDGs.

**Environmental Risks:** Malaysia faces significant environmental threats due to its tropical climate, including storms, floods, droughts, and haze caused by forest burning. These risks, intensified by climate change, endanger lives, livelihoods, and the progress towards the SDGs. Rising sea levels also pose a long-term threat to coastal communities.

**Institutional and Programming Risks:** Within the UN and its programming, risks exist in ensuring that interventions are well-designed and effectively implemented. Challenges include securing adequate financing, managing reputational risks, and ensuring proper oversight and safeguards to prevent abuse and protect beneficiaries' rights. Continuous monitoring and collaborative planning with diverse stakeholders are essential to addressing these risks.

### Assumptions

**Political Assumptions:** It is assumed that Malaysia's government will continue its SDG prioritisation in areas like equity, inclusion, and democratic governance, despite potential future political changes. This assumption is key to sustaining progress on addressing issues of corruption, political polarization, and the strengthening of legal frameworks.

**Economic Assumptions:** The assumption is that Malaysia's economy will continue to recover and grow, despite global economic challenges and environmental disruptions. It is also assumed that the

government will manage these risks effectively, ensuring that progress towards the SDGs remains on track.

**Social Assumptions:** It is assumed that efforts to improve social cohesion, and provide equitable access to services will be effective in addressing the needs of marginalized groups and reducing social tensions. This assumption is crucial for sustained social progress toward the 2030 Agenda.

**Environmental Assumptions:** There is an assumption that Malaysia will successfully manage and mitigate environmental risks through effective government and private sector interventions, and that the impacts of climate change will not overwhelm these efforts. This assumption is critical to maintaining momentum towards environmental sustainability goals.

**Institutional and Programming Assumptions:** It is assumed that the UN and its partners will have the capacity to design and implement effective programs with appropriate safeguards and oversight. This includes the assumption that adequate financial and human resources, will be available to support these efforts, and that planning and implementation will effectively address potential risks.

## Annex 3A. Synoptic Table for the Analysis of the Theory of Change

The analysis of the soundness of the CF’s result chain (contributive links of the joint work plan outputs (and/or CPD outputs) to the CF outcomes and that of the CF outcomes to NDS pillars) is based on the following assumptions contained in the CF document:

- 1- The CF was aligned to the **National Development Strategy (Shared Prosperity Vision 2030 – SPV-2030 and Malaysia MADANI Vision – MMV, which both outline the key guiding principles and values) and its successive Mid-Term Development Plan 2021-2025 (12<sup>th</sup> Malaysia Plan – 12MP, which outlines programmatic sustainable development priorities and to which the CF claims substantive alignment)**. All planning frameworks are aligned to Agenda 2030. According to the 12MP, it is “aligned with the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. The adoption of the whole-of-nation approach is essential for SDGs implementation. In line with the principle of “leaving no one behind”, localising SDGs initiatives will be intensified, and communication, education and public awareness will be emphasised to enhance understanding and implementation of the SDGs at the local level.”
- 2- The outcomes serve as a **mutual accountability framework** between the Government and UN system agencies.

Pillars of the National Development Strategy:  3 Themes and 13 Game Changers of 12 MP	CF Outcomes	Joint workplan outputs (2021-2023)	Evaluation team		
	In this column, from the CF’s results framework, link CF outcomes with the specific pillars or SDGs they are contributing to.	In this column, link each joint workplan outputs with the outcomes they are contributing to	Theoretical analysis of the evaluation team members to establish contributive links (A)	Following the analysis, the ET may propose a better alignment of (JWP outputs-UNDAF outcomes - NDS pillars/SDGs) if necessary.	
<b>Theme 1: Resetting the Economy<sup>31</sup></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Game Changer 2:</b> Catalysing Strategic and High Impact Industries to Boost</li> </ul>	<b>Outcome 3:</b> By 2025, Malaysia is making meaningful progress towards an economy that is inclusive, innovative and sustainable across all income	<b>Output 3.1:</b> Inclusive growth and decent work also tap into new sources of economic growth and the Future of Work trends.	<b>Alignment:</b> aligns with the priorities of restoring growth momentum and propelling strategic industries. The focus on inclusive growth supports the rejuvenation of key economic sectors and the development of high-impact industries, ensuring that the benefits of economic growth are widely shared. In addition, aligns with Game Changer	<b>Probing question 1:</b> In the course of programme implementation How did strategies and activities under this Output contribute to the achievement of the respective Outcome?  <b>Probing question 2:</b> During the implementation, were there any shifts to this Output, in terms of revision of formulation, change of activities; or to	Overall, well-aligned with many of the key priorities under Theme 1, particularly in terms of promoting innovation, inclusivity, entrepreneurship, and sustainable economic growth. However, to fully support Theme 1, the output could be strengthened by addressing specific sectors and focusing more explicitly on strategies to expand export markets

<sup>31</sup> Theme 1 focuses on restoring the growth momentum of key economic sectors (such as services, manufacturing, agriculture, mining and quarrying, and construction), and propelling strategic and high impact industries (such as electrical and electronics (E&E), global services (GS), aerospace, creative, tourism, halal, smart farming and biomass) as well as micro, small and medium enterprises to realign growth in a sustainable trajectory as well as strengthening Malaysia’s position in the global supply chain, with the objective to move to becoming a high-income nation driven by advanced technology

<p>Economic Growth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Game Changer 3:</b> Transforming Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) as the New Driver of Growth </li> </ul>	<p>groups and productive sectors</p>	<p>3 on youth entrepreneurship and opportunities for vulnerable groups.</p> <p><b>Contribution:</b> The pathway of change focuses on creating an enabling environment for inclusive economic growth, promoting decent work, and supporting the transition to higher value-added and skilled economic activities. This supports Malaysia's aspiration to become a high-income nation driven by advanced technology.</p>	<p>address emerging issues or other reasons; etc?</p> <p><b>Probing question 3:</b> Taking stock of the implementation experience, do you think this Output, its strategies and activities could have been shifted to better contribute to the achievement of the respective Outcome? If yes, how?</p>	<p>and enhance Malaysia's position in the global supply chain.</p>	
		<p><b>Output 3.2:</b> Further advances are made towards women's equality in the economy</p>	<p><b>Alignment:</b> aligns with the priority of strengthening MSMEs and boosting entrepreneurial capabilities. It emphasizes support for MSMEs, specifically among women, and including in adopting technology and digital solutions, which is critical for inclusive growth and participation in both domestic and global markets.</p> <p><b>Contribution:</b> The pathway of change focuses on fostering economic empowerment, innovation and entrepreneurship, particularly support for women MSMEs. This aligns with the national strategy to enhance the contribution of MSMEs as drivers of economic growth.</p>	<p>Same as above</p>	<p>Overall, well-aligned with many of the key priorities under Theme 1, particularly in terms of promoting women's equality in the economy and supporting inclusive growth. However, to fully support Theme 1, the output could be enhanced by addressing specific sectors where women's participation is crucial and by focusing more explicitly on strategies to expand export markets for women-led businesses.</p>
		<p><b>Output 3.3:</b> Adoption of corporate practices that are aligned to SDGs and international standards of upholding principles of social justice, transparency, accountability and sustainability while promoting economic development.</p>	<p><b>Alignment:</b> Supports the focus on propelling strategic industries and improving governance by encouraging sustainable business practices, including elimination of forced labor. It aligns with the emphasis on leveraging private sector investments with Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) elements to support the green economy agenda.</p> <p><b>Contribution:</b> The pathway of change focuses on integrating sustainability into business practices, particularly in high-impact industries. This aligns with the national priority of promoting</p>	<p>Same as above</p>	<p>Overall, well-aligned with many of the key priorities under Theme 1, particularly in terms of promoting sustainable and ethical corporate practices and improving governance. However, to fully support Theme 1, the output could be strengthened by focusing more explicitly on specific sectors and ensuring that MSMEs are also included in the push for sustainable practices.</p>

			strategic industries while ensuring environmental sustainability and governance improvements.		
	<b>Outcome 2:</b> By 2025, environmental sustainability and resilience are mainstreamed as priorities within the national development agenda, across all sectors and levels of society.	<b>Output 2.1:</b> Transitioning national development towards a decarbonised pathway and a resource-efficient economy through the adoption of green growth strategies and practices across all sectors.	<b>Alignment:</b> While this output primarily aligns with environmental goals, it also supports the transition to a sustainable economic growth model, which is a key part of Theme 1. This includes circular economy and promotion of advanced technologies and sustainable practices, including in strategic industries. <b>Contribution:</b> The pathway of change supports the adoption of green technologies and the shift towards a resource-efficient economy, which is integral to Malaysia's strategy of becoming a high-income nation with sustainable growth trajectories.	Same as above	Overall, well-aligned with many of the key priorities under Theme 1, particularly in terms of promoting sustainable and resource-efficient economic growth, in particular, circular economy. However, to fully support Theme 1, the output could be strengthened by focusing more explicitly on specific sectors and ensuring that MSMEs are included in the adoption of green growth strategies.
<b>Theme 2: Strengthening Security, Wellbeing and Inclusivity<sup>32</sup></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Game Changer IV:</b> Enhancing National Security and Unity for Nation-Building</li> <li><b>Game Changer V:</b> Revitalising the Healthcare System in Ensuring a Healthy and Productive Nation</li> </ul>	<b>Outcome 1:</b> By 2025, poor and vulnerable groups living in Malaysia benefit from more equity-focused and high-quality social services as well as a social protection system that ensures all have an adequate standard of living.	<b>Output 1.1:</b> A more efficient, effective and sustainable social protection system is in place that provides increased protection against contingencies throughout the life cycle.	<b>Alignment:</b> Closely aligns with the priority of eradicating hardcore poverty. It focuses on reducing socio-economic disparities and promoting social inclusion, which are central to addressing poverty.  <b>Contribution:</b> The pathway of change supports comprehensive social protection reforms, which include expanding coverage to vulnerable groups and improving the adequacy and effectiveness of social assistance programs. These efforts directly contribute to transforming poverty eradication strategies by providing targeted support to the poorest and most vulnerable populations.	Same as above	Overall, well aligned, with strong focus on social inclusion and poverty eradication. Also, the focus on vulnerable populations ensures that social protection reforms contribute directly to poverty eradication and uplift the most disadvantaged groups. Could be strengthened by explicitly addressing how social protection reforms will be tailored to the specific needs of less developed regions such as Sabah and Sarawak. This would ensure a more comprehensive alignment with the priority of reducing regional disparities. In addition, Game Changer VI has a broader focus on poverty eradication strategies, including dedicated poverty units, databases on poverty and potential tax reforms, which are not directly addressed in the output.
		<b>Output 1.2:</b> Social services are strengthened to	<b>Alignment:</b> Aligns directly with the priority of revitalizing the healthcare system. It focuses on strengthening	Same as above	Overall, well-aligned with many of the key priorities under Theme 2, particularly in terms of promoting

<sup>32</sup> Theme 2 focuses on strengthening security, wellbeing and inclusivity, including national defence and security, crime prevention and rehabilitation, security governance, healthcare service delivery and coverage, preparedness in battling various diseases, affordable housing, inclusive housing development, active lifestyles, poverty reduction, promoting harmonious society, addressing deprivations of vulnerable groups, urban and rural development, and development in Sabah and Sarawak

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Game Changer VI:</b> Transforming the Approach in Eradicating Hardcore Poverty</li> <li>• <b>Game Changer VII:</b> Multiplying Growth of Less Developed States, especially Sabah and Sarawak to Reduce Development Gap</li> </ul>		<p>ensure access to high-quality, equity-focused provision that promotes the well-being of all.</p>	<p>healthcare services, health financing, expanding coverage, and improving resilience.</p> <p><b>Contribution:</b> The pathway of change includes optimizing health financing, enhancing service quality, and improving access for vulnerable populations. These efforts contribute to the game changer of revitalizing the healthcare system by ensuring it is better prepared for future health crises and more inclusive in its coverage.</p>		<p>access to high-quality healthcare and social services, reducing disparities, and supporting vulnerable populations. However, to fully support Theme 2, the output could be enhanced by focusing more explicitly on regional disparities. In addition, the output does not explicitly address digitization of healthcare services emphasized in Game Changer V.</p>
		<p><b>Output 1.3:</b> Increased adoption of inclusive social norms and values and rejection of harmful practices, particularly against women and girls, and the creation of demand for services.</p>	<p><b>Alignment:</b> supports poverty eradication by promoting social inclusion and combating harmful practices that perpetuate poverty and exclusion.</p> <p><b>Contribution:</b> The pathway of change focuses on changing social norms, raising awareness, and engaging communities, which helps create a more inclusive society where vulnerable groups are better supported. This aligns with the goal of eradicating hardcore poverty by addressing the social and cultural barriers that contribute to poverty.</p>	Same as above	<p>Overall, well-aligned with many of the key priorities under Theme 2, particularly in terms of promoting social inclusion, fostering social cohesion, and addressing harmful practices.</p>
	<p><b>Outcome 2:</b> By 2025, environmental sustainability and resilience are mainstreamed<sup>29</sup> as priorities within the national development agenda, across all sectors and levels of society.</p>	<p><b>Output 2.3:</b> Prevention, preparedness and resilience (especially of indigenous, poor and vulnerable groups) against climate change, natural hazards, and disaster risks are strengthened.</p>	<p><b>Alignment:</b> Aligns with Game Changers IV and VI on security and poverty eradication. The focus on strengthening resilience against climate change and disaster risks directly supports the goal of national security by protecting vulnerable communities from the adverse impacts of natural hazards, which can destabilize social cohesion and security and exacerbate poverty.</p> <p><b>Contribution:</b> Contributes significantly by enhancing Malaysia’s preparedness for disasters, which is crucial for maintaining national stability and security. It also supports the inclusivity aspect by focusing on the most vulnerable groups, ensuring that no</p>	Same as above	<p>Overall, well-aligned with many of the key priorities under Theme 2, particularly in enhancing national security, protecting vulnerable populations, and contributing to poverty reduction.</p>

			one is left behind in disaster risk reduction efforts.		
	<b>Outcome 3:</b> By 2025, Malaysia is making meaningful progress towards an economy that is inclusive, innovative and sustainable across all income groups and productive sectors.	<b>Output 3.1:</b> Inclusive growth and decent work also tap into new sources of economic growth and the Future of Work trends.	<b>Alignment:</b> Aligns with the regional growth priority by promoting inclusive economic development and decent work opportunities, particularly in less developed areas.  <b>Contribution:</b> The pathway of change includes policies that promote regional and local economic development, including reskilling and upskilling, which helps create more equitable growth across the country. This directly contributes to narrowing the development gap between more and less developed states and covering several vulnerable groups.	Same as above	Overall, well-aligned with many of the key priorities under Theme 2, particularly in terms of promoting inclusive growth, creating decent work opportunities, and supporting regional development.
		<b>Output 3.4:</b> Competitive, sustainable and inclusive urban development that supports social and economic well-being for the population.	<b>Alignment:</b> Supports the priority of multiplying growth in less developed states by focusing on sustainable and inclusive development strategies, thereby addressing the needs of urban areas in less developed regions, contributing to regional development. <b>Contribution:</b> The pathway of change includes support for urban observatories, infrastructure development, and sustainable urban planning, which aligns with the goal of reducing the development gap between regions. The focus on enhancing local economic opportunities and improving infrastructure supports the game changer of fostering growth in Sabah and Sarawak.	Same as above	Overall, well-aligned with many of the key priorities under Theme 2, particularly in terms of promoting sustainable and inclusive urban development, reducing urban poverty, and supporting the well-being of urban populations. However, to fully support Theme 2, the output could be enhanced by focusing more explicitly on urban development in less developed regions.
	<b>Outcome 4:</b> By 2025, Malaysia has strengthened democratic governance, and all people living in Malaysia benefit	<b>Output 4.1:</b> Malaysia makes significant progress towards inter-ethnic and cultural harmony and cohesion.	<b>Alignment:</b> Directly aligns with the goal of enhancing national security and unity. By promoting social cohesion, cultural harmony, and dialogue among diverse populations, contributing to creating a stable and unified nation, which is essential for national security.	Same as above	Overall, well-aligned with many of the key priorities under Theme 2, particularly in terms of promoting social cohesion and inclusivity.

	from a more cohesive society, strengthened governance and participation.		<b>Contribution:</b> The pathway of change includes support for assessing laws, strengthening dialogue, and preventing violent extremism, which aligns well with the priorities of crime prevention and curbing illegal activities at the borders. The focus on social cohesion and preventing violent extremism addresses root causes of insecurity and instability.		
		<b>Output 4.2:</b> Institutions are more capable of undertaking inclusive political processes and are more citizen-centric and protective of fundamental freedoms.	<b>Alignment:</b> Aligns with the Game Changer IV in terms of ensuring inclusive participation and representation in political processes. By <b>Contribution:</b> The pathway of change includes support to promoting inclusive political institutions, contributing to building a more unified and secure nation.	Same as above	Indirectly aligned. While the output focuses on inclusivity, it does not explicitly address how these processes will contribute to reducing social tensions or preventing extremism, which are key aspects of Game Changer IV.  However, this output is strongly aligned with Game Changer I, which is cross-cutting for all themes, and which focuses on governance reforms, transparency, and accountability.
		<b>Output 4.3:</b> The system of checks and balances across branches of government is strengthened at national and subnational levels, core government functions are more responsive and efficient, and people have better access to services.	<b>Alignment:</b> Aligns with the priority on strengthening security governance by enhancing the efficiency and accountability of core government functions, including law enforcement and justice sectors. <b>Contribution:</b> The pathway of change includes support to strengthen judiciary systems, enhance law enforcement capacities, and promote anti-corruption efforts, aligning with the goal of improving national security governance. The focus on counterterrorism and human rights safeguards is particularly relevant to addressing security challenges.	Same as above	Overall, well-aligned with many of the key priorities under Theme 2, particularly in terms of improving governance and promoting social inclusion. However, to fully support Theme 2, the output could be enhanced by focusing more explicitly on regional challenges in less developed regions and by integrating governance reforms with broader health and economic outcomes.
	<b>Outcome 2:</b> By 2025, environmental sustainability and resilience are mainstreamed as priorities within the	<b>Output 2.1:</b> Transitioning national development towards a decarbonised pathway and a	<b>Alignment:</b> Directly aligns with Theme 3, particularly with regard to green growth and energy sustainability. The focus on mainstreaming green economy approaches, supporting circular economy practices, and	Same as above	Overall, well-aligned with many of the key priorities under Theme 3, particularly in promoting green growth and circular economy practices. However, to fully support Theme 3, the output could be enhanced by focusing more explicitly on water

<p><b>Theme 3: Advancing Sustainability</b><sup>33</sup></p> <p>3- <b>Game Changer VIII:</b> Embracing the Circular Economy</p> <p>4- <b>Game Changer IX:</b> Accelerating Adoption of Integrated Water Resources Management</p>	<p>national development agenda, across all sectors and levels of society.</p>	<p>resource-efficient economy through the adoption of green growth strategies and practices across all sectors.</p>	<p>promoting low-carbon considerations aligns well with the emphasis on sustainable economic practices and the shift to a low-carbon nation.</p> <p><b>Contribution:</b> The pathway of change emphasizes technical support, policy harmonization, and societal behavior change, which are critical for the successful implementation of Theme 3's priorities, especially in transforming economic and consumption practices towards sustainability. By embedding circular economy practices into business operations and enhancing environmental management systems, this output directly contributes to reducing GHG emissions, waste, and promoting resource efficiency, which are central to advancing sustainability.</p>	<p>Same as above</p>	<p>sector transformation (integrated water management) and developing more targeted strategies for energy sustainability.</p>
		<p><b>Output 2.2:</b> Natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems are sustainably managed, adequately protected and conserved for long-term economic and environmental sustainability</p>	<p><b>Alignment:</b> Directly aligns with the environmental aspects of Theme 3 by focusing on the sustainable management and conservation of natural resources, biodiversity, and ecosystems. It aligns with the goal of promoting green growth and ensuring that economic practices do not harm the environment.</p> <p><b>Contribution:</b> The pathway of change includes policy and legislative support, capacity building, and data-driven decision-making, in particular to support the integration of biodiversity conservation into national development agendas and strengthening policies to protect natural areas.</p>		<p>Overall, well-aligned with many of the key priorities under Theme 3, particularly in promoting environmental sustainability, conserving biodiversity, and managing natural resources sustainably. However, to fully support Theme 3, the output could be enhanced by focusing more explicitly on water sector transformation (integrated water management).</p>

<sup>33</sup> Theme 3 focuses on advancing green growth, enhancing energy sustainability, transforming the water sector, more sustainable economic practices and lifestyles, and issues of climate change, unsustainable consumption and production practices, loss of biodiversity, lack of coherence in the implementation of policies and inefficient water resources management

	<p><b>Outcome 3:</b> By 2025, Malaysia is making meaningful progress towards an economy that is inclusive, innovative and sustainable across all income groups and productive sectors.</p>	<p><b>Output 3.4:</b> Competitive, sustainable and inclusive urban development that supports social and economic well-being for the population.</p>	<p><b>Alignment:</b> Aligns with the sustainability goals of Theme 3 through promoting sustainable urbanization, which includes green infrastructure, waste management, and sustainable transportation. These are key components of a green growth strategy.</p> <p><b>Contribution:</b> The pathway of change emphasizes empowering local authorities and leveraging innovative financing for sustainable urban development, in particular for improving waste management systems, urban green spaces, and sustainable transportation contributes to reducing urban environmental impact.</p>	<p>Same as above</p>	<p>Overall, well-aligned with many of the key priorities under Theme 3, particularly in promoting sustainable and inclusive urban development, advancing green growth, and supporting the circular economy. However, to fully support Theme 3, the output could be enhanced by focusing more explicitly on water resource management and developing more targeted strategies for energy sustainability in urban areas.</p>
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## Annex 4. Stakeholder Mapping.

### Overview of stakeholders based on the UN Joint Workplan 2021-2023

Pillar	PEOPLE	PLANET	PROSPERITY	PEACE
Outcome	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4
<b>UN Agencies involved in the implementation of Joint Workplan 2021-2023</b>				
FAO		x		
ILO	x		x	x
IOM	x		x	
UNAIDS	x			
UNDP	x	x	x	x
UNFPA	x		x	x
UNHCR	x			x
UNICEF	x	x	x	x
UNOCT				x
UNODC	x			x
WHO	x			
UNEP		x		
UN-HABITAT		x	x	
UNIDO		x	x	
ITC			x	
UN Women			x	
UNCDF			x	
OHCHR				x
<b>Joint Initiatives/Joint Programmes</b>				
COVID-19 follow-up rapid needs assessment on migrant/refugee/stateless populations	IOM; UNDP			
Refugee resettlement	IOM; UNHCR			
International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women 2021	UN RCO; UNFPA			
UN Joint Team on HIV and AIDS in Malaysia	UNAIDS; UNHCR; UNODC; WHO			
Establish an enabling legal environment to reduce stigma and discrimination of people living with HIV (PLHIV)	UNDP; WHO			
Understanding Pathways to Adolescent Pregnancy in Southeast Asia	UNFPA; UNICEF			

SAFE: Safety across Asia For the Global Environment		FAO; UNEP; UNODC		
Unwaste: tackling waste trafficking to support a circular economy in South East Asia.		UNEP; UNODC		
Reducing digital divide in rural areas through the introduction of e-commerce and digital payment platforms among SMEs in rural areas in Sabah			UNCDF; UNDP	
The Impact of COVID-19 on Children and Women in Low Income Families			UNFPA; UNICEF	
Conduct awareness raising efforts promoting the protection and assistance needs of Rohingya refugees and migrants, with particular focus on COVID 19 safety.				IOM; UNHCR; WHO
Enhanced engagement with the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia to strengthen the understanding on human rights mechanisms				OHCHR; UN Women; UNDP
Provide technical advice and support to the government on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Treaty Body Reporting.				OHCHR; UNICEF
Strengthening resilience against violent extremism in Asia by building capacity of law enforcement and criminal justice actors in Prevention / Countering Violent Extremism and enhancing their collaboration with CSOs/NGOs.				UNDP; UNOCT; UNODC
<b>Joint Programmes</b>				
Improving People with disabilities' access to the open labour market with enhanced social protection	UNDP; ILO			
Enhancing access to key health services for refugees	UNHCR; WHO			
Youth Environment Living Labs- building capacity for youth to understand sustainability through action learning		UNDP; UNICEF		
Enhancing wastewater, nutrient management and sanitation provision for marginalised coastal communities in Sabah		UNEP; UN- HABITAT		
Integrated National Financing Framework			UNDP; UNICEF; UNCDF	
<b>UN Results Groups</b>				

People	X			
Peace				X
Planet & Prosperity		X	X	
Gender	X	X	X	X
<b>UN Thematic and Subgroups</b>				
SDG Results Group	X	X	X	X
Migration	X			
Social Protection	X			
Disability & inclusion	X			
Sabah PMT	X	X	X	X
M&E Group	X	X	X	X
Communications	X	X	X	X
Operations Management Team (OMT)	X	X	X	X
<b>Policy advocacy and sustainable development agenda partners / CSOs, Academia, Parliamentarians</b>				
National Council of Women's Organisations	x	x	x	x
Sunway Centre for Planetary Health	x	x	x	x
Yayasan Hasanah	x	x	x	x
All Party Parliamentary Group Malaysia on SDGs	x	x	x	x
CSO-SDG Alliance	x	x	x	x
Sisters in Islam	x	x	x	x
Pusat KOMAS	x	x	x	x
ASEAN Parliamentarian for Human Rights	x	x	x	x
Centre for Independent Journalism	x	x	x	x
Justice for Sisters	x	x	x	x
Fugee School	x	x	x	x
PACOS Trust	x	x	x	x
Childline	x	x	x	x
National Council for the Blind Malaysia	x	x	x	x
Refugee Fest	x	x	x	x
Spinal Muscular Atrophy Malaysia	x	x	x	x
Development of Human Resources for Rural Areas	x	x	x	x
Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women	x	x	x	x
ENGENDER Consultancy	x	x	x	x
MySDG Academy	x	x	x	x
Amanah Lestari Alam	x	x	x	x
Bursa Malaysia	x	x	x	x

Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO)	x	x	x	x
UKM - IKMAS	x	x	x	x
IDEAS	x	x	x	x
IMAN Research	x	x	x	x
Social Wellbeing Research Centre, University of Malaya	x	x	x	x
Population Studies Unit, University of Malaya (PSU-UM)	x	x	x	x
Asia School of Business	x	x	x	x
<b>Contributing partners</b>				
Malaysia Ministry of Human Resources	x		x	
Australia Department of Home Affairs	x			
Thailand Ministry of Labour	x			
The US Government Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration	x			x
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation	x			
European Union	x	x	x	
Government of Australia; Government of Canada; Government of Japan; Government of New Zealand; Government of Norway; Government of Philippines; Government of the Republic of Korea; Government of the United Kingdom; United State of America Government	x			
UNAIDS Country Envelope	x			
Government Cost Sharing	x			x
Malaysia Ministry of Finance	x	x		
Malaysia Ministry of Economy	x			
Malaysia-UN SDG Trust Fund	x			
Malaysian Research Institute on Ageing	x			
Malaysia Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development	x			
United States Fund for UNICEF	x			
European Commission Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations	x			x
MySDG Foundation	x			
WHO Flexible Fund-Assessed Contributions	x			
German Funds	x			
European Union	x	x	x	x
Resolve to Save Lives	x			

Adaptation Fund		x	x	
The Global Environment Facility		x	x	
United Kingdom Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office		x		x
Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol		x		
Convention for International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora		x		
Sarawak State Government		x		
Amanah Lestari Alam		x		
Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade			x	
United States Department of Labor			x	x
United Kingdom Department for International Development			x	
Government of Sweden			x	
Consumer goods forum			x	
Walmart Foundation			x	
Malaysia Penang State Government			x	
United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund			x	
UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office			x	
UNDP COVID Fund			x	
Malaysia National Population and Family Development Board			x	
Malaysia Ministry of Foreign Affairs				x
Swedish International Development Agency				x
Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade				x
<b>Implementing partners</b>				
<b>Malaysian Government</b>				
Malaysia Ministry of Human Resources	x		x	x
Malaysia Ministry of Foreign Affairs	x		x	x
Malaysia Ministry of Home Affairs	x		x	x
Malaysia Ministry of Health	x		x	
Malaysia Ministry of Economy	x	x	x	x
Malaysia Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development	x	x	x	x
Malaysia Department of Statistics	x		x	
Malaysia Ministry of Education	x	x	x	
Malaysia Department of Social Welfare	x			x
Malaysia Ministry of Finance	x	x		

Sarawak State Government	x			
Malaysia Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security	x		x	
Royal Malaysian Police	x			x
Malaysia Ministry of Higher Education	x		x	
Malaysia Department of Veterinary Services	x		x	
Malaysia Department of Agriculture	x		x	
Malaysia Penang City Council		x	x	
Malaysia Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Climate Change		x	x	
Malaysia Department of Irrigation and Drainage		x	x	
Malaysia Penang State Government		x	x	
Malaysia Department of Environment		x		
Malaysia Energy and Natural Resources Ministry		x		
Sarawak Ministry of Urban Development and Natural Resources		x		
Forestry Department of Peninsular Malaysia		x		
Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute		x		
Malaysia Ministry of Science and Technology		x		
Malaysian Green Technology and Climate Change Centre		x		
Standard and Industrial Research Institute of Malaysia		x		
Malaysia Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry			x	
Malaysia Ministry of Plantation and Commodities			x	
Malaysia Department of Standards			x	
Malaysia Department of Fisheries Sabah			x	
Malaysia Department of Fisheries			x	
Malaysia Seberang Perai City Council			x	
Malaysia Ministry of Local Government Development			x	
Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism				x
Human Rights Commission of Malaysia			x	x
Malaysia Ministry of National Unity				x
<b>NGO, CSO and others</b>				
International Committee of the Red Cross	x			
International Detention Coalition	x			
Guetanyoe Foundation	x			x

Centre of Excellence Research in AIDS	x			
Malaysian AIDS Council	x			
Malaysian Bar Council	x			
Malaysian Research Institute on Ageing	x			
Malaysian Relief Agency Foundation	x			
International Catholic Migration Commission	x			
Global Shepherds Berhad	x			
Pertubuhan Kebajikan Cahaya Surya Bakti Malaysia	x			
Malaysian Social Research Institute	x			
Women's Aid Organisation	x			
Elshaddai Centre Berhad	x			
Health Equity Initiatives and Solutions Berhad	x			
Penang Family Health Development Association	x			
Taiwan Tzu Chi Foundation	x			
Islamic Medical Association of Malaysia	x			
Coaches Across Continent	x			
Dignity for Children Foundation	x			
Persatuan Jaringan Islam Global Masa Depan	x			
Persatuan Kebajikan Suara Kanak-Kanak Malaysia	x			
HOST International	x			
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia	x	x		
Universiti Malaysia	x		x	x
Malaysia National Population and Family Development Board	x		x	
Médecins Sans Frontières	x			
Malaysia Make It Right Movement	x			
Hospital Universiti Putra Malaysia	x			
Hospital Universiti Sains Malaysia	x			
Universiti Malaysia Sabah	x		x	
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak	x			
University of Melbourne	x			
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia	x	x		
The George Institute for Global Health	x			
International Islamic University Malaysia	x			
Universiti Teknologi MARA	x			
Alzheimer's Disease Foundation Malaysia	x			
The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria	x			

Malaysia Think City		x	x	
National Water Research Institute of Malaysia		x		
ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity		x		
Malaysian Green Technology and Climate Change Centre		x		
ASEAN Centre for Energy		x		
Reef Check Malaysia		x		
Environmental Justice Foundation		x		
Action Caring Team Malaysia		x		
Malaysian Industry-Government Group for High Technology		x	x	
Malaysia Trade Union Congress			x	x
Malaysia Employers Federation			x	x
Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers			x	
The Remedy Project			x	
Indonesia Ministry of Manpower			x	
Fair Labour Association			x	
Consumer goods forum			x	
Responsible business alliance			x	
Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation			x	
Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation			x	
Bank Negara Malaysia			x	
TONIBUNG			x	
Malaysia Securities Commission			x	
Sarawak Biodiversity Centre			x	
Malaysia UN Global Compact			x	
Malaysia Industrial Court				x
Project Liber8				x
International Detention Coalition				x
Malaysia Office of the Children's Commissioner				x
Malaysia Council for Anti-Trafficking in Persons and Anti-Smuggling of Migrants				x
Malaysia National Youth Council				x
Malaysia Children's Representative Council				x
<b>LNOB Beneficiaries</b>				
Migrants	x		x	
Victims of grave human rights violations of (slavery, torture, trafficking, sexual exploitation and abuse...)	x			x
LGBTI persons	x			

Persons with disabilities	x		x	
Persons affected by chronic/long-term health conditions (e.g., HIV/AIDS, leprosy, diabetes, autoimmune disease, etc.)	x			
Minorities	x		x	x
Refugees & Asylum Seekers	x			x
Stateless Persons	x			
Indigenous Peoples	x		x	
Peasants & Rural Workers	x			
Youth / Children	x	x	x	x
Older Persons	x	x	x	x
Women & Girls	x	x	x	x
Coastal communities		x		
Undocumented residents		x		
Human rights defenders (incl. NGOs, journalists, union leaders, whistleblowers...)			x	
Persons deprived of their liberty				x
<b>Geography</b>				
Malaysia	x	x	x	x
W.P. Kuala Lumpur	x	x	x	x
Selangor	x	x	x	
Terengganu	x		x	
Perlis	x			
Pahang	x	x		
Negeri Sembilan	x	x		x
Melaka	x		x	
Johor	x	x		
Kelantan	x			
Kedah	x		x	
Perak	x			
Pulau Pinang	x	x	x	
Sarawak	x	x		
Sabah	x	x	x	
Brunei Darussalam	x			
Singapore	x			
Timur Laut		x	x	
Barat Daya		x	x	
S.P. Utara			x	
S.P. Tengah			x	

### UN Country Team

<b>UNCT members (Resident)</b>		
1	Karima El Korri	UN Resident Coordinator
2	Manon Bernier	UNDP Representative a.i.
3	Robert Gass	UNICEF Representative
4	Dr Julitta Onabanjo	UNFPA Representative
5	Kendra Rinas	IOM Head of Mission / Migration Working Group
6	Dr Rabindra Abeyasinghe	WHO Representative
7	Thomas Albrecht	UNHCR Representative
8	Panudda Boonpala	ILO Deputy Regional Director
9	Unni Krishnan Karunakara	UNU-IIGH Director <i>ad interim</i>
<b>UNCT Members (Non-resident)</b>		
10	Srinivasa Popuri	UN-Habitat Chief of Programme
11	Fukuya Iino	UNIDO Representative
12	Patricia Ongpin	UNAIDS Country Director
13	Cynthia Veliko	OHCHR Regional Representative
14	Kamala Ernest	UNEP Programme Management Officer
15	Sylvie Cochin	ITC - Chief, Office for Asia and The Pacific
16	Maki Katsuno-Hayashikawa	Director, UNESCO Jakarta
17	Atsuko Okuda	Regional Director, ITU
18	Benedikt Hofmann	Deputy Regional Representative, SEA and Pacific, UNODC
19	Hulda Atieno Ouma	UN Women
20	Marco Toscano-Rivalta	UNDRR Chief of Office

### Evaluation Management stakeholders

No.	Name	Entity / Designation
<b>Evaluation Steering Committee</b>		
1	Karima El Korri	UN Resident Coordinator
2	Robert Gass	UNICEF Representative
3	Manon Bernier	UNDP Representative <i>ad interim</i>
4	Dr Julitta Onabanjo	UNFPA Representative
5	Dr Rabindra Abeyasinghe	WHO Representative
6	Juanita Joseph	UNRCO Evaluation Manager
<b>Evaluation Technical Team</b>		
1	Peter Leth	UNICEF Evaluation Specialist
2	Angeli Monique Siladan	IOM Programme Officer
3	Shiau Yun Chong	UNFPA, CPD Evaluation Focal Point
4	Aisyah Razihan	UNDP, CPD Evaluation Focal Point
5	Christine Cheah	UNRCO, Data & Monitoring Officer
6	Richard Marshall	UNRCO, Senior Economist
<b>Evaluation Manager</b>		
1	Juanita Joseph	UNRCO, Head of RCO & Strategic Planner, CCA/CF Team Co-chair
<b>DCO Evaluation Advisor</b>		
1	Simon-Pierre Tegang	DCO, CF Evaluation Lead
<b>UNEDAP focal point</b>		
1	Angeline Wambanda	UNEDAP Focal Point for Malaysia

## Annex 4A. Stakeholders Interviewed.

Internal UN entities			
UNCT members (Resident)			
1	Karima El Korri	Resident Coordinator	UNRCO
2	Manon Bernier	Resident Representative a.i.	UNDP
3	Robert Gass	Representative	UNICEF
4	Dr Julitta Onabanjo	Representative	UNFPA
5	Kendra Rinas	Head of Mission	IOM
6	Dr Rabindra Abeyasinghe	Representative	WHO
7	Ana M. Pelosi Alessandro Nobile <i>On behalf of</i> Thomas Albrecht	Deputy Representative Programme Officer  Representative	UNHCR UNHCR  UNHCR
RCO Members			
8	Juanita Joseph	Head & Strategic Planner / Evaluation Manager	UNRCO
9	Richard Marshall	Senior Economist	UNRCO
10	Christine Cheah	Data & Monitoring Officer	UNRCO
UNCT Members (Non-resident)			
11	Shivani Verma <i>On behalf of</i> Cynthia Veliko	Human Rights Officer  Regional Representative	OHCHR  OHCHR
12	Kamala Ernest	Programme Management Officer	UNEP
13	Panudda Boonpala	Deputy Regional Director	ILO
Results Group Chairs and Working Groups and Sub-Groups Leads			
14	Dr Julitta Onabanjo	Gender Results Group Chair	UNFPA
15	Tam Hoang	Planet & Prosperity Results Group Chair	UN Habitat
16	Sanja Saranovic	People Results Group Chair	UNICEF
17	Juanita Escallon	(PEOPLE Results Group) Social Protection sub-group chair/Chief Social Policy	UNICEF
18	Mattias Carlson	(PEOPLE Results Group) Migration sub-group chair	IOM
19	Zoe Elizabeth Gan	(PEOPLE Results Group) Disability sub-group chair	UNICEF

20	Richard Marshall	CCA-CF co-chair / Chair of PMT on Undocumented Persons in Sabah	UNRCO
21	Lim Fook Ming	UN-MY SDG Trust Fund Secretariat	UNRCO
22	Andres Mejia	UNICEF Asst Rep / OMT Chair	UNICEF
23	Jasson Lim	Administrative Services Officer	UNICEF
<b>Results Groups</b>			
<b>RCS-People Results Group</b>			
24	Susheela Balasundaram	Head of Public Health Unit	UNHCR
25	Undral Ganbaatar	Programme Specialist	UNESCO
26	Audi, Ahmad Syafiq Ali	National Project Coordinator	ILO
27	Shiau Yun Chong	Evaluation Lead	UNFPA
28	Jessie Cheah Swee Neo	Head of Inclusive Growth and Prosperity Unit	UNDP
29	Herlianna Naning	Programme Associate	UNDP
30	Kendra Rinas	Head of Mission	IOM
31	Daniela Eilberg	Cybercrime Assoc. Prog Officer	UNODC
<b>RCS-Gender Results Group</b>			
32	Dr. Nazirul Shamsudin	Technical Officer - Determinants of Health	WHO
33	Tengku Aira	Assistant Representative	UNFPA
<b>RCS-Peace Results Group</b>			
34	Izzati Abdul Wahab	Programme Associate	UNDP
35	Adlyss Adnan	Project Manager, Preventing / Countering Violent Extremism and Enhancing Social Cohesion	UNDP
<b>RCS-PlanetProsperity Results Group</b>			
36	Sabrina Aripin	Project Associate, Green and Resilient Recovery Local Action Grant Project	UNDP
37	Sooksiri Chamsuk	Programme Officer	UNIDO
38	Tam Hoang	Sustainable Urbanization Specialist	UN-HABITAT
39	Kamala Ernest	Programme Management Officer	UNDP
40	Chong Yin Wei	Head of SDG Impact, Finance and Innovation	UNDP

41	Nosrat Ravichandran	Head of Natural Resource, Climate and Environment Unit	UNDP
42	Shiau Yun Chong	Evaluation Lead	UNFPA
43	Fereshteh Rafieian	Programme Specialist	UNESCO
<b>CPD Evaluators</b>			
44	David Slattery	CPD Evaluator	UNDP
45	Hubert Paulmer	CPD Evaluator	UNICEF
46	Razina Bilgrami	CPD Evaluator	UNFPA
<b>GOVERNMENT</b>			
<b>MINISTRY OF ECONOMY</b>			
47	Moktar Idham Musa	Director, International Cooperation Division	Ministry of Economy
48	Jenny Rayapan	Principal Assistant Director (Development Partner), International Cooperation Division	Ministry of Economy
49	Asfaazam Kasbani	Executive Director	National SDG Centre
50	Sheela Inthiram	Assistant Director (Sustainable Development), Environment and National Resources Division	Ministry of Economy
<b>MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS</b>			
51	Mohd Ridzwan Bin Shahabudin	Multilateral Economic and Environmental Division	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<b>SUHAKAM</b>			
52	Ann Jennifer Victor Isaacs	Dep. Secretary (Policy, Law & Int'l Coordination)	SUHAKAM (Human Rights Commission)
53	Helmi Fendy Mohammad Idris	Assistant Secretary	SUHAKAM (Human Rights Commission)
<b>PARLIAMENT</b>			
54	Maria Chin Abdullah	Former Member of Parliament and former co-chair of APPGM	All-Party Parliamentary Group on SDGs (APPGM SDGs)
<b>DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICS</b>			
55	Dr. Mohd Uzir Mahidin	Chief Statistician	Department of Statistics
<b>CSOs</b>			

56	Tan Sri Sharifah Hapsah Syed Hassan Shahabudin	President	National Council of Women's Organisations
57	Lavanya Rama Iyer	Co-chair	CSO-SDG Alliance
58	Kiu Jia Yaw	Co-chair	CSO-SDG Alliance
<b>Private Sector</b>			
59	Mr. Faroze Nadar	Executive Director	UN Global Compact Network Malaysia & Brunei (UNGCMYB)
60	Tan Sri Abdul Wahid Omar	Chair	Bursa Malaysia / Malaysia SDG Trust Fund / SDG Foundation
<b>Academia &amp; Think tanks</b>			
61	Prof. Dato' Dr. Rashila Ramli	Director, IKMAS (Global Governance, Human Security, Gender and Politics)	Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
<b>Diplomatic Corps and donors / partners</b>			
62	Timo Goosman	Minister Counsellor – Head of Political Affairs	EU delegation to Malaysia
63	Mei Ling Tan	Senior Country Operations Officer	World Bank
64	Matthew Dornan	Senior Economist	World Bank

#### EVALUATION MANAGEMENT / MEETING COUNTERPARTS

<b>Evaluation Steering Committee</b>			
1	Karima El Korri	Resident Coordinator	UNRCO
2	Robert Gass	Resident	UNICEF
3	Manon Bernier	Resident Representative a.i.	UNDP
4	Dr Julitta Onabanjo	Representative	UNFPA
5	Dr Rabindra Abeyasinghe	Representative	WHO
6	Juanita Joseph	Evaluation Manager	UNRCO
<b>Evaluation Technical Team</b>			
7	Peter Leth	Evaluation Specialist	UNICEF
8	Angeli Monique Siladan	Programme Officer	IOM
9	Christine Cheah	Data & Monitoring Officer	UNRCO
10	Richard Marshall	Senior Economist	UNRCO
11	Shiau Yun Chong	Evaluation Lead	UNFPA
12	Aisyah Razihan	Evaluation Focal Point	UNDP

	Evaluation Manager		
13	Juanita Joseph	Head & Strategic Planner	UNRCO
	DCO Evaluation Advisor		
14	Simon-Pierre Tegang	CF Evaluation Lead	DCO
	UNEDAP focal point		
15	Angeline Wambanda	Focal Point for Malaysia	UNEDAP

## Annex 5. Documentation Reviewed.

### **UNCT/RCO reports**

- UNSDCF (2021-2025) (Sept 2023)
- Results and Resources Framework, endorsed by the Government
- UNCT Meeting Minutes (2022, 2023 and 2024)
- UN Country Results Report Malaysia (2020, 2021, 2022, 2023)
- UNCT Malaysia CEDAW Report for 2023 (Feb 2023)
- UNCT Malaysia Addendum Submission to the CEDAW (Apr 2024)
- UNCT SWAP Gender Scorecard Report Malaysia 2023 (Jun 2023)
- Malaysia Report of the Working Group on the UPR (March 2024)
- UN Malaysia Common Country Analysis Summary (Dec 2019)
- Malaysia Common Country Analysis: Executive Summary (Sept 2024)
- Malaysia Human Development Reports
- UNCT Joint Work Plans 2021-2023
- Management and Accountability Framework of the UN Development and RC System (Sept 2021)

### **Covid-19 reports**

- UN Covid-19 Commitment to Malaysia: UN Socioeconomic Response Plan (Dec 2020)
- Malaysia One-UN Plan of Multisectoral Support for Covid-19 (July 2020)

### **UN agency reports**

- CPD-UNDP- Malaysia (2022-2025)
- CPD-UNFPA-Malaysia (2022-2025)
- CDP-UNICEF-Malaysia (2022-2025)
- Programme Cycle Evaluation Plan-UNFPA-Malaysia (2022-2025)
- Working materials for CPD Evaluation Reports of UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF

### **Results group reports**

- UN Communications Group 2022 Workplan
- UN Communications Group Strategy (2023-2024) (Nov 2023)
- Draft TOR UNCT Disability Inclusion Subgroup 2024 for Malaysia
- UNCT People Results Group - Disability Inclusion Subgroup Survey Result (Sept 2024)

### **IMS Annual Surveys**

- IMS Annual Survey: Normative Areas (2021, 2022, 2023)
- IMS Annual Survey: Programmatic and Coordination Areas (2021, 2022, 2023)

### **Malaysia-UN SDG Trust Fund reports**

- UNDP-ILO Project Document: Improving People with Disabilities' access to the open labour market with enhance social protection

- UNEP-UN Habitat Project Document: Enhancing Wastewater, Nutrient Management and Sanitation Provision for Marginalized Coastal Communities in Sabah, Malaysia
- UNHCR-WHO Project Document: Enhancing access to key health services for refugees
- Sabah Undocumented Paper Series
- 2021 SERP Reporting by UNCT
- SERP Joint Workplan
- State SDG 2024 Overview Analysis

### **National governmental reports**

- Executive Summary of the 12th Malaysia Plan
- 12th Malaysia Plan (Full document)
- Midterm Review of the 12th Malaysia Plan (Sept 2023)
- Shared Prosperity Vision 2030
- 13th Malaysia Plan Inception Presentation (Sept 2024)
- Keynote Address by Minister of Economy (Sept 2024)
- Economy MADANI Brochure
- Malaysia Voluntary National Review (2017 & 2021)

### **National civil society reports**

- Malaysian CSO-SDG Alliance 2023 Policy Brief
- The Khazanah Report (2023)

### **Other UN reports**

- Six Transitions: Investment Pathways to Deliver the SDGs (Sept 2023)
- Human Rights Council-Outcome-Malaysia
- Pact for the Future, Rev3 (Aug 2024)
- Declaration on Future Generations, Rev3 (Sept 2024)

### **CF Evaluation guidelines**

- UNEDAP Evaluation Training - Steps 1 and 2 (May 2024)
- UNEDAP Evaluation Training - Steps 3, 4 and 5 (May 2024)
- UNEDAP 2024 Training - Examples of Communication Products by UN
- UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation 2020
- UNEG Norms & Standards for Evaluation (2016 & 2017)
- UNEG Quality Checklist for Evaluation TOR and Inception Reports 2010
- UNSDCF Evaluation Guidelines (Sept 2021 & July 2022)
- UNEG Handbook for Conducting Evaluations of Normative Work (Nov 2013)
- UNEG Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations (Aug 2014)

# Perception Survey

## for UNCT Members and Key Programme Staff

### Introduction

This perception survey is part of the evaluation process of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (CF) in Malaysia. It seeks to assess overall relevance and performance of the UN under the CF as well as assess internal coordination. It is also intended to identify any good practices that have emerged, clarify any enabling or disabling factors, and capture lessons learned.

Most questions in this survey use a five-point rating scale to capture your level of assessment. Additionally, space is provided for comments and clarifications, allowing you to express more detailed insights and perspectives beyond the scale.

We understand that some of the questions may seem general or broad; however, we are interested in your honest and overall impression based on your perspective, experience and knowledge. There are no right or wrong answers - what matters most is your personal view and understanding.

Your responses will contribute to an independent, transparent, and participatory evaluation that supports learning, accountability, and decision-making for future programming cycles, particularly in preparation for the new CF 2026-2030.

All responses will be treated confidentially and will only be used for the purpose of this evaluation.

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### Section 1: Relevance and Alignment

**1.1 To what extent do you believe the CF’s Strategic Priority Areas (SPAs), in particular the ones that are most relevant to your area of work, are aligned with Malaysia’s national priorities?**

Not aligned at all

Slightly aligned

Moderately aligned

Strongly aligned

Fully aligned

Difficult to say

[Please provide examples or comments to elaborate on your answer] [Text field]

**1.2 To what extent do you believe the CF is geared towards supporting Malaysia’s international commitments in key normative areas, such as gender equality, human rights, disability inclusion, and environmental sustainability?**

<b>Gender equality</b>	<b>Human rights</b>	<b>Disability inclusion</b>	<b>Environmental sustainability</b>
Not at all	Not at all	Not at all	Not at all
Slightly	Slightly	Slightly	Slightly
Moderately	Moderately	Moderately	Moderately
Strongly	Strongly	Strongly	Strongly
Fully	Fully	Fully	Fully
Difficult to say	Difficult to say	Difficult to say	Difficult to say

[Please provide examples or comments to elaborate on your answer] [Text field]

**1.3 How effective has the UN Country Team (UNCT) been in adapting the CF to address emerging challenges, such as the impacts of COVID-19?**

Not effective at all

Slightly effective

Moderately effective

Very effective

Extremely effective

Difficult to say

[Please provide examples or comments to elaborate on your answer] [Text field]

## **Section 2: Performance**

**2.1 To what extent has the CF contributed to outcome-level change (institutional, behavioural, or legislative changes) in Malaysia, in particular, under the SPAs that are most relevant to your area work?**

Not at all

To a small extent

To a moderate extent

To a large extent

To a very large extent

Difficult to say

[Please provide examples or comments to elaborate on your answer] [Text field]

**2.2 To what extent the contributions of your agency to the CF's SPAs have integrated key normative dimensions such as gender equality, human rights, disability inclusion, and environmental sustainability?**

<b>Gender equality</b>	<b>Human rights</b>	<b>Disability inclusion</b>	<b>Environmental sustainability</b>
Not at all	Not at all	Not at all	Not at all
To a small extent	To a small extent	To a small extent	To a small extent
To a moderate extent	To a moderate extent	To a moderate extent	To a moderate extent
To a large extent	To a large extent	To a large extent	To a large extent
To a very large extent	To a very large extent	To a very large extent	To a very large extent
Difficult to say	To a very large extent	To a very large extent	Difficult to say
	Difficult to say	Difficult to say	

[Please provide examples or comments to elaborate on your answer] [Text field]

**2.2 How would you assess the effectiveness of the CF in prioritizing activities based on Malaysia's national needs rather than on the availability of resources, particularly given the absence of the formal Steering Committee?**

Not effective at all

Slightly effective

Moderately effective

Very effective

Extremely effective

Difficult to say

[Please provide examples or comments to elaborate on your answer] [Text field]

**2.3 Has your agency been able to identify and access new financing flows with the support of the CF as the overarching framework for UN contribution to outcome-level change?**

Yes

No

Difficult to say

[Please provide examples or comments to elaborate on your answer] [Text field]

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### **Section 3: Impact Orientation**

**3.1 To what extent do you believe the CF have contributed to progress towards achieving Malaysia's national SDG targets, in particular, under the SPAs that are most relevant to your area of work?**

Not at all

To a small extent

To a moderate extent

To a large extent

To a very large extent

Difficult to say

[Please provide examples or comments to elaborate on your answer] [Text field]

**3.2 Do the achieved CF results, in particular, under the SPAs that are most relevant to your area of work, provide a strong foundation for continued progress towards the SDGs? Are they sustainable?**

Not at all

To a small extent

To a moderate extent

To a large extent

To a very large extent

Difficult to say

[Please provide examples or comments to elaborate on your answer] [Text field]

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### **Section 4: Internal Coherence and Coordination**

**4.1 To what extent have the coordination mechanisms (e.g., Results Groups, Gender Results Group, OMT, Comms, etc.) within the CF, in particular, under the SPAs that are most relevant to your area of work, contributed to increased synergies between UN agencies?**

Not at all

To a small extent

To a moderate extent

To a large extent

To a very large extent

Difficult to say

[Please provide examples or comments to elaborate on your answer] [Text field]

**4.2 Does your agency have a country-specific strategy, programme or work plan for Malaysia?**

Yes

No

Please clarify, if you selected No [Text field]

**4.3 Have your agency programme or work plan been derived from and/or aligned with the CF?**

Yes, fully

Partially

No

Difficult to say

Not relevant

[Please provide examples or comments to elaborate on your answer] [Text field]

**4.4 In your opinion, has the Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO) played an effective role in enhancing the UNCT's convening power and improving coherence among UN agencies?**

Not effective at all

Slightly effective

Moderately effective

Very effective

Extremely effective

Difficult to say

[Please provide examples or comments to elaborate on your answer] [Text field]

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**Section 5: Additional Comments**

**Do you have any additional comments or suggestions regarding the CF and its evaluation?**

[Text field]

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**REQUIRED DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS:**

**Do you represent a resident agency or a non-resident agency?**

Resident

Non-resident

Other

Please clarify, if you selected Other [Text field]

**Your gender:**

Female

Male

Prefer not to say

**OPTIONAL INFORMATION:**

**Name of Your Agency:**

[Dropdown list of UN agencies / signatories of CF]

**Your Role in the Agency:**

[Text field]

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Thank you for your valuable input.

# Interview Guide

## Theory of Change Workshops with Results Groups

### Introduction

This interview guide is designed to facilitate discussions with the Results Groups (People, Planet & Prosperity, and Peace) involved in the delivery of the Strategic Priority Areas (SPAs) under the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (CF) in Malaysia. The guide aims to validate, reconstruct, and discuss the Theories of Change (ToC) for each SPA, while also focusing on the key evaluation areas of relevance, performance, and coordination. Each ToC workshop can be conducted either as a collective focus group with all UN agencies in the respective Results Group or through individual interviews with agency representatives. All information shared will be treated confidentially and used solely for the purposes of the evaluation.

### Structure of the Workshop/Interview

#### 1. Introduction and Purpose (10 minutes)

- Brief introduction to the evaluation and its purpose.
- Explanation of the ToC workshop's objectives: to validate and possibly reconstruct the ToC for the SPA, assess relevance, performance, and coordination.
- Confidentiality assurance and explanation of how the information will be used.
- Overview of the workshop structure and key topics to be covered.

#### 2. Validation and Reconstruction of Theory of Change (40 minutes)

- **Current Understanding:**
  - Ask participants to describe the current Theory of Change for their SPA. What are the key assumptions, causal pathways, and expected outcomes?
  - Conduct attribution of agency sub-outputs to the pathways of change under their respective SPA (*\*can be done before or after the workshop by each agency individually*).

**Probe:** How well do these pathways reflect the realities on the ground?

- **Assumptions Testing:**
  - Review the key assumptions relevant to the SPA. Ask participants to assess whether these assumptions held true during the implementation of the CF.

**Probe:** Were there any significant deviations from the assumptions? What were the factors contributing to these deviations? What have been enabling and disabling factors?

- **Reconstruction of ToC:**

- Discuss whether the original Theory of Change needs to be adjusted based on the actual experiences and outcomes.

**Probe:** What would the reconstructed ToC look like? What new assumptions or pathways should be included?

### 3. Discussion on Relevance (20 minutes)

#### ○ Alignment with National Priorities:

- How well do the activities and outputs under this SPA align with Malaysia's evolving national priorities and socio-economic context?
- **Probe:** Are there areas where the SPA has been particularly relevant or irrelevant? How has the SPA adapted to changes in national priorities?

#### ○ Alignment with International Commitments:

- To what extent are the SPA's activities aligned with Malaysia's international commitments, particularly in normative areas like gender equality, human rights, disability inclusion, and environmental sustainability?

**Probe:** What challenges have been faced in ensuring this alignment?

#### ○ Emerging Challenges:

- How effectively has the SPA addressed emerging challenges such as the impacts of COVID-19 or political changes?

**Probe:** What adaptations were made in response to these challenges, and how were they incorporated into the ToC?

### 4. Discussion on Performance (20 minutes)

#### ○ Effectiveness of Interventions:

- To what extent have the activities and outputs under this SPA led to the expected institutional reforms, behavioural shifts and/or legislative changes in Malaysia?

**Probe:** Can you provide examples of where these changes have been most and least successful?

#### ○ Prioritization of Activities:

- How were activities prioritized within this SPA? Were they based on national needs or driven by available resources?

**Probe:** In the absence of formal Steering Committee oversight, what mechanisms ensured that priorities were aligned with national needs?

#### ○ Sustainability of Outcomes:

- How sustainable are the outcomes achieved under this SPA? Do they provide a strong foundation for continued progress towards Malaysia’s SDG targets?

**Probe:** What factors have contributed to or hindered the sustainability of these outcomes?

○ **Integration of Normative Areas:**

- How effectively have normative areas such as gender equality, women’s empowerment, human rights, disability inclusion, and environmental sustainability been integrated into the operations and performance of your agency under this SPA?

**Probe:** Can you provide specific examples of how these normative areas have been addressed in your agency’s activities? Were there any challenges or successes in integrating these areas? **Reflection:** Looking back, were there any normative areas that were more challenging to integrate than others? How were these challenges addressed, and what lessons were learned?

**5. Discussion on Coordination (20 minutes)**

○ **Internal Coordination:**

- How effective have the internal coordination mechanisms (e.g., Results Groups, Gender Results Group, Thematic Working Groups, Operations, Comms, etc.) been in enhancing synergies between UN agencies?

**Probe:** What examples can you provide of successful or unsuccessful coordination efforts?

○ **Alignment of Agency Work Plans:**

- To what extent have your agency’s programmes and work plans been derived from and aligned with the UNSDCF, particularly under this SPA?

**Probe:** What is the formal process to ensure this alignment?

○ **Role of the Resident Coordinator’s Office (RCO):**

- How effective has the RCO been in enhancing the UNCT’s convening power and improving coherence among UN agencies under this SPA?

**Probe:** How has the RCO supported or hindered your agency’s work in this SPA?

**6. Closing Discussion and Next Steps (10 minutes)**

○ **Good Practices and Lessons Learned:**

- What good practices have emerged from the coordination and implementation of activities under this SPA?

**Probe:** What lessons have been learned that could inform future programming, particularly for the next CF cycle (2026-2030)?

○ **Final Thoughts:**

- Is there anything else you would like to add that has not been covered in this discussion? Is there anything you would like to keep for the next cycle or anything you would definitely change?

**Next Steps:** Brief participants on what will happen next in the evaluation process and how their input will be used.

## Interview Guide

### Focus Group/Workshop with the RCO

#### Introduction

The purpose of this workshop is to gather insights on the strategic role of the Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO) in the design and implementation of the UNSDCF, with a focus on relevance, performance, coordination, and integration of normative areas, as well as the additional CF results enhancements. The discussion will explore how the RCO has leveraged coordination, partnerships, policy support, financing strategies, and stakeholder engagement to enhance the UNSDCF's outcomes. All information shared will be treated confidentially and used solely for the purposes of the evaluation.

#### Workshop Structure

1. **Introduction and Purpose (10 minutes)**

- Brief introduction to the evaluation and its purpose.
- Explanation of the workshop objectives: to evaluate the RCO's strategic role in the UNSDCF's relevance, performance, coordination, integration of normative areas, and delivery of additional CF results enhancements.

2. **Strategic Leadership and Relevance (25 minutes)**

○ **Setting Strategic Direction:**

- **Question:** How has the RCO provided strategic leadership to ensure that the UNSDCF is aligned with Malaysia's evolving national priorities and socio-economic context?

**Probe:** Can you describe specific instances where the RCO's strategic direction influenced the adaptation or realignment of CF activities?

○ **Ensuring Relevance to International Norms:**

- **Question:** How has the RCO ensured that the CF aligns with Malaysia’s international commitments, particularly in key normative areas such as gender equality, human rights, disability inclusion, and environmental sustainability?

**Probe:** What challenges did the RCO face in maintaining this alignment, and how were they addressed?

- **Responding to Emerging Challenges:**

- **Question:** How did the RCO adapt the strategic focus of the CF in response to emerging challenges such as political changes or the COVID-19 pandemic?

**Probe:** What strategic shifts were necessary, and how effectively were they implemented?

### 3. Performance and Oversight (30 minutes)

- **Monitoring and Supporting Performance:**

- **Question:** How has the RCO monitored and supported the performance of UN agencies in achieving the objectives of the CF? What systems or processes were put in place for this purpose?

**Probe:** Can you provide examples of where the RCO’s oversight directly contributed to the success or improvement of agency performance?

- **Integration of Normative Areas:**

- **Question:** How has the RCO facilitated the integration of normative areas such as gender equality, women’s empowerment, human rights, disability inclusion, and environmental sustainability across all SPAs?

**Probe:** What strategies did the RCO use to ensure these areas were prioritized in agency activities? Were there any specific challenges or successes in this regard?

- **Resource Mobilization and Prioritization:**

- **Question:** How has the RCO influenced the prioritization of activities and resource mobilization under the CF?

**Probe:** In the absence of formal governance mechanisms such as the Steering Committee, how did the RCO ensure that activities were prioritized according to national needs and strategic importance?

- **Implementation of CF Results Enhancements:**

- **Leveraging Coordination and Partnerships:**

- **Question:** How has the RCO strengthened collaboration with the government, private sector, civil society, and academia to multiply the impact of the CF?

**Probe:** Can you provide examples of successful partnerships or coordination efforts that have significantly enhanced CF outcomes?

- **Providing Policy Support:**

- **Question:** How has the RCO provided high-level policy support and technical assistance to federal and state governments in areas such as development planning and budgeting?

**Probe:** What impact has this support had on the effectiveness and sustainability of the UNSDCF outcomes?

- **Strengthening SDG Monitoring and Evaluation:**

- **Question:** What role has the RCO played in enhancing SDG progress monitoring, evaluation, and data quality?

**Probe:** How has the RCO advocated for better SDG-related data and ensured effective tracking of progress?

- **Innovative Financing for SDGs:**

- **Question:** How has the RCO explored and facilitated access to non-traditional financing sources, including Islamic financing and private sector contributions, to support SDG achievement?

**Probe:** Can you provide examples of successful financing initiatives that were supported or facilitated by the RCO?

- **Fostering Social Dialogue and Multi-Stakeholder Engagement:**

- **Question:** How has the RCO convened stakeholders through platforms that promote a whole-of-nation approach to SDG achievement and enhanced Malaysia's role in international cooperation?

**Probe:** What challenges and successes have been encountered in fostering social dialogue and multi-stakeholder engagement?

#### 4. **Coordination and Convening Power (30 minutes)**

- **Enhancing UN Coherence:**

- **Question:** How effective has the RCO been in enhancing coherence and synergy among the UN agencies working under the CF?

**Probe:** What specific coordination mechanisms or approaches did the RCO use to foster collaboration? Can you provide examples where these efforts were particularly successful or faced challenges?

- **Facilitating Inter-Agency Collaboration:**

- **Question:** How has the RCO facilitated inter-agency collaboration to ensure that the UNSDCF objectives are met in a coordinated and integrated manner? **Probe:** What role did the RCO play in resolving conflicts or addressing overlaps between agency mandates or activities?
  - **Engagement with National Counterparts:**
    - **Question:** How has the RCO engaged with national counterparts to ensure the effective implementation of the CF? **Probe:** How has the RCO’s engagement with government ministries, civil society, and other stakeholders enhanced or hindered the achievement of CF outcomes?
5. **Closing Discussion and Next Steps (10 minutes)**
- **Good Practices and Lessons Learned:**
    - **Question:** What good practices have emerged from the RCO’s role in leading and coordinating the CF? **Probe:** What lessons can be learned from the RCO’s experience that could inform future coordination strategies, particularly in the next CF cycle (2026-2030)?

**Final Thoughts:** Is there anything else you would like to add that has not been covered in this discussion? Is there anything you would like to keep for the next cycle or anything you would definitely change?

## Interview Guide

### Key Informant Interviews with National Partners

#### Introduction

The purpose of the interview is to gather insights from key national partners on the United Nations’ operations in Malaysia, specifically regarding the de facto acceptance and implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (CF), despite it not being formally signed; and to explore how the UN’s activities under the UNSDCF align with national priorities and contribute to Malaysia’s sustainable development goals. The discussion will focus on the relevance, performance, and coordination of the UN’s work in Malaysia. All information shared will be treated confidentially and used solely for the purposes of the evaluation.

#### Interview Structure

##### 1. Introduction and Context (10 minutes)

- Brief introduction to the evaluation and its limited scope, noting the de facto recognition of the CF by the government.
- Explanation of the interview’s objectives: to understand the stakeholder’s perspective on the relevance, performance, and coordination of the UN’s activities in Malaysia under the CF.

- Overview of the interview structure and key topics to be covered.
2. **Discussion on Relevance (20 minutes)**
- **Alignment with National Priorities:**
    - **Question:** From your perspective, how well do the activities and Strategic Priority Areas (SPAs) of the CF align with Malaysia’s national priorities and socio-economic goals?
    - Probe:** Despite the CF not being formally signed, how has the UN’s work been integrated into national development plans? Are there specific areas where this alignment is particularly strong or weak?
  - **Stakeholder’s position on UNSDCF:**
    - **Question:** How would you describe your organization’s positioning towards the CF as the framework for UN operations in Malaysia?
    - Probe:** How does your organization view the UN’s role under this framework?
    - For Government only:** Which factors prevent the formal adoption of the CF? Are there any formal or informal mechanisms through which the government engages with the UN under the CF?
  - **Response to Emerging Needs:**
    - **Question:** How effectively has the UN responded to emerging needs and priorities of Malaysia, such as those arising from the COVID-19 pandemic or other socio-economic shifts?
    - Probe:** Can you provide examples where the UN’s flexibility and responsiveness have been particularly valuable to the country’s needs?
3. **Discussion on Performance (25 minutes)**
- **Effectiveness of UN Operations:**
    - **Question:** How effective have the UN agencies been in delivering their programmes and work plans, as endorsed bilaterally by their respective government counterparts?
    - Probe:** What are the key areas where the UN’s contributions have had the most significant impact on Malaysia’s development? Are there areas where performance could be improved?
  - **Integration of Normative Areas:**
    - **Question:** How well have the UN’s programmes integrated key normative areas such as gender equality, human rights, disability inclusion, and environmental sustainability into their operations?

**Probe:** How do you view the UN's efforts in these areas? Are there any specific initiatives that stand out as particularly effective or aligned with national goals?

○ **Sustainability of Outcomes:**

- **Question:** From your perspective, how sustainable are the outcomes achieved through the UN's interventions?

**Probe:** What mechanisms or partnerships have been most effective in ensuring the long-term sustainability of these outcomes?

4. **Discussion on Coordination (20 minutes)**

○ **Coordination with National Counterparts:**

- **Question:** How effective has the UN been in coordinating with national counterparts, such as various ministries, government agencies and other stakeholders, under the de facto framework?

**Probe:** Are there specific examples of successful coordination efforts? Conversely, are there areas where coordination could be improved?

○ **Role of the Resident Coordinator's Office:**

- **Question:** How do you perceive the role of the Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO) in enhancing the coordination and coherence of UN activities in Malaysia?

**Probe:** How has the RCO facilitated effective communication and collaboration between the UN and national stakeholders? What improvements could be made?

5. **Closing Discussion and Next Steps (10 minutes)**

○ **Good Practices and Lessons Learned:**

- **Question:** From your experience, what good practices have emerged from the engagement with the UN?

**Probe:** Are there lessons learned that could inform future cooperation, particularly in the next CF cycle (2026-2030)? Is there anything you would like to keep for the next cycle or anything you would definitely change?

○ **Final Thoughts:**

- **Question:** Is there anything else you would like to add that has not been covered in this discussion?
- **Next Steps:** Brief the interviewee on what will happen next in the evaluation process and how their input will be used.

## Annex 7. Evaluation Design Matrix.

Evaluation Criterion: Relevance and adaptability (Questions 1 and 2)			
Evaluation Question 1: To what extent are the CF's SPAs consistent with the country's evolving needs, national priorities, the country's agreed international and regional commitments, including the normative dimensions of GEWE, HR, disability inclusion and environmental sustainability?			
Assumptions <sup>34</sup> to be assessed	Indicators	Key sources of Information	Methods and tools for data collection
<u>Assumption 1.1:</u> The SPAs are aligned with the most recent national development plans and strategies, reflecting the country's socio-economic and political context.	<b>Degree of Alignment:</b> Extent to which the SPAs match the objectives and priorities outlined in national development plans and strategies.	Current and past national development strategies, policy documents, and sectoral plans, in particular, 12 MP and SPV2030.  Documentation on the country's international and regional commitments, including treaties, conventions, and agreements	<b>Document Review:</b> Systematic analysis of national development plans, CF documentation, international agreements, and related reports to assess alignment and consistency.  <b>Key Informant Interviews:</b> Semi-structured interviews with stakeholders from government, UN agencies, and civil society to gather insights on alignment, adaptation, and integration of normative dimensions.
<u>Assumption 1.2:</u> The SPAs address the country's obligations under international and regional agreements, including those related to gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE), human rights (HR), disability inclusion, and environmental sustainability.	<b>Coverage of Commitments:</b> Number and scope of international and regional commitments reflected within the SPAs, particularly in GEWE, HR, disability inclusion, and environmental sustainability.	The CF document, including SPAs, ToC, and any updates or revisions.  Reports from UNCT, agencies, relevant UN bodies, government agencies, and civil society organizations on GEWE, HR, disability inclusion, and environmental sustainability.	<b>Focus Group Discussions:</b> Discussions with specific groups to explore perceptions of the relevance of SPAs.  <b>Content Analysis:</b> Qualitative analysis of SPAs and related documents to identify how well they incorporate normative
<u>Assumption 1.3:</u> The SPAs have been updated or adapted over time to address changes in the country's needs	<b>Relevance to Current Context:</b> Evidence of recent modifications or adjustments to SPAs in response to changing national contexts		

<sup>34</sup> Assumptions are interfaces between the evaluation question and the data sources. It narrows the evaluation question further by specifying what evaluators should focus on and what they should check precisely when attempting to answer the question.

			dimensions and respond to evolving needs.
<u>Assumption 1.4</u> : The SPAs explicitly incorporate and operationalize normative commitments to GEWE, HR, disability inclusion, and environmental sustainability.	<b>Normative Integration</b> : Presence and comprehensiveness of the normative dimensions within the SPAs, as indicated by specific targets, activities, and monitoring mechanisms.		<b>Comparative Analysis</b> : Comparison of the CF SPAs against both national priorities and international/regional commitments to assess alignment and consistency.
<b>Evaluation Question 2</b> : How resilient, responsive and strategic was the UNCT in addressing the changing political context and emerging needs, notably in addressing the COVID-19 impacts and in reprioritizing/adapting to provide timely support to the country and ensure the achievement of the CF results?			
<b>Assumptions to be assessed</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Key sources of Information</b>	<b>Methods and tools for data collection</b>
<u>Assumption 2.1</u> : The UNCT quickly recognized and responded to changes in the political context and the impacts of COVID-19, revising strategies and priorities to address emerging needs.	<b>Speed of Response</b> : Time taken by the UNCT to adapt strategies and interventions in response to the political changes and the onset of COVID-19.	Updates or revisions to the CF document, progress reports, and COVID-19 response plans.  Official reports and communications from national authorities on the collaboration with the UNCT during the changing context.	<b>Document Review</b> : Analysis of CF documents, UNCT reports, and COVID-19 response plans to assess the timeliness and strategic nature of the UNCT's adaptations.  <b>Key Informant Interviews</b> : Semi-structured interviews with UNCT members, government officials, and relevant stakeholders to gather insights on the responsiveness and strategic adaptations of the UNCT.
<u>Assumption 2.2</u> : The UNCT's response involved strategic coordination among agencies and with national stakeholders to ensure a coherent and unified approach to the changing context.	<b>Revised Priorities</b> : Evidence of reprioritization of CF activities to address the most pressing needs, particularly those arising from the pandemic.	Interviews with UNCT members, government officials, and other key stakeholders involved in the response to the political changes and COVID-19.	<b>Focus Group Discussions</b> : Discussions with UNCT members and national partners to explore perceptions of the effectiveness of the response and coordination during the changing context.  <b>Timeline Analysis</b> : A chronological mapping of key events, adaptations, and
	<b>Level of Coordination</b> : Degree of coordination and collaboration among UN agencies and with national partners in responding to the emerging context	Specific UN and government documents related to the COVID-19 response, including strategy and operational plans.	

			decision-making processes to assess the speed and strategic nature of the UNCT's responses.
<b>Evaluation Criteria: Effectiveness and efficiency (Questions 3, 4, and 5)</b>			
<b>Evaluation Question 3:</b> To what extent has the CF contributed to key institutional, behavioural and legislative changes that are critical for catalyzing progress towards the CF desired impact, including integration of normative areas such as GEWE, HR, disability inclusion and environmental sustainability?			
Assumptions to be assessed	Indicators	Key sources of Information	Methods and tools for data collection
<u>Assumption 3.1:</u> The CF has effectively influenced institutional reforms and capacity-building efforts that align with its goals, including in the normative areas such as GEWE, HR, disability inclusion, and environmental sustainability.	<b>Institutional Reforms:</b> Number and type of institutional reforms or capacity-building initiatives influenced by the CF that align with the normative areas.	CF annual reports and monitoring data, progress reports and monitoring data that track institutional, behavioural, and legislative changes influenced by the CF.  Government records, policy briefs, and legislative documents indicating new or revised laws and policies aligned with CF objectives.	<b>Document Review:</b> Systematic analysis of CF reports, legislative documents, and institutional policies to identify contributions to key changes.  <b>Key Informant Interviews:</b> Semi-structured interviews with stakeholders, including government officials, civil society, and UNCT members, to gather qualitative data on the CF's influence on institutional, behavioural, and legislative changes.
<u>Assumption 3.2:</u> The CF has catalysed shifts in societal and stakeholder behaviours towards greater inclusivity, rights-based approaches, and sustainable practices.	<b>Behavioural Shifts:</b> Evidence of changes in behaviours or practices among key stakeholders, such as government officials, civil society, and the private sector, as a result of CF interventions.	Reports, strategic plans, and other documents from institutions reflecting reforms or capacity-building efforts supported by the CF.	<b>Focus Group Discussions:</b> Group discussions with stakeholders to explore the impact of the CF on normative integration and the sustainability of these changes.
<u>Assumption 3.3:</u> The CF has contributed to the development, enactment, or strengthening of laws and policies that support its desired impact, including in the normative areas.	<b>Legislative Changes:</b> Number and significance of new laws, policies, or regulations introduced or strengthened with CF support in areas such as GEWE, HR, disability inclusion, and environmental sustainability.	Insights from interviews with government officials, civil society, and UNCT members on the perceived impact of the CF on institutional, behavioural, and legislative changes.  Results from surveys conducted with relevant stakeholders to gauge	<b>Contribution analysis:</b> Collection of evidence from various sources to identify, verify, and analyse CF

	<b>Normative Integration:</b> Degree of integration of the normative principles into national strategies, policies, and practices.	behavioural changes and the integration of normative principles.	contributions to institutional, behavioural, and legislative changes.
<b>Evaluation Question 4:</b> To what extent has the CF prioritized activities based on the needs (demand side) rather than on the availability of resources (supply side)? Particularly, how was this achieved (or not) in the absence of CF joint governance structures such as the Steering Committee?			
<b>Assumptions to be assessed</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Key sources of Information</b>	<b>Methods and tools for data collection</b>
<u>Assumption 4.1:</u> The CF has systematically prioritized activities based on the identified needs of the country, especially in alignment with national priorities, rather than merely on the availability of financial or technical resources.	<b>Needs Assessment Processes:</b> Evidence of documented needs assessments or situational analyses that informed the prioritization of CF activities.	CF strategic and operational documents, planning documents, needs assessments, and strategic frameworks that outline the process for prioritizing activities.  Financial reports and resource distribution records that provide evidence of prioritization aligned with identified needs.	<b>Document Review:</b> Analysis of CF documents, financial reports, and needs assessments to determine the alignment between prioritized activities and identified needs.  <b>Key Informant Interviews:</b> Semi-structured interviews with UNCT members, government representatives, and other key stakeholders to explore how prioritization decisions were made in the absence of formal governance structures.
<u>Assumption 4.2:</u> In the absence of formal governance structures such as the Steering Committee, alternative mechanisms or processes were effectively utilized to ensure that prioritization decisions were still needs-driven.	<b>Decision-Making Mechanisms:</b> Existence and effectiveness of alternative decision-making processes or mechanisms used in place of the Steering Committee to prioritize activities based on needs.	Interviews with UNCT members, government officials, and other stakeholders involved in decision-making to understand how prioritization was managed in the absence of the Steering Committee.  Documentation of meetings, correspondence, or informal governance arrangements that substituted for the Steering Committee in guiding prioritization.	<b>Focus Group Discussions:</b> Discussions with relevant stakeholders to gather qualitative data on the perceived effectiveness of the CF's prioritization process and adaptability.
<u>Assumption 4.3:</u> The CF demonstrated the capacity to adapt and reallocate resources flexibly to address emerging needs, despite the lack of standard governance frameworks.	<b>Flexibility in Resource Use:</b> Instances where CF activities were adapted or re-prioritized in response to changing needs, even without the formal governance structure.  <b>Stakeholder Perceptions:</b> Stakeholder perceptions and satisfaction with the	Reports or case studies on how the CF adapted its activities and resource use in response to emerging needs.	<b>Process Tracing:</b> A method to trace the decision-making processes used to prioritize activities, focusing on how needs were assessed and how resources were allocated in the absence of the Steering Committee.

	CF's prioritization process, particularly regarding the responsiveness to demand-side needs		
<b>Evaluation Question 5:</b> How has the CF facilitated the identification of and access to new financing flows at scale for national partners?			
<b>Assumptions to be assessed</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Key sources of Information</b>	<b>Methods and tools for data collection</b>
<u>Assumption 5.1:</u> The CF has played an active role in identifying and leveraging new financing opportunities for national partners, aligning with both national priorities and international commitments.	<b>Documented Financing Strategies:</b> Existence of CF documents outlining strategies or initiatives aimed at identifying new financing sources for national partners.	CF strategic and operational documents, documents outlining the CF's strategies for mobilizing resources, including partnerships and initiatives aimed at identifying new financing flows.  Reports and agreements detailing new funding secured through CF facilitation, including the scale and sources of these funds.	<b>Document Review:</b> Review of CF strategies, funding proposals, and reports to identify how the CF facilitated the identification and access to new financing flows.  <b>Key Informant Interviews:</b> Semi-structured interviews with national partners, UNCT members, donors, and other stakeholders to gather insights on the CF's effectiveness in securing new financing.
<u>Assumption 5.2:</u> The CF has effectively collaborated with national stakeholders, international donors, and private sector entities to identify and secure new financing flows.	<b>New Funding Sources:</b> The number and scale of new financing sources identified and accessed by national partners with CF support, including both international and domestic funding.  <b>Stakeholder Perceptions:</b> Perceptions of national partners and donors regarding the effectiveness of the CF in facilitating access to new financing.	Interviews with government officials, NGOs, and other national partners to assess the CF's role in helping them identify and secure new funding.  Interviews with donors and international partners to understand their collaboration with the CF in financing efforts.	<b>Financial Tracking and Analysis:</b> Tracking the flow of funds secured through CF initiatives, including an analysis of their scale and sources.
<u>Assumption 5.3:</u> The CF has contributed to enhancing the capacities of national partners to access and manage these new financing flows at scale.	<b>Capacity Development Efforts:</b> Evidence of capacity-building activities provided to national partners to enhance their ability to access and manage new financing.		

Evaluation Criterion: Orientation towards impact (Question 6)			
Evaluation Question 6: To what extent have CF results contributed to sound and sustainable progress towards the achievement of national SDG targets?			
Assumptions to be assessed	Indicators	Key sources of Information	Methods and tools for data collection
<u>Assumption 6.1:</u> The CF results are closely aligned with the national SDG targets and have been designed to contribute meaningfully to their achievement.	<b>SDG-Aligned Outputs:</b> Number and quality of outputs produced under the CF that directly align with specific national SDG targets.	CF and UNCT reports detailing the outputs and outcomes of CF activities, particularly in relation to SDG targets.  Official government reports and SDG tracking tools which provide data on the country's progress toward achieving SDG targets.	<b>Document Review:</b> Analysis of CF reports, SDG progress reports, and relevant policy documents to assess the alignment and contribution of CF results to SDG targets.  <b>Key Informant Interviews:</b> Semi-structured interviews with stakeholders, including government officials, UNCT members, and other partners, to gather qualitative data on the CF's impact on SDGs.
<u>Assumption 6.2:</u> The implementation of CF activities has led to measurable progress in specific SDG indicators relevant to the country's context.	<b>SDG Indicator Improvement:</b> Changes in key SDG indicators that can be attributed to CF interventions, as measured against baseline data.	National and sectoral policies, strategies, and plans that have been influenced by CF interventions.  Interviews with government officials, UNCT members, development partners, and civil society representatives to gather insights on the CF's impact on SDG progress.	<b>Trend Analysis:</b> Quantitative analysis of SDG indicators over time.
<u>Assumption 6.3:</u> The outcomes achieved through the CF are sustainable in the long term and have built a foundation for continued progress toward SDG targets.	<b>Policy and Institutional Strengthening:</b> Evidence of strengthened national policies, strategies, and institutions that contribute to achieving SDG targets, supported by CF activities.  <b>Stakeholder Perceptions:</b> Perceptions of national and international stakeholders regarding the CF's contribution to SDG progress and the sustainability of those contributions.		
Evaluation Criterion: Coordination (Questions 7, 8 and 9)			

**Evaluation Question 7:** To what extent have the CF coordination mechanisms (for example, the Results Groups, Thematic Working Groups, Operations Management Team, and the Communications Group) contributed to coherent and increased synergies between agencies?

Assumptions to be assessed	Indicators	Key sources of Information	Methods and tools for data collection
<p><u>Assumption 7.1:</u> The CF coordination mechanisms were effective in fostering collaboration and coherence among UN agencies, leading to synergistic outcomes.</p>	<p><b>Participation Rates:</b> Frequency and consistency of participation by different UN agencies in the CF coordination mechanisms.</p> <p><b>Joint Initiatives:</b> Number and quality of joint initiatives, programs, or activities that emerged as a result of these coordination mechanisms.</p>	<p>Documentation such as meeting minutes from Results Groups, Thematic Working Groups, Operations Management Team, and the Communications Group, highlighting discussions, decisions, and outcomes.</p> <p>Reports and proposals of joint programmes and initiatives developed through CF coordination mechanisms.</p>	<p><b>Document Review:</b> Systematic analysis of meeting minutes, reports, and joint programme documents to assess the functioning and outputs of the coordination mechanisms.</p> <p><b>Key Informant Interviews:</b> Semi-structured interviews with members of the Results Groups, Thematic Working Groups, Operations Management Team, and Communications Group to gather qualitative data on coordination effectiveness and synergy creation.</p>
<p><u>Assumption 7.2:</u> All relevant UN agencies actively participated in the coordination mechanisms, contributing to a shared vision and coherent action plans.</p>	<p><b>Joint Initiatives:</b> Number and quality of joint initiatives, programs, or activities that emerged as a result of these coordination mechanisms.</p>	<p>Insights from UN agency representatives and coordination group members on the effectiveness and impact of the coordination mechanisms.</p> <p>Analysis of individual agency reports to assess how coordination mechanisms have influenced programmatic outcomes and synergy creation.</p>	<p><b>Focus Group Discussions:</b> Discussions with representatives from various UN agencies to explore their experiences with the coordination mechanisms and the resulting synergies.</p>
<p><u>Assumption 7.3:</u> The coordination mechanisms resulted in increased synergies across agencies, leading to more efficient use of resources and enhanced programmatic outcomes.</p>	<p><b>Outcome Alignment:</b> Degree to which agency-specific outcomes are aligned and contribute to shared CF outcomes, as observed in joint programming, reporting or collaborative efforts.</p>	<p>Surveys conducted with UNCT members and other stakeholders to gather quantitative data on perceived synergies and the effectiveness of coordination efforts.</p>	<p><b>Survey/Questionnaire:</b> Administering surveys to UNCT members and coordination group participants to collect quantitative data on the perceived effectiveness of coordination mechanisms.</p>
<p><u>Assumption 7.4:</u> Effective communication and information-sharing practices within and across coordination groups facilitated alignment and synergy between agency efforts.</p>	<p><b>Stakeholder Perceptions of Synergy:</b> Perceptions of UN agency representatives regarding the extent to which coordination mechanisms have led to increased coherence and synergies.</p>		

**Evaluation Question 8:** Post UN reform, to what extent have UN agency programmes and work plans been effectively and meaningfully derived from the CF both in design and implementation?

Assumptions to be assessed	Indicators	Key sources of Information	Methods and tools for data collection
<p><u>Assumption 8.1:</u> UN agency programmes and work plans are designed to align closely with the overarching goals and strategic priorities outlined in the CF.</p>	<p><b>Degree of Alignment:</b> Proportion of agency programmes and work plans that explicitly reference and align with the CF’s strategic priorities and outcomes.</p>	<p>Review of country programmes and work plan documents from various UN agencies to assess alignment with CF priorities.</p>	<p><b>Document Review:</b> Systematic analysis of UN agency programme documents, work plans, and the CF framework to evaluate the degree of alignment and consistency.</p>
<p><u>Assumption 8.2:</u> The CF’s strategic priorities and outcomes are effectively translated into actionable agency-specific work plans and programs.</p>	<p><b>Impact on Implementation:</b> Evidence that CF-aligned programmes and work plans have led to more coordinated, effective, and impactful implementation at the country level.</p>	<p>The original CF document and any associated guidance or frameworks that inform agency planning.</p> <p>Insights from UN agency staff involved in the design and implementation of programmes and work plans regarding the influence of the CF.</p>	<p><b>Key Informant Interviews:</b> Semi-structured interviews with UN agency staff, including program designers and implementers, to gather qualitative insights on the integration of CF priorities.</p>
	<p><b>Consistency Across Agencies:</b> Evidence of consistency and coherence in programme design and implementation across different UN agencies as reflected in their work plans.</p> <p><b>Stakeholder Perception:</b> Feedback from agency representatives on the influence of the CF on programme design and the practical application of CF priorities in agency operations.</p>	<p>Analysis of agency progress reports and evaluations to assess how well CF priorities have been integrated into program execution.</p>	<p><b>Focus Group Discussions:</b> Discussions with multiple UN agency representatives to explore collective experiences and challenges in deriving work plans from the CF.</p> <p><b>Surveys or Questionnaires:</b> Administering surveys to collect quantitative data on the perceived effectiveness of deriving programs from the CF among agency staff.</p>

**Evaluation Question 9:** To what extent did the post-UNDS reform Resident Coordinator Office’s roles and responsibilities enable positive UNCT’s joint convening power and better coherence of the country team?

Assumptions to be assessed	Indicators	Key sources of Information	Methods and tools for data collection
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<p><u>Assumption 9.1:</u> The RCO, post-UNDS reform, has effectively enhanced its coordination role, leading to improved coherence and collaboration among UNCT members.</p>	<p><b>Frequency and Quality of Joint Initiatives:</b> Number and quality of joint programs and initiatives led by the UNCT that demonstrate enhanced coherence and collective action.</p>	<p>Review of meeting minutes and reports from UNCT meetings and joint initiatives to assess the role of the RCO in promoting coherence and collaboration.</p> <p>Analysis of strategic documents, guidelines, and reports produced by the RCO post-reform, focusing on coordination and leadership roles.</p>	<p><b>Document Review:</b> Systematic analysis of UNCT meeting minutes, RCO strategic documents, and reports to evaluate the coordination role and impact of the RCO post-reform.</p>
<p><u>Assumption 9.2:</u> The RCO’s new responsibilities have strengthened its ability to convene UN agencies, ensuring unified and strategic responses to national priorities.</p>	<p><b>Alignment with National Priorities:</b> Evidence that the RCO has successfully aligned UNCT activities with national development priorities, as reflected in joint work plans, initiatives, and strategic documents.</p>	<p>Key informant interviews with UNCT members to gather insights on the RCO’s effectiveness in fostering joint action and coherence.</p> <p>Review of progress reports and evaluations of joint UNCT initiatives to assess the effectiveness of the RC Office’s leadership and coordination.</p>	<p><b>Key Informant Interviews:</b> Semi-structured interviews with UNCT members and national stakeholders to gather qualitative data on the effectiveness of the RC Office in enhancing joint convening power and coherence.</p>
<p><u>Assumption 9.3:</u> The RCO has successfully facilitated the integration of the CF’s strategic priorities into the work of the UNCT, promoting a more cohesive and aligned approach across agencies.</p>	<p><b>Participation in Coordinated Efforts:</b> Levels of active participation by UN agencies in coordinated efforts and joint initiatives led by the RCO.</p>		<p><b>Focus Group Discussions:</b> Discussions with multiple UNCT members to explore collective experiences and perceptions of the RCO’s role in improving coherence and collaboration.</p>
<p><u>Assumption 9.4:</u> The post-reform RCO has provided clear leadership, resulting in more streamlined decision-making processes and effective joint initiatives.</p>	<p><b>Stakeholder Perception of RCO Leadership:</b> Feedback from UN agency representatives on the effectiveness of the RC Office in fostering collaboration and coherence within the UNCT.</p>		<p><b>Surveys or Questionnaires:</b> Surveys targeting UNCT members to collect quantitative data on the perceived effectiveness of the RCO post-reform.</p>

