Mainstreaming water resources management in   
UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks   
in Africa

Task 1: Rapid Needs Assessment Report   
Ver. 2.0

October 2022

*This report is part of a series from an initial study in 2022, by UNEP’s Regional Office for Africa and the UNEP-DHI Centre, on mainstreaming water management in UN country work.* Last updated: 31/10/22

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**Acronyms**

CCA: Common Country Assessment

CF: Cooperation Framework

DCO: Development Coordination Office

JWP: Joint Work Plan

UNCT: United Nations Country Team

UNEP-DHI: UNEP-DHI Centre on Water and Environment

RCO: Resident Coordinator’s Office

RDC: Regional Development Coordination Unit (UNEP Africa Office)

SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals

UNCT: United Nations Country Team

UNSDCF: United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework

# Introduction

The UNEP Africa Office and the UN Resident Coordinators of African countries agreed to explore ways in which UNEP can support African countries in ensuring that the environment pillar of sustainable development is adequately addressed in the Common Country Analyses (CCAs) and operationalization of UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs).

In this context, UNEP, with support from the UNEP-DHI Centre on Water and Environment, is undertaking a pilot initiative on how best to support UN Country Teams (UNCTs) to strengthen the understanding of the role of freshwater ecosystems and integrated approaches to water resources management to contribute to the achievement of multiple development objectives (thereby cutting across multiple SDGs), and ultimately to ensure that this is adequately incorporated into CCAs, UNSDCFs and Joint work plans of various strategic/thematic pillars. The intention is then to look to scale up this pilot initiative to be able to support other countries in a similar way.

The pilot initiative consists of three main tasks (timeframe June - October 2022):

1. **Rapid Needs Assessment:** in two pilot countries (Malawi and South Africa) and recommend how (i) the gaps for meeting the freshwater needs can be met; (ii) integrated water resource management can contribute to the multiple SDGs in line with the national development priorities and in what format. *Estimated timeframe: 3 months*.
2. **Develop Support Package:** that can be used by the UNEP Africa Office and the UN Country Teams (UNCTs), based on the needs of the two pilot countries, to facilitate the mainstreaming of water resources management into operationalization of UNSDCF processes. *Estimated timeframe: 3 months*.
3. **Recommendations for scaling up:** Prepare a concept note on data, decision support tools, best practices and processes necessary to replicate and scale up the pilot initiative to support other countries in Africa. *Estimated timeframe: 1 month*.

This report is the main output of task 1: rapid needs assessment. The purpose of this task is to: (a) understand the key needs of the UNCTs in the pilot countries, in line with the priorities of the government in the context of the SDGs; (b) understand the needs of UNEP’s Africa Office to support UNSDCF processes, particularly in countries where UNEP is not a resident agency; and (c) make recommendations to inform tasks 2 and 3.

The two pilot countries - Malawi and South Africa - have been selected based on the willingness to participate from the UNRCO, and their appropriate stage in the UNSDCF cycle (i.e. opportunity to support in-country processes). Malawi is currently undertaking a review of the 2019-2023 UNSDCF, and is initiating the design consultation process for the 2024-2028 UNSDCF (Aug-Nov 2022). South Africa is currently undertaking a light update of a more comprehensive CCA undertaken in 2019-20. In most countries in Africa, including Malawi, UNEP is not a resident agency, and therefore contributes to the UNSDCF through the UNEP Africa Office.

# The UNSDCF cycle

The UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) in each country is the primary joint planning and implementation document between the government and the UN Country Team (UNCT), which is coordinated by the Resident Coordinator’s Office (RCO). Typically, a UNSDCF is in place for 5 years. The development of the CF is usually preceded by an analysis phase, including a Common Country Analysis (CCA) (see Figure 1). The UNCT drives the development of the CF and CCA, under the coordination of the RCO. Non-resident UN agencies (i.e. not part of the UNCT) may also be invited to participate, as relevant (see Section 3). The CF is developed and implemented in partnership with government and non-government stakeholders in the country.

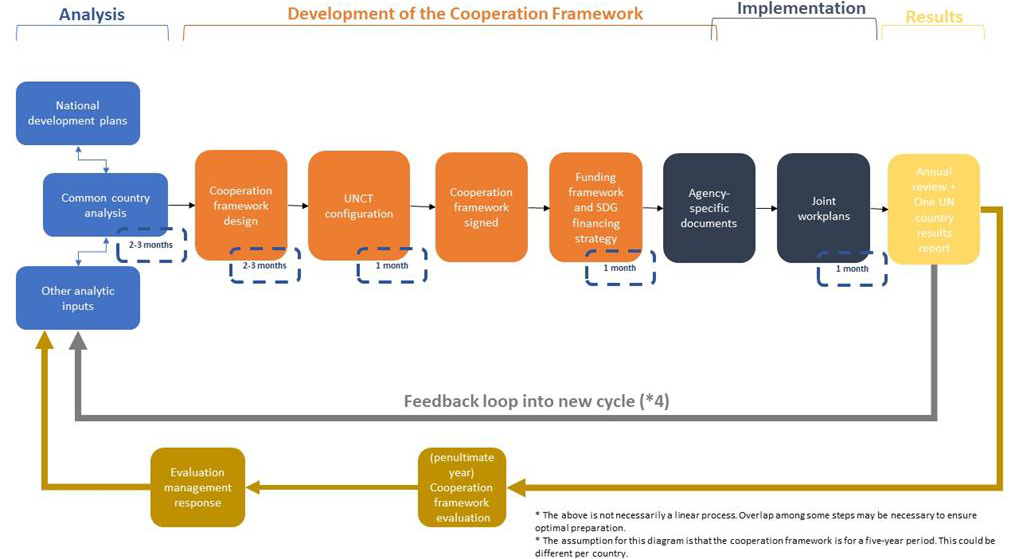


Figure 1 The Cooperation Framework cycle. Source: UN Sustainable Development Group 2019

# Role and capacity of UNEP Africa Office

As UNEP is not a resident agency in most countries in Africa, UNEP’s Africa Office provides most of the inputs to UNSDCF cycles, in relation to the environment, to the UNCTs. Since the UNEP-UNRC dialogue in September 2019, efforts have been made to increase UNEP’s role and capacity to better support the relatively new Resident Coordinator system (“One UN”) in each country, despite its non-residential status. One of the results of this is that UNEP Country Focal Points (CFPs) are nominated for each country to support the UNCT in designing and implementing their Cooperation Frameworks.

Internal coordination

The inputs to Cooperation Framework processes are coordinated by the Regional Development Coordination (RDC) Unit, who may in turn solicit inputs from any of the 6 other thematic sub-programmes: Climate Change; Disasters and Conflict; Ecosystem Management; Environmental Governance; Chemicals and Waste; and Resource Efficiency. The Assessment Unit ([Environment Under Review](https://www.unep.org/regions/africa/regional-initiatives/keeping-environment-under-review)) sub-programme is the primary sub-programme that provides direct data and inputs to CCAs.

Regular meetings are held across the Africa Office to discuss programme and CF implementation and to provide advisory support to Africa Office staff to address discrepancies, develop individual skills and knowledge, and foster coordinated action. The RDC unit follows up on decisions and implementation status from past meetings.

Regional Sub-programme Coordinators share strategic information on their portfolio (work plans, programme documents, implementation reports, budget planning, constraints) and highlight collaboration opportunities with other programmes within the Africa Office, or other UNEP divisions, and unveil constraints towards joint effort.

Africa Office capacity: strengths and challenges

The RDC Unit supports the Country Focal Points (CFPs) in their role by providing capacity development support on Cooperation Framework principles and implementation.

The Assessment Unit (Environment Under Review) works to ensure that environment and climate change are adequately integrated into CCAs, and indirectly into CF processes. However, more resources are needed to support their work.

As a member of the United Nations Development Group’s “Quality Support and Assurance-Peer Support Group” (QSA-PSG), Africa Office has received [recognition](https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/unep-receives-gold-award-support-unct-activities) in their work to support UNCTs in developing and implementing CCAs and CFs.

The UN Development Coordination Office (DCO), through its regional office in Addis Ababa, advises on CCAs and other components of the Cooperation Framework process, based on country-based requests from Resident Coordinator Offices. Africa Office also assists the UN’s regional Development Coordination Office (DCO) in the Opportunity/Issue-based Coalition (OIBC) mechanism. There may be scope to expand UNEP’s contribution to the OIBC in this space, as the European OIBC produced a comprehensive [*Guidance On Integrating The Environment And Climate Change In Processes For United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks*](https://unece.org/climate-change/news/un-system-europe-and-central-asia-strengthens-integration-environment-and) in 2021*.*

UNEP Africa Office also has sub-regional offices in West Africa ([Côte d'Ivoire](https://www.unep.org/regions/africa/our-work-africa/un-environment-west-africa)), Southern Africa (South Africa), [a liaison office in Ethiopia](https://www.unep.org/regions/africa/our-work-africa/un-environment-ethiopia) and country [offices in South Africa](https://www.unep.org/regions/africa/our-work-africa/un-environment-south-africa) and Tanzania.

**Summary of strengths and needs**

Strengths

* The full engagement of all Africa Office staff to implement the outcomes of the UNEP-UNRC dialogue.
* The Country Focal Point mechanism.
* The high potential of the Africa Office to mobilise resources in support of this work.

Noting that all of the above can be further strengthened.

Challenges/needs

* UNEP’s non-resident status which sometimes challenges performance (though in general performance is quite high, due to various measures in place).
* The region is sizable and the operating budget for Africa Office is insufficient to more fully support UNCTs. Thus any resources to make Africa Office’s procedures in support of UNCTs more efficient can greatly benefit the UNCTs.
* Recently, the CF design period has been reduced from 18 to 6 months. This has put increased pressure on UNCTs, and therefore on UNEP to support them. This is another reason to try to make UNEP’s support as efficient as possible.
* The Africa Office has a wide mandate with numerous programmes, but relatively few professional staff. As such, the Africa Office has a limited capacity to be able to respond in a timely manner to provide both ad-hoc and ongoing support to UN Country Teams.

Recommendations

* The CFP mechanism is working quite well, but needs to be strengthenedto better engage with and support the UNCT through the CF design, implementation and review. Consider budgeting for country missions for the CFP to build relationships and raise awareness within the UNCT at key times.
* Hold regular UNEP-UNRC dialogues (based on the success of the 2019 dialogue).
* Provide the Africa Office, in particular the Assessment Unit (Environment Under Review) team, with capacity development and resources to strengthen and streamline their ability to support UNCTs, in particular in the CCA process. This may include:
  + awareness-raising products for internal use (within UNCTs, but potentially also for non-UN partners), e.g. generic PPT and/or technical brief outlining the value of mainstreaming water resources for multiple development objectives. This may include some economic analysis to assign monetary value to benefits of interventions (drawn from examples from around Africa, and potentially globally).
  + simple guideline / methodology for assessing the completeness / adequacy of the degree to which water resources are included in CCAs and CFs.
  + knowledge about relevant data sets and how they can be accessed and used (e.g. simple toolkit in Word/Excel with links and guidance). This includes guidance on relevant SDG datasets*.*
* RDCU could play a proactive coordinating role that guides the work of sub-programmes
* Repository system to collate and access UNEP compiled /generated data/info on country by country basis with continuous updating as data/info becomes available
* Assessment Unit (Environment under review) to work closer with thematic sub-programmes in the process of inputs to CCAs and UNSDCFS, including data provision.

# Pilot country 1: South Africa

The following analysis is presented as it relates to the UNSDCF cycle.

## Situation analysis

This section considers the following, all in the context of mainstreaming water, environment and climate resilience to support multiple socio-economic development objectives across sectors: national context; plans and policies; institutional arrangements; implementation; and monitoring and evaluation.

### National context

“Currently, water availability is the single most critical factor that limits agriculture production in South Africa and the situation is likely to become worse as adverse climate change impacts are

intensifying the competition for water” (CCA 2019-20). Some municipalities have also faced severe water shortages over recent years, particularly in the Eastern Cape province (dubbed “Day Zero”). “South Africa is considered a climate change hot-spot and projected to face a higher frequency of intense climate-related disasters”; ​​”water resources are vulnerable to increasing temperatures and reduction in rainfall, and [the] economy is dependent on climate and biodiversity sensitive sectors such as agriculture, forestry, fishery, and wildlife tourism” (UNSDCF 2020-25).

### UNSCDF and associated UN and government strategies and plans

South Africa has a long history in recognising that a healthy environment is an essential foundation for sustainable socioeconomic development. The Constitution (1996, Section 2b(b)) aims to secure ecologically sustainable development and the use of natural resources, while promoting justifiable economic and social development. The 2019-20 Common Country Analysis (CCA - see section 4.1.3) states that *“Many of the key policy documents and legislative frameworks in South Africa embed the principles of sustainable development that recognise environmental management and social and economic development as key pillars for a stable, secure and prosperous society.”* (p.35) The UNSDCF 2020-2025 also acknowledges the need to *“address developmental challenges in a manner that ensures environmental sustainability and builds resilience [...]. Environmental considerations must be mainstreamed into social and economic decisions at all levels.”* (p.15) Furthermore, this understanding is embedded in the Theory of Change in the UNSDCF (p.17). **Recommendation:** this type of wording in relation to environmental sustainability underpinning socioeconomic development can be regarded as “best practice” and a useful example for other countries in developing UNSDCFs and CCAs.

Therefore, with the “theory” seemingly well understood “on paper”, the line of enquiry should perhaps focus on: (a) to what extent are water resources more specifically addressed in the relevant documents (sections 4.1.2 and 4.1.3); (b) how are they linked with socio-economic activities (not just under the ‘environmental’ pillar) (section 4.1.2 and 4.1.3); and (c) what activities are being implemented in practice (section 4.1.5)?

The current UNSDCF (2020-2025) has four strategic priorities:

1. Inclusive, just, and sustainable economic growth (prosperity)
2. Human capital and social transformation (people)
3. Effective, efficient, and transformative governance (peace)
4. Climate resilience and sustainably managed natural resources (planet).

Again, the concept of interconnectedness is well recognised in the UNSDCF, which states: *“The strategic priority areas are interlinked, reflecting the integrated nature of the 2030 Agenda, with progress under each strategic priority area requiring and contributing to progress of the other priority areas.”* (p.18) However, the extent to which Priority 4 underpins Priorities 1 and 2 in practice should be investigated (see section 4.1.5 - Implementation). More needs to be done to bring the work of RG1 and RG4 together to ensure an integrated approach is undertaken.

The Outcomes and selected Outputs for strategic priority 4 are:

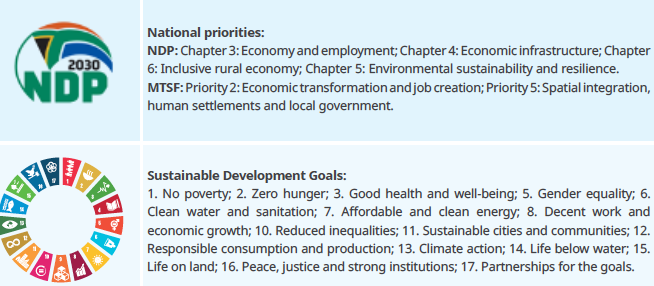
* Outcome 4.1 [Climate Action] “By 2025, South Africa is on a just transition to a low-carbon society and vulnerable and marginalised communities adapt and are more resilient to adverse effects of climate change”. In this context, the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus is a useful analysis framework.
  + Output 4.1.2 Climate Change Adaptation Capacity at all levels strengthened for household food and nutrition, water and energy security
* Outcome 4.2 [Nature Action]: By 2025, natural resources are managed and utilised sustainably for improved livelihoods, health and well-being of vulnerable communities:
  + Output 4.2.1 Strenghtened capacity of national and sub-national institutions to sustainably and efficiently manage Natural Resources
  + Output 4.2.2 Strengthened capacity of national and sub-national institutions to enable vulnerable, marginalised communities and indigenous people to equitably access and justly benefit from Natural Resources
  + Output 4.2.3 Enhanced coordination and efficient implementation of sustainable waste and water management programmes

**Finding:** these outcomes and outputs provide an adequate framework for activities in relation to integrated approaches to water resources management to occur.

Under “Partnerships” it is stated “Regional cooperation, especially through the SADC, the AU and the BRICS, will be enhanced to address transboundary energy and water insecurities.” This is an important mention of regional cooperation, though transboundary water resources management is not considered in the main body of the UNSDCF.

The overarching relevant government documents are the National Development Plan (NDP) 2030, and its implementation through the Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) 2019-2024. The UNSDCF does a good job of broadly mapping how the NDP and MTSF, as well as the SDGs, relate to each of the four Strategic Priorities (see example below for strategic priority 4). Acknowledging that this is very broad (with RG4 being linked to most chapters in the NDP/MTSF and most SDGs), in the context of the UNSDCF, which cuts across all sectors, it makes sense to keep the ‘mapping’ analysis ‘only’ to the NDP and MTSF. However, it is also **recommended** that, internally, the UNCT undertakes to map out how the various sectoral strategies and plans relate to the UNSDCF, to identify where the UNSDCF supports the sectoral plans, and where there may be gaps. It is acknowledged that this is likely to be happening already.

Strategic priority 4: Climate resilience and sustainably managed natural resources



The key government strategies and plans in relation to water resources management include the National Water Resources Strategy 3 (NWRS-3) (Draft 2.6, November 2021), and the National Water and Sanitation Master Plan 2018 (Volume 3: Schedule of Action. Ver. 4.8).

“The NWRS-3 is founded on the principles of integrated water resources management (IWRM) within the context of a developmental state.” Indeed, the word “integrate” is used 90 times in the NWRS-3. However, the principles of IWRM do not appear strongly in the UNSDCF.

Figure 2 below provides an overview of the NWRS-3 and sets out the enablers for execution, the chapters aligned to each of the three main goals, and the overall vision of the strategy.

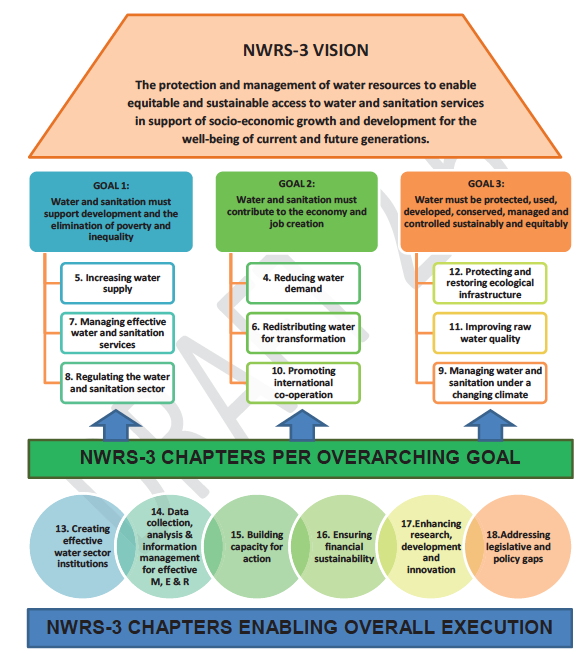


Figure 2 Overview of the NWRS-3 Vision, Goals and Chapters

The above figure illustrates the work areas the UNCT may contribute to, in the context of the goals and targets of the UNSDCF. It is noted that many of the activities in relation to RG4 focus on relatively small-scale and local activities, often focussing on vulnerable communities, thus relating more to chapter 5-12 in the above (see also section 4.1.5 “implementation”). **Recommendation:** Consider how the UNCT can support with the ‘enabling environment’ as covered by chapters 13-18 in the figure above). This would also help to increase the overall impact of the UN’s support.

**Gaps in UNSDCF:**

* At an overarching level, no significant gaps identified, with the inter-related nature of all SDGs well recognized.
* However, more specifically, there is no mention of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) or similar, although “integrated natural resource management” is mentioned as an output area under Strategic Priority 4.
* One minor gap is the lack of mention of basin-wide approaches to natural resources management, including basins (watersheds) that may cross international borders (transboundary river basins and aquifers).

**Recommendations for 2026-2030 UNSDCF:**

* Maintain focus on natural resources management underpinning sustainable socio-economic development objectives.
* Maintain and strengthen the language around the interconnected nature of each of the Strategic Priorities, ensuring mechanisms to support integrated implementation of the UNSDCF through the Joint Work Plans.
* Strengthen the consideration of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) as a framework to implement natural resources management across sectors.
* Consider supporting basin-level management, in alignment with the 6 Water Management Areas in South Africa (as described in the National Water Resources Strategy), as well as including transboundary cooperation. Noting that this is addressed through Activity 4.2.1.5 in the 2022 Joint Work Plan (see section 5.1.5 Implementation).

### Common Country Analysis (CCA)

The 2019-20 CCA contains a long introduction, which includes a short description on the progress towards each of the 17 SDGs, followed by chapters on prosperity, people, peace, planet, and partnerships. In the introduction, the description for SDG 6 is one of the longer ones, but only WaSH is covered. **Recommendation:** where SDG 6 is covered, broaden the assessment to include all 6 target areas.

Under SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth), water shortages are mentioned as a stressor. Water resources or freshwater ecosystems are not mentioned in conjunction with any of the SDGs, including 6 (water) 13 (climate), and 15 (life on land). Nor are they mentioned in chapters 2-4 on prosperity, people, and peace. **Recommendation:** consider explicit mention of the importance of sustainable water resources management to support other SDGs and priority areas.

Chapter 5 - Planet - covers “eight interrelated issues that are central to the overall integrity of development in South Africa”: 1) natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems (which mentions ecosystem services); 2) climate change; 3) agriculture (which mentions the water-food-energy nexus, competition for water, and climate change as key challenges); 4) forestry; 5) freshwater resources; 6) waste management; 7) energy; 8) invasive plant species. Freshwater ecosystems, floods, droughts, water availability, and water quality are mentioned in all eight of these issues. Most of the data is derived from national data sources, with South Africa having a relatively advanced monitoring and evaluation frameworks compared to many African countries. However, relatively little use is made of the widely available SDG data. In the ‘freshwater resources’ section, links are made to the relevant government documents, including the National Water and Sanitation Master Plan (NWSMP), and the National Water Resource Strategy (NWRS). **Recommendations:**

* Maintain explicit recognition of strong interlinkages between all 8 issues.
* Maintain references to relevant government strategies and plans.
* Supplement national data sources with SDG data where feasible and relevant. In particular, consider incorporating relevant aspects of the SDG 6.5.1 national survey on integrated water resources management, completed approximately every 3 years, which contains a wealth of information on relevant mechanisms and activities in place related to sustainable water management.

Critically, although the “energy” section describes the growth in renewable energy, and mentions hydropower as being part of the mix, there is no mention or analysis of what impacts any new hydropower projects might have on freshwater ecosystems and their services (though this is mentioned in the “agriculture” section). **Recommendation:** make more explicit mention of the potential trade-offs between renewable energy (in particular hydropower, but also biofuels) and water resources and ecosystems. The Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) framework, or the Water-Energy-Ecosystems-Food nexus, could be useful frameworks for analysis.

In chapter 7 - implications for UN engagement - the following relevant aspects are mentioned in the “Planet” section: Ecosystem based Adaptation (EbA), Disaster Risk Reduction (UN active on this following the KwaZulu-Natal floods in April 2022), climate smart agriculture (FAO doing work on this), land restoration and reafforestation, and support to the Water for Growth and Development (WfGD) Framework; the Raw Water Pricing Strategy; the National Groundwater Strategy; and the Re-use Strategy.

**Recommendations:** in the 2022 CCA update:

* Include the whole of SDG 6, as appropriate (not just WaSH).
* Discuss, with the UNCT, the possibility of mentioning water and environment under other SDGs and strategic priority areas, as relevant (i.e. not just under SDG 6 and RG4).
* Discuss, with the UNCT, the possibility of including a short description (e.g. box), on the importance of integrated approaches to water resources management to support multiple SDGs.

### Institutional arrangements

UNCT institutional arrangements

It should be noted that South Africa is one of only three countries in Africa in which UNEP is a resident agency as part of the UNCT (see section 3).

To implement the UNSDCF (see section 3 of UNSDCF), a “Results Group” (RG) is formed for each of the strategic priorities. RG 4 officially comprises 16 agencies, coordinated by UNEP and UNIDO, and including UNICEF, WHO, FAO, UNDP, ILO, UN Women, UNAIDS, UNFPA, OHCHR, UNESCO, IOM, IFC, UN Habitat and World Bank. As RG4 comprises virtually all agencies from the UNCT, there should be good scope for coordination on climate resilience and natural resources management. This is well covered in chapter 3 - implementation plan - of the UNSDCF. However, in practice, and understandably, the level of engagement in RG4 varies significantly between the 16 agencies. **Recommendation:** Even with this institutional alignment in place, experience has shown that truly integrated planning and implementation is much harder than ‘silo’ approaches, and requires sustained efforts and a willingness to cooperate from all partners, and strong leadership and coordination. This leadership is needed from both the RCO, as well as the ‘lead’ agencies for the relevant strategic priorities related to water, environment, and climate change. The lead agencies on the various relevant activities in RG4 are: FAO, ILO, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UN Habitat, UNIDO, UN Women, OHCHR.

Non-UN primary partners

The primary partners involved in implementing RG4 of the UNSDCF, as noted in the Joint Work Plans, are:

Governmental bodies

* Department of Water and Sanitation ([DWS](https://www.dws.gov.za/)): primary ministerial body responsible for water resources planning, development and management, including water resources infrastructure (including dams), monitoring, water supply and sanitation. Within DWS:
  + Chief Directorate: Integrated Water Resource Planning (CD: [IWRP](https://www.dws.gov.za/iwrp/Default.aspx)) appears to be the critical directorate with responsibility for coordinating planning, implementation, and monitoring.
  + SDG 6 [programme](https://www.dws.gov.za/Projects/sdg/default.aspx)
  + [Blue Deal](https://www.dws.gov.za/Bluedeal/default.aspx) programme goal: Access to clean, sufficient and safe water for 2.5 million people in 2030.
* Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and the Environment ([DFFE](https://www.dffe.gov.za/)). Primary UNCT counterpart: UNEP.
* Department of agriculture, land reform and rural development ([DALRRD](https://www.dalrrd.gov.za/)): Primary UNCT counterpart: FAO?
* Department of mineral resources and energy ([DMRE](https://www.dmr.gov.za/)): Primary UNCT counterpart: XXX?.
* [Stats SA](https://www.statssa.gov.za/): broadly responsible for monitoring many of the Outcome level indicators of the UNSDCF (Annex 1 of UNSDCF). More specifically implementing partner in RG4 Activity 4.2.1.7 “Support the sustainable management of SA’s natural capital through National Accounts of key ecosystems (water accounts, protected areas accounts) …”

Non-governmental organisations

* Water Research Commission ([WRC](https://www.wrc.org.za/)):
* Council for Scientific and Industrial Research ([CSIR](https://www.csir.co.za/)):

See section [4.2](#_raf8qfciqu8d) for further findings and recommendations regarding the coordination between the UNCT and non-UN partners.

### Implementation, monitoring and evaluation

The work is guided by annual Joint Work Plans (JWP), which are developed with inputs from each RG, the UNSDCF Technical Steering Committee, and the Ministerial Steering Committee. Each JWP contains the various projects and programmes being implemented by various agencies, Key Activities, as well as Outcome and Output indicators to measure progress towards the targets. Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the UNSDCF is described in section 4 and annex 1 of the UNSDCF.

The most relevant Outcome and Output indicators, and Key Activities, are provided in [Annex 3](#_4pclzt5cej2l) of this report. Many of these are highly relevant for integrated water resources management.

Outcome indicators include those on: access to drinking water (SDG 6.1.1); proportion of wastewater safely treated and discharged (SDG 6.3.1); level of water stress (6.4.2); vegetated area (forests, grasslands, etc.) as a proportion of total land area, and percentage of terrestrial and freshwater ecosystem types that are well protected (both related to SDG indicator 6.6.1); and number of national and local disaster risk-reduction strategies (related SDG indicator 11.b.1). **Recommendation:** consider retrospectively adding the following as an Outcome indicator: Degree of IWRM implementation (0-100) (SDG 6.5.1),as this is readily available (reported every three years), and provides a solid indication of how the country is progressing towards IWRM implementation. Furthermore, joint activities to advance the implementation of IWRM in the country will have wide-ranging benefits that cut across sectors and SDGs.

It should be noted that the Outcome level indicators (Annex 1 of the UNSDCF) are monitored by Stats SA and other government departments, meaning that the UNCT is dependent on these government departments to provide the data. According to the Joint Work Plan for RG 4, it is noted that there are a number of gaps for a number of the Outcome indicators, in relation to baseline value, target value, and means of verification. It is further noted that “Goal Tracker South Africa” is listed as one of the data sources, yet the data does not appear to be actively updated (for example, most of the data for SDG 6 indicators is from 2017 or 2018, so not even as recent as the start of this UNSDCF period in 2020). Equally, there appear to be many gaps in the baseline values, target values, and data sources for most of the Output indicators as well. **Recommendation:** there appears to be a need to strengthen the data sources and define baseline and target values, especially as we are now half-way through the current UNSDCF period of 2020-25.

Progress is reported annually in a UNCT Country Results Report (CRR). In the 2021 version:

1. There is recognition of the importance of ‘environment’ (very broadly) as underpinning socio-economic development.
2. But relatively little specifically on freshwater resources. Floods and droughts are mentioned.
3. Climate change features heavily, both as a pressure, and in terms of activities undertaken.
4. Many of the activities undertaken are quite practically focussed, and supporting the vulnerable, but also relatively small-scale e.g. directly benefiting in the order of hundreds of people. Consider mechanisms for scaling up the impact of the activities. These may include activities in support of the ‘enabling environment’ in relation to water, environment and climate change. For example, supporting on the institutional, planning, financial, and monitoring aspects (see e.g. discussion on the National Water Resources Strategy in section 4.1.2). Other opportunities for scaling up may be identified.
5. Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) mentioned (in capacity building to municipal officials). Opportunities to scale-up this activity should be considered.

The key challenges in implementing SDGs in 2021 (section 2.3 of the CRR): planet: impacts of climate change (without effective adaptation), has the potential to reverse developmental gains and push millions further into poverty. Floods, droughts, wildfires witnessed in different parts of the country. “responding to climate change requires comprehensive and integrated strategies that simultaneously address social, economic and environmental consequences.”

There is awareness on the need for UN coherence - see section 2.4 - e.g. within and across the 4 Results Groups, but again, it is recognised that this is challenging in practice (see section 4.1.4).

## Stakeholder consultation discussion points

See Annex 1.2 for further information on the stakeholder consultation process in South Africa.

Within the **UNCT consultation**, some of the following were noted:

Coordination

* Even though there are some mechanisms for coordination/collaboration across the UNCT, including through Results Group 4 on environmental resilience and climate change, there is still a need for further guidance on processes/arrangements for coordination within the UNCT. This includes information sharing (who is doing what), as well as leveraging key expertise from different agencies in different circumstances (could almost be considered as internal UNCT capacity building. I.e. agency X informs agencies Y and Z on issues A and B).

Engagement with non-UN partners

* Important to involve non-UN partners in UNSDCF design and implementation as they are aware of local priorities on the ground. The UN has an important coordination role to play (to bring stakeholders together). While this is primarily the role of the RCO, agencies also have a role to play (UNEP SA is looking to expand its network).

Opportunity areas (for collaboration):

* There’s a need for more comprehensive, up to date and accessible data on water resources (UNIDO),
* Need for guidance on how to manage scarce water resources (UNIDO).
* There’s an opportunity to do more work on the value of water / natural resources for job creation and the economy (ILO).
* Reducing plastics in the marine environment (from land-based sources (UNIDO)).

Another finding from the UNCT consultation process was that the other UNCT agencies did not have much time to engage in the consultation process, even with RCO coordination and support.

Within the stakeholder consultation (non-UN partners), some of the following were noted:

* Even within the government, the responsibility for various aspects of WRM is fragmented (e.g. monitoring of environment is a separate department from monitoring of WaSH, and there is limited communication between the two). Need for more integration/collaboration mechanisms across national and provincial governments (this is related to IWRM work, noting also that there is a directorate for Integrated Water Resources Planning within the Department for Water and Sanitation). Need for practical integration mechanisms ‘on the ground’. This confirms the need for IWRM work, including through SDG 6.5.1 and the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme.
* On the other hand, there are numerous local organisations that have been working on multi-stakeholder integration at catchment level for years, including catchment management groups. How can the UN support this?
* It may be useful to undertake a mapping of relevant research being undertaken in the country, to identify gaps, overlaps, and opportunities for collaboration. UNDP Cap-Net may be able to support in this regard.
* There’s a need for stronger links/dialogue between policy makers and research. This underscores the first of UNEPs areas of work according to the new delivery model 1. Generation and dissemination of science-policy knowledge – including through scientific networks, coalitions and platforms, substantive advocacy, technical materials, as well as databases and digital materials.
* Need to consider ongoing financial survival of institutions/agencies beyond current funding cycles (e.g. 3-5 years).
* Relatively few of the stakeholders present had actually worked with, or had much interaction with, the UN Country Team, pointing to the need to strengthen engagement with non-UN partners (see also finding in UNCT consultation above).

## Opportunities and recommendations to provide input to current cycle, including timeline

Following a comprehensive CCA developed in 2019-20, the UNCT has agreed to undertake a ‘light’ update of the CCA in 2022, running from July to November, with the following timeline:

* Jul: UN RCO invites UNCT agencies to nominate focal points for the update.
* Aug-Sep: agencies provide inputs to the CCA update, coordinated within and across RGs.
* Sep-Nov: UN RCO compiles inputs and drafts updated CCA, with review from agencies.

The updated CCA will focus on new and emerging issues as they relate to the UNSDCF 2020-2025. In the context of this project, there is an opportunity for UNEP-DHI to support UNEP SA in providing inputs to the CCA update during Aug-Sep 2022. **While this will focus on RG4, consideration should be given to how sustainable management of water, environment and climate resilience supports socioeconomic objectives across all RGs.**

Within the scope of this project, it will not be possible to directly provide inputs to the next version of the UNSDCF, which expires in 2025. However, some broad recommendations can be made regarding incorporating the general principles of integrated water resources management in the next UNSDCF update. Some basic capacity building / knowledge transfer within UNEP SA may be warranted in this regard, so that they are in a position to follow up on the recommendations at the time of updating the UNSDCF.

# Pilot country 2: Malawi

## Situation analysis

Section 5.1 considers the following topics: national context; plans, policies, strategies; institutional arrangements; implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The analysis is restricted to the context of mainstreaming water, environment and climate resilience to support multiple socio-economic development objectives across sectors, in particular in relation to the development, implementation and review of UNSDCFs.

### National context

The following text is extracted from the UNSDCF 2019-2023. Malawi is among the most vulnerable countries to the effects of climate change and environmental shocks, with few resources or institutional mechanisms to effectively scale-up adaptation investments to safeguard its development gains. Malawi has a predominately agro-based economy, and 80% of the population is dependent on rain-fed, smallholder agriculture for food, nutrition, and income security. Chronic food insecurity coupled with high vulnerability to even the smallest fluctuations in weather patterns, have led to cyclical humanitarian responses to meet food and nutrition needs. Despite a strong policy environment, agricultural productivity remains constrained by the highest deforestation rates in southern Africa, driving land and soil degradation and natural resource depletion.

### UNSDCF and associated UN and government strategies and plans

The UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF, the earlier equivalent of a UNSDCF) 2019-23, has three pillars:

1. **Peace, Inclusion and Effective Institutions:** no mention of ‘sectors’, but many of the themes (e.g. strong, integrated legal and organisational frameworks, decentralisation, civic participation, data, gender equality) are very relevant for water and environmental management.
2. **Population Management and Inclusive Human Development:** focussing on childhood health and services, and gender equality in that context. Not particularly relevant for water and environment.
3. **Inclusive and Resilient Growth:** most directly relevant pillar to environment, natural resources management and climate change.

* **Outcome 7:** Households have increased food and nutrition security, equitable access to WASH and healthy ecosystems and resilient livelihoods.

Relevant UN Contribution Areas:

(1) Sub-national government capacity for resilience programmes; (2) Disaster risk management and early recovery from shocks; (5) Climate resilient WASH programme.

* **Outcome 8:** Malawi has more productive, sustainable and diversified agriculture, value chains and market access. This is the only outcome with UNEP listed as contributing UN agency (along with UN Women, UNIDO, UNHCR, FAO, UNDOC, WFP, AND UNDP).  
  Relevant UN Contribution Areas:

1. Agricultural service delivery to be able to address the challenges of modern sustainable agriculture; 2. Value chains; 3. Enabling environment for agricultural entrepreneurship, agro-processing and commercialisation; 4. Tenure rights.

* **Outcome 9:** Malawi has strengthened economic diversification, inclusive business, entrepreneurship and **access to clean energy.**

Relevant UN Contribution Areas:

3. Empowering renewable energy services in Malawi (as relevant for hydropower, and water-energy-food-ecosystems nexus).

At the time of development of the 2019-23 UNDAF, the main Government development plan was the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS III) 2017-2022. In 2020, Malawi Vision 2063 was released, along with its first 10-year Implementation Plan 2021-2030. This will form the primary policy context for the development of the next 2024-2029 UNSDCF. The 2022 Voluntary National Review (VNR) of the SDGs provides a recent update of the situation that should inform the development of the 2024-2029 UNSDCF (while noting that only WaSH is included under SDG 6 in the VNR, though other relevant issues are mentioned under other Goals, such as wastewater treatment and reuse (SDG 12), water quality / eutrophication and management of Lake Malawi (SDG 14), climate change and disaster risk management (SDG 13), irrigation and climate resilience in agriculture (SDG 2).

More specifically in relation to integrated water and ecosystem management, other government documents include: Draft National Water Policy (2022, awaiting cabinet approval); “Priority Projects” from the Ministry of Water and Sanitation (2022); Irrigation and Water Resources Strategic Plan (2019- 2024) (as listed in the 2020 SDG 6.5.1 report from Malawi, but not located online); Water Resources Act, 2013; National Water Policy, 2005; Environmental Management Act, 2017; Other docs include 2022 Climate-Resilient WASH Strategy (joint Govt/UNICEF).

**Gaps/recommendations:**

* In the UNDAF introduction, and in the ‘general’ sections, there is relatively little acknowledgement of a healthy environment underpinning sustainable socioeconomic development priorities. Although poor environmental management is considered a “major risk to food security, health, nutrition, livelihoods, economic growth and inflation” in “Risks and assumptions” (section 3), more can be done to highlight the value of strengthened environmental management as a foundation for sustainable socioeconomic development in the design of the 2024-2029 UNSDCF. The South Africa UNSDCF 2020-25 may be a useful example in this regard.
* The interlinkages between the three pillars do not appear to be well described in the UNDAF, despite this being mentioned as a constraint of the previous UNDAF (2012-2018) (see section 1.2). Whilst there is some language around the interconnectedness between the SDGs (section 1.2) and the need for coordinated implementation (section 6), this important aspect could be more visibly highlighted in the presentation and discussion of the key pillars in the 2024-2029 UNSDCF. The interlinkages between the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development are described in section 3.3 of the 2022 Voluntary National Review (VNR) for the SDGs, showing that the expenditure on the environmental dimension had increased by 205 per cent between 2021/22 and 2022/23 budgets. This should be be reviewed in light of the new 2024-2029 UNSDCF.
* Although “Climatic, natural hazard, and environmental risks” are noted in “Risks and assumptions” (section 3), these aspects could be more mainstreamed within pillar 3. For example, there appears to be insufficient description of activities to protect, restore and manage freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems within the outcomes and “UN Contribution” areas under pillar 3.
* There is little to no mention of integrated natural resources management or integrated water resources management in the UNDAF, and this should be considered in the design of the next UNSDCF.
* Water quality and pollution are not mentioned in the UNDAF. This should be considered in the design of the next UNSDCF as this topic impacts a large number of SDGs.

It is noted that many of the above recommendations are consistent with the findings of the 2021 stakeholder consultations of the review of the 2018 CCA, and the latest draft of the current CCA (see next section).

### Common Country Analysis (CCA)

The 2019-23 UNDAF was informed by the 2018 CCA. The 2018 CCA was reviewed by the UNCT and four groups of stakeholders in 2021 (see “CCA 2021 Information Sheet”), resulting in a revised draft CCA 2021 (latest draft version 26 Aril 2022).

Key findings from the four stakeholder group consultations relevant to this initiative include:

1. Development partners and ambassadors: UN should …
   * Prioritize natural resource management as a pathway to transform Malawi
   * Strengthen partnerships with the private sector and make green growth part of the engagement.
   * Be a knowledge institution
   * Analysis presents many facts, but too few solutions
   * The role of the UN in the solutions is unclear – is it funding, coordination, or policy?
2. Government:
   * Need to work as ONE UN and streamline coordination of its programmes and work in a coherent manner.
   * Need the UN to provide … knowledge products in the form of advisory services …build capacities of the government … strengthen capacity in data collection for better targeting of groups left behind.
   * Country is slow at adapting technologies that can help to mitigate climate change
   * Current farming practices are harmful to the environment, and this is amplifying the impact of climate change.
3. Vulnerable groups:
   * Many Malawians are not aware of the severe impact of climate change on their personal lives (the concept of better access to information was mentioned a few times by various stakeholders).
   * Demand for charcoal is significant, which impacts climate change both on the global and the local level
   * Revise the curriculum to include civic education on environmental issues and climate change
4. Private sector, media, academia, trade unions
   * Revamp the coordination team for SDGs reporting to make reporting consultative

In summary, the above recommendations point to:

* The need for stronger coordination across the UNCT in implementation of the UNSDCF, and in reporting on the SDGs.
* The need for the UN to be a ‘knowledge institution’, and support the government with capacity for data and information collection, management, and use (this is supported by a recommendation from UNEP’s Africa Office of the need to support governments in this regard (see section 3).
* The significance of coordinated natural resources resources management to build climate resilience in this primarily agriculture-based economy.

Analysis of current draft CCA (2020/21, latest revision 26/4/22)

Under section 3 “Progress Towards the 2030 Agenda and SDGs”, under SDG 6, only 6.1.1 (water supply) and 6.2.1 (sanitation) are mentioned, and both showing 2015 or 2016 data. There is quite detailed analysis on progress towards targets under SDGs 1-5, but nothing from 7-17. **Recommendation:** as a minimum, include all SDG 6 targets/indicators where data is available, ensuring the latest data is used. As can be seen from the global SDG 6 database, the latest available data for most SDG 6 indicators is from 2020: <https://sdg6data.org/country-or-area/Malawi>.

In section 4.1 “Governance and institutions'', significant attention is given to governance, institutions, capacity, horizontal and vertical accountability. The section highlights the significant challenges and gaps within ‘foundational’ governance with respect to the rule of law, judiciary, parliament, elections, transparency and democratic engagement. While there is no direct mention of the situation with regards to environmental governance, it is likely to be the case that environmental governance is further behind the core judiciary and fiscal capacities. Furthermore, in section 4.9 “climate and environment” it is noted that “*... there has been increasing awareness of climate change and its implications, as well as a substantive policy and strategic framework. However, this is undermined by weak policy implementation, poor coordination, weak multi-sectoral and local application, capacities, knowledge and information management and inadequate investments, including by the private sector.*” **Recommendation:** consider the need for support to strengthen environmental governance, and its inclusion in the CCA update, and the design and implementation of the next UNSDCF.

In section 4.2.2 “economic structure” it is noted that “Malawi is primarily an agriculture-based economy” and describes the significant and increasing of floods and droughts on agriculture, and therefore on food security and the economy. There is an important sub-section on “climate and resilience” (p.26), which notes the potential trade-offs between modernising the agricultural sector and protecting and restoring the environment. **Recommendation:** Consider the inclusion of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) and Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) as an important solution to Malawi’s environmental decline and risks to agriculture. Consider also the implementation of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) (SDG 6.5.1), which is a process that promotes the coordinated development and management of water, land and related resources in order to maximise economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of vital ecosystems. UNEP and FAO may make contributions in this regard.

Section 4.9 contains a strong section on climate change and environment financing (section 4.9.1), which includes opportunities for leveraging various funding sources. Section 4.10 “financing landscape and opportunities” looks at financing needs and gaps across sectors and SDGs, and highlights the significant gap between required and current per capita expenditure to make progress towards SDGs achievement. **Recommendation:** Financing is an important topic, which may serve as inspiration to other countries developing CCAs and UNSDCFs. To take it further, ways of strengthening national revenue raising, including from various water users, must be investigated. Noting the generally longer timescales, and extra capacity required, for revenue raising to occur, this could be an important area for the UNCT to provide support in a long-term partnership.

It should be noted that the 2021 CCA does not appear to be finalised.

### Institutional arrangements

UN Country Team (UNCT) partners

Within the UN Country Team (UNCT), FAO and WFP lead pillar 3 on Inclusive and Resilient Growth, which also includes 7 other agencies: UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Habitat, UN Women, WHO, and UNEP (as a non-resident agency, coordinated by UNEP Africa Office Country Focal Point for Malawi). Other resident agencies: IOM (International Organisation for Migration), UNAIDS, UNDSS (Department of Safety and Security), UNHCR, WFP. Other non-resident agencies: IAEA, IFAD, ILO, International Trade Centre, OCHA, UNCDF, UNESCO, UN-HABITAT, UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, UNIDO, UNODC, UN Technology, UN Volunteers.

The 2022 Joint Work Plan lists UNEP as contributing to Outcome 3.2 (also called Outcome 8 in the UNDAF): “Malawi has more productive, sustainable and diversified agriculture, value chains and market access.” Under this, UNEP is the joint lead with UNDP on sub-outcomes:

* 3.2.1.45 Plans and policy coherence for poverty eradication, gender equality and Environment and Natural Resources sustainability through improved sector and national district coordination.
* 3.2.1.46 Provide improved guidelines and mechanisms for leveraging national and district expenditures and private investment on poverty reducing environment and natural resources

More information on the activities under these sub-outcomes and how UNEP has engaged, could be investigated in a later phase of this initiative.

It is notable that UNEP is not listed as contributing to Outcome 3.1 (also called Outcome 7 in the UNDAF): “Households have increased food and nutrition security, equitable access to WASH and healthy ecosystems and resilient livelihoods.” This Outcome has a number of Outputs and sub-outputs (activities) related to climate change resilience and disaster risk reduction, for which integrated approaches to water and environmental management would be critical. Similarly, UNEP is not listed as a participating agency in this Outcome in the 2021 UN Annual Country Report. In that report, UNDP and WFP are mentioned as the implementing partners on these relevant activities. While these agencies are likely to be in a strong position to lead those activities, it should be considered whether the inclusion of agencies such as FAO and UNEP may contribute to improved outcomes. In the 2021 UN Annual Country Report, it is notable that UNEP is not mentioned specifically as an agency in the description of activities (though its logo appears in relation to Strategic Priority 3 and Outcome 3.2 (sustainable and diversified agriculture). The extent to which the principles of integrated water and environmental management are adopted in the activities under Outcome, and the extent to which UNEP is involved, could be investigated in a later phase of this initiative.

Key non-UN partners

Government

* Ministry of Water and Sanitation (this is a relatively new Ministry, established in February 2022. Previous responsibility for water and sanitation service provision and water resources management was with the ​​Ministry of Forestry and Natural Resources (MoFNR)).
* The National Water Resources Authority (NWRA), established in 2018, has the responsibility to develop, manage, administer and protect water resources for the sustainable, effective and efficient provision of water for all its uses.
* Ministry of Natural Resources and Climate Change
* Ministry of Agriculture
* Ministry of Health

**Recommendations:**

* It appears that UNEP has a relatively minor presence and role in the implementation of the UNSDCF in Malawi. Investigate options for increasing UNEP’s engagement in the country, including: (a) identify entry points for UNEP to contribute to Joint Work Plan development, and its implementation; (b) increase the capacity of UNEP to contribute to implementation of activities in Malawi. *(potential solutions pending further consultation)*
* Despite an acknowledgement in the 2021 CCA review that the level of coordination between activities and institutions needs strengthening, this is not evident in the 2022 Joint Work Plan. Investigate options for mapping the interlinkages between Outcomes, Outputs, and Activities, in the context of integrated approaches to natural resources management, to identify where and how increased coordination could lead to improved sustainability and greater impact.

See section [5.2](#_ua7n9joaxp8q) for further findings and recommendations on how the coordination across the UNCT functions in practice.

### Implementation, monitoring and evaluation

The implementation of the UNSDCF is guided by annual Joint Work Plans (JWPs - current 2022), and progress is reported through UN Annual Country Reports (latest 2021). See Annex 4 of this report for more detail on relevant Outcomes, Outputs, sub-outputs, indicators, and activities.

Most relevant Strategic Priority: 3 Inclusive and Resilient Growth, containing the following Outcomes:

* 3.1 food and nutrition security, equitable access to healthy ecosystems and WASH and resilient livelihoods
* 3.2 productive, sustainable and diversified agriculture, value chains and market access
* 3.3 economic diversification, inclusive business, entrepreneurship and access to clean energy

Within the Outcomes of this Strategic Priority 3 - with Outputs related to sustainable and resilient agriculture, climate-resilient WaSH, resilient communities (to climate impacts), and increased renewable energy - there is very little or no mention of integrated or sustainable natural resources management as underpinning these activities. If the integrated nature of these activities, and the potential tradeoffs between socioeconomic and environmental objectives, is not well understood and mainstreamed into the implementation of the UNSDCF, there is a risk that some activities may have negative or unintended consequences on sustainability. Furthermore, potential synergies may not be identified, missing out on the opportunity for potential joint activities with coordinated funding mechanisms and improved outcomes.

**Recommendations:**

* Undertake a mapping of the relevant Outputs, sub-outputs and activities under Strategic Priority 3 to: (a) assess the need for strengthening environmental considerations / impacts of the activities; and (b) identify interlinkages between them to identify potential synergies and tradeoffs, and make recommendations for how to harness the synergies and avoid the tradeoffs.
* Undertake a mapping of how integrated approaches to natural resources management and healthy ecosystems can support activities under Strategic Priorities 1 (Peace, Inclusion and Effective Institutions) and 2 (Population Management and Inclusive Human Development).
* See also section 5.1.4 (institutions)

## Stakeholder consultation discussion points

See Annex 1.3 for further information on the stakeholder consultation process in Malawi.

Within the **UNCT consultation**, some of the following were noted:

Coordination

* Lots of agencies are doing related work in this space, but there is a need for more information sharing and coordination across the UNCT, as well as with related govt. agencies (some of the old mechanisms need to be re-established following the creation of the Ministry of Water and Sanitation).
* UNDP does some watershed management work, including with WFP and FAO, but there could be some value in having some expertise/inputs specifically on water. And they generally work on a relatively small/local scale, so there is a need to look into how initiatives can be scaled up / create more impact. This points to the need for knowledge and experience sharing - informing policy and programme development.
* There are various committees that meet periodically, including for donor and government collaboration, but they tend to be project-based, and ongoing institutional coordination mechanisms are needed.
* There are limited/no policy frameworks to guide integrated catchment management *(however, it is noted that a draft National Water Policy is up for approval by cabinet in 2022)*.

Opportunities areas for collaboration/support

* Lack of in-situ data/monitoring is a challenge (lots of gaps and under-maintained network). Also how data is stored - and there is no clear link from national level down to the districts. While this is a national responsibility, there may be scope for UN to support the development of a data and information management system.
* UNDP are designing a pilot for monitoring water quality in one catchment with the relevant government department. There should be scope to collaborate / scale up on this with UNEP, including the SDG 6.3.2 UNEP team.

Another finding from the UNCT consultation process was that the other UNCT agencies did not have much time to engage in the consultation process, even with RCO coordination and support.

Within the **government stakeholder consultation**, some of the following were noted:

○ Demand for water services is much higher than current levels, so there is a lot of pressure to increase supply, with potential negative impacts on ecosystems. Increasing water service levels needs to be done in a sustainable manner, also taking into account climate change impacts. This points to the need for UNEP and others to support IWRM implementation and related.

○ Financing / revenue raising is far lower than needed to increase water services and manage water resources, pointing to the need for support to access financing and increase revenue raising (see also [Finance Toolkit](https://docs.google.com/document/u/0/d/1z9Yd0UV6nqLU4INUUCdpfISiM8-04vWYuANBonjsZto/edit))

○ Improving the national data management system is a priority for the government.

○ UNEP supported the finalisation of the 2022 draft National Water Policy (awaiting approval), which goes much further towards IWRM approaches.

○ There are inter-ministerial ‘sector working groups’ to collaborate across sectors. These meet periodically, and sometimes launch joint projects, with different ministries taking responsibility for different aspects. How can the sector working groups be better leveraged for coordinated land, water and ecosystem management?

## Opportunities and recommendations to provide input to current cycle, including timeline

### CCA update

The 2018 CCA was reviewed and updated in 2020-21, following a consultation involving the UNCT and four groups of stakeholders, resulting in a revised draft CCA 2022, though it appears this has never been finalised/approved (latest draft version April 2022).

In 2022, the UNCT agreed to undertake a ‘light’ update of the CCA, and this is expected to take place from August to November. UNEP, through the Country Focal Point, has been invited to provide inputs to this update, under the coordination of UNDP and FAO (leads on the environmental component). There is scope for UNEP-DHI to support UNEP with their input.

### UNSDCF update: 2024-2028

There is a Cooperation Framework Roadmap outlining the process for updating the 2019-2023 UNDAF.

* Aug-Nov 2022: CF 2024-28 design consultations launched. It is recommended that UNEP-DHI supports UNEP in their inputs to these design consultations (through the Country Focal Point(s) at the UNEP Africa Office), in light of the recommendations made in this report.
* Nov-Dec 2022: UNCT configuration exercise. This project will have finished by then, but recommendations can be made as inputs to that process.

# Summary recommendations

## For UNEP Africa Office

Please see also section 3 of this report.

* The Country Focal Point (CFP) mechanism is working quite well, but needs to be strengthenedto better engage with and support the UNCT through the CF design, implementation and review. Consider budgeting for country missions for the CFP to build relationships and raise awareness within the UNCT at key times.
* Hold regular UNEP-UNRC dialogues (based on the success of the 2019 dialogue).
* Provide the Africa Office, in particular the Assessment Unit (Environment Under Review), with capacity development and resources to strengthen and streamline their ability to support UNCTs, in particular in the CCA process. This may include:
  + awareness-raising products for internal use (within UNCTs, but potentially also for non-UN partners), e.g. generic PPT and/or technical brief outlining the value of mainstreaming water resources for multiple development objectives. This may include some economic analysis to assign monetary value to benefits of interventions (drawn from examples from around Africa, and potentially globally).
  + simple guideline / methodology for assessing the completeness / adequacy of the degree to which water resources are included in CCAs and CFs.
  + knowledge about relevant data sets and how they can be accessed and used (e.g. simple toolkit in Word/Excel with links and guidance). This includes guidance on relevant SDG datasets*.*

## At country level

Please see sections 4 and 5 for specific recommendations for South Africa and Malawi respectively.

The UN reform, with the creation of “one UN” principles, greatly facilitates integrated and multi-sectoral policy development and implementation, which is vital for implementing integrated approaches to water resources management. However, even with this institutional alignment in place, experience has shown that truly integrated planning and implementation is much harder than ‘silo’ approaches, and requires sustained efforts and a willingness to cooperate from all partners, and strong leadership and coordination. This leadership is needed from both the RCO, as well as the ‘lead’ agencies for the relevant strategic priorities related to water, environment, and climate change.

In relation to the Outcome and Output indicators in the Joint Work Plans, there appears to be a need to identify functional data sources, and set baseline and target values, for many of the indicators. A more thorough review of national, regional and global datasets, including conversations with government counterparts, should be considered.

# Annexes:

## Consultation processes

* 1. **UNEP Africa Office**

Consultations have been held with the following teams:

* Regional Development Coordination Unit. Primary contacts: Jean Jacob Sahou, Julius Mwambanga Mwangemi, Vivian Njogu
* Ecosystem Management Subprogramme: Levis Kavagi, Bethsheba Muchiri
* Assessment Unit (Environment Under Review): Charles Sebukeera and Harrison Simotwo
* Poverty-Environment: David Smith (in capacity as outgoing Malawi Country Focal Point)
* Southern Africa Regional Coordination: Meseret Teklemariam Zemedkun, Brian Mubiwa (and in capacity as incoming Malawi Country Focal Points)
  1. **South Africa**
* UN Resident Coordinator’s Office (RCO): Nonkululeko Ngcobo, Ricardo Orlando Gottschalk
* UNEP South Africa: Meseret Teklemariam Zemedkun (Head), Brian Mubiwa
* UNCT agencies: light consultation held on 28th September with the following agencies (alphabetical): FAO (Nokulunga Xaba, Sinegugu Msweli), ILO, UNEP, UNIDO, and the RCO (Nonkululeko Ngcobo). All agencies from Results Group 4 were invited to attend the consultation, and to submit completed questionnaires, though these were only received from UNDP and FAO.
* Non-UN partners consultation: light consultation held on 28th September, with the following: Blue North Sustainability; Conservation South Africa; University of Cape Town Future Water Institute; Western Cape Department of Environmental Affairs; Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation; NEPAD Centre of Excellence (West Africa); Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE); Water Research Commission; South African National Parks, University of Rwanda.
  1. **Malawi**
* UN Resident Coordinator’s Office (RCO): Chimwemwe Msowoya
* UNEP Africa Office: Malawi Country Focal Point(s): David Smith (outgoing); Meseret Teklemariam Zemedkun and Brian Mubiwa (incoming)
* UNCT Programme Management Team (PMT): has been informed
* UNCT agencies: light consultation held on 20th September with the following agencies (alphabetical): FAO, UNDP, UNEP, WFP, WHO, and the RCO. Apologies from UNICEF, UNFPA, UN-Women. All agencies were invited to complete the questionnaire in advance of the consultation, and after it, though only one was received (from UNEP).
* Government consultation: light consultation held on 13th September, with the following: Ministry of Water and Sanitation: Department of Planning, Director of Planning (Dr. Max Wengawenga); Economist (Faith Chimtedza), Chief Hydrological Research Officer (Macpherson Nkhata) and Zione. Subsequently informed were the Director of Water Resources (Dr Modesta Kanjaye) and the Deputy Director of Water Resources (Mr Prince Mleta). A completed questionnaire was received from the Ministry.

## Bibliography

* 1. **General / Overall UN guidance documents**

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2. UNSDG (2019). United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework: Internal Guidance. Edited version 3 June 2019. United Nations Sustainable Development Group. <https://unsdg.un.org/resources/united-nations-sustainable-development-cooperation-framework-guidance>
3. Consolidated annexes for Cooperation Framework Guidance. Endorsed 24 May 2019, updated May 2022. <https://unsdg.un.org/resources/consolidated-annexes-cooperation-framework-guidance>
   1. **South Africa documents**

**UN and joint documents**

1. UNSDCF 2020-25
2. CCA 2019-20
3. UNCT Country Results Report 2022 (developed 2021, not yet formally approved by government)
4. Annual UN report 2020
5. 2022 Joint Work Plans for the 4 Results Groups (Excel files)

**Government documents**

1. National Development Plan (NDP) 2030
2. Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) 2019-2024
3. Strategic Plan (Revised) 2020-2025. Department of Water and Sanitation
4. National Water Resources Strategy 3. Draft 2.6, November 2021. <https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/202208/47133gon2327.pdf>
5. National Water and Sanitation Master Plan 2018. Volume 3: Schedule of Action. Ver. 4.8.
6. Water for Growth and Development Framework 2009 (ver. 7). <https://www.dws.gov.za/WFGD/default.aspx> Department of Water and Sanitation.
7. SA Voluntary National Review (VNR) 2019 (VNR on SDGs)
8. SA SDG country report 2019

**Other documents**

1. Munnik et. al. (2020). The reluctant roll-out of Catchment Management Agencies: Assessing the key risks and consequences of delays in finalising institutional arrangements for decentralised water resource management. Water Resources Commission. <https://www.wrc.org.za/wp-content/uploads/mdocs/2943_final.pdf>
   1. **Malawi documents**

**UN and joint documents**

1. UNDAF 2019-23
2. CCA 2021 Information Sheet (stakeholder consultation output report, as part of CCA update process)
3. CCA update 2021 (latest draft 26/4/22)
4. 2021 UN Country Annual Results Report (draft ver.3)
5. Draft Roadmap for UNSDCF 2024-28
6. 2022 Joint Annual Work Plan
7. Malawi Framework for Common Climate Action May 2022
8. Climate-resilient WASH financing strategy May 2022

**Government documents**

1. Draft National Water Policy (2022, awaiting cabinet approval)
2. Ministry of Water and Sanitation: Priority Projects 2022
3. Malawi Vision 2063
4. 2063 10-year implementation plan (MIO) 2021-2030
5. Malawi Covid-19 Socio-Economic Recovery Plan 2021-23
6. Malawi Voluntary National Review of SDG progress 2020
7. Malawi Voluntary National Review of SDG progress 2022

## South Africa UNSDCF: design and implementation

Outcomes, outputs, indicators, and activities:

**Outcomes and Outcome indicators**

**Outcome 4.1** By 2025, South Africa is on a just transition to a Low-carbon society and vulnerable and marginalised communities are more resilient to adverse effects of climate change

**Indicators: most directly relevant:**

* Indicator: 4c. Number of national and local disaster risk-reduction strategies adopted by South Africa (domesticated indicator). Related SDG indicator 11.b.1; Baseline: 13 strategies (2019); Target: TBD; Source: National Disaster Management Centre of the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affair
* Indicator: 4d. Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population. Baseline: 15000 (2017); Target: TBD; Source: World Bank – World Development Indicators http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/worlddevelopment-indicators
* Indicator: 4e. Climate change vulnerability (0-1). Baseline: 0.09 (); Target: 10% decrease from baseline; Source: HCSS (<http://projects.hcss.nl/monitor/>)
* (added later?) Proportion of agricultural area under Climate Smart Agriculture (e.g. climate resilient seed varieties) (SDG 2.4.1)

**Outcome 4.1 Indicators: other relevant indicators:**

* Indicator: Number of jobs created through the expansion and implementation of environmental sectors. Related SDG indicator: (blank); Baseline: TBD; Target: TBD; Source: Statistics SA
* Indicator: Renewable power generation (GW/H). Related SDG indicator: (blank); Baseline: TBD; Target: TBD; Source: Statistics SA
* Indicator: 4a. Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population (based on the Community Childhood Hunger Identification Project (CCHIP) index. Related SDG indicator 2.1.2; Baseline: 26% (2012); Target: Reduce individual’s vulnerability to hunger to 6.6%; Source: SANHANES72, HSRC
* Indicator: 4b. Percentage of households that were vulnerable to hunger, from 24.2% in 2002. Related SDG indicator (blank); Baseline: 10.4% (2017); Target: Reduce household vulnerability to hunger to 5.7% by 2024.

**Outcome 4.2:** By 2025, natural resources are managed and utilised sustainably for improved livelihoods, health and well-being of vulnerable communities.

* Indicator: 4f. Level of water stress: freshwater withdrawal as a proportion of available freshwater resources. Related SDG indicator 6.4.2: Baseline: 41.38% (2016); Target: TBD; Source: HYDSTRA Database, SANBI and CSIR
* Indicator: 4h. Percentage of terrestrial and freshwater ecosystem types that are well protected (domesticated indicator). Related SDG indicator 15.1.2; Baseline: Terrestrial 28% (2018); Target: Freshwater 23% (2018); Source: TBD, SAPAD (2018), DEA and SANBI
* Outcome Indicator (added later?): Proportion of waste-water safely treated and discharged (SDG 6.3.1). Baseline: TBD; Target: TBD; Source: Goal Tracker SA.
* Outcome Indicator (added later?): Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services (SDG 6.1.1). Baseline: 80% (2017); Target: TBD; Source: Statistics South Africa General Household Survey; Goal Tracker SA

**2022 Key Activities**

The most relevant Key Activities include:

* 4.2.1.5 “Address transboundary Energy and Water insecurities by supporting WRM and river-basin authorities, and create regional platforms for dialogue and collaboration between Member States to strengthen regional solidarity through the development / implementation of Joint Action Plans”. UNDP lead.
* 4.2.1.7 “Support the sustainable management of SA’s natural capital through National Accounts of key ecosystems (water accounts, protected areas accounts) and Innovative Financing Models for Biodiversity Conservation”. UNDP lead.
* 4.2.3.5 “Support Gvt. initiatives focusing on resilient and resource-efficient practices in the COVID-19 and post COVID-19 times, including Energy- and Water-efficiency, Waste Beneficiation and widespread adoption of the Circular Economy”. ILO lead.

**From UNCT Country Results Report 2021:**

‘Planet’ results:

* Climate:
  + Climate-smart, energy efficient agricultural interventions, WEF nexus approach (50 households)
  + Climate-smart livestock production, rangeland management (120 small-scale farmers)
  + Farming start-up (100 women)
  + Job creation in waste management
  + Capacity to 200 Municipal officials in: Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA); waste management; climate smart agriculture (CSA).
* Natural resources are managed and utilised sustainably for improved livelihoods:
  + Food gardens (43 people). This doesn’t seem like much under this heading, but actually many of the initiatives under ‘climate’ support this heading as well.
* Bridging technology gaps for a green economy: produced a Green Technology Gap Analysis report, including water, energy and biodiversity sectors. Report ‘can’ be used to develop a Technology Action Plan (check if this is being developed).
* Econometrics Modelling on post COVID-19 Economic Recovery Options
* Driving Green Business Development

## Malawi UNSDCF: design and implementation

Outcomes, outputs, indicators, and activities, based on the 2022 Joint Work Plan *(Further analysis could be undertaken during a later phase of this initiative)*:

Under **Strategic Priority 3, “Inclusive and Resilient Growth”**, relevant outcomes, outputs and indicators include:

**Outcome 3.1: Households have increased food and nutrition security, equitable access to healthy ecosystems and WASH and resilient livelihoods.** Outcome 3.1 indicators:

* + 3.1.3: Catchment area conserved (lead FAO).
  + 3.1.5: Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030
  + 3.1.6 Percentage of people using basic drinking water services (disaggregated by location) (Lead agency-UNICEF)
  + 3.1.7 Percentage of people using basic sanitation services (disaggregated by location) (Lead agency-UNICEF)
* Output 3.1.1 Sub-national Government capacity for resilience programmes.
  + Output indicators (Lead agency for all: UNDP):
    - 3.1.1-1 Number of district councils that incorporate resilience issues in their district plans and have increased budget allocations towards resilience activities
    - 3.1.1-2 Number of district councils with functional M&E systems (trained M&E personnel, M&E plan, database, budget, reports)
    - 3.1.1-3 Number of district councils with functional committees at district and T/A level (CPC and SPC)
    - 3.1.1-4 Number of nationally-owned and operated Information Management Systems developed
  + Sub-outputs (and Activities) under Output 3.1.1.
    - 3.1.1.15 Strengthen the sub-national government capacity to implement national laws and policies and to deliver services to the public. Agencies listed for sub-outputs: UN-Habitat, WFP
      * Support development of relevant policy instruments to strengthen urban disaster and climate resilience (UN-Habitat)
      * Support district Councils to incorporate resilience issues in their district plans (WFP)
      * Support resilience building through nature-based solutions to climate change effects in Lilongwe City (UN-Habitat)
      * Promote mitigation of environmental and climate change adaptation in all 28 districts through ultra poor graduation members and community based financial organisation members (IFAD)
      * Support district councils to incorporate resilience issues in district plans. Advocate for increased budget allocation towards resilience activities from external donors and individual budgets (UNDP)
    - 3.1.1.16 System strengthening for risk informed programming, including climate change, resilience at sub-national level. Agencies listed for sub-outputs: UN-Habitat, IFAD, UNDP, UNICEF, WHO.
      * Support the updating or development of child sensitive Disaster risk management plans in selected districts; Support preparation/updating of local level disaster profiles and situational analysis and identify risk reduction priorities and best practices. (UNICEF)
* Output 3.1.2 Communities in targeted areas have enhanced disaster, risk management and early recovery from shocks (with associated Output indicators, and sub-outputs/activities, but UNEP not listed for any of those).

**Outcome 3.2 Malawi has more productive, sustainable and diversified agriculture, value chains and market access**

* Output 3.2.1 Improved agriculture service delivery to promote modern sustainable agriculture
  + 3.2.1.45 Plans and policy coherence for poverty eradication gender equality and ENR sustainability through improved sector and national district coordination (UNDP and UNEP)
  + 3.2.1.46 Improved guidelines and mechanisms for leveraging national and district expenditures and private investment on poverty reducing environment and natural resource (UNDP and UNEP)
* Output 3.2.4 Tenure rights
  + 3.2..4.19 Support community based participatory land use planning and operationalization (FAO)
  + 3.2.4.20 Support the mainstream land use planning and integrated watershed management in agricultural extension delivery (FAO)

Outcome 3.3 Malawi has strengthened economic diversification, inclusive business, entrepreneurship and access to clean energy.

* Output 3.3.1 Enhancing competitiveness and market access. No relevant activities.
* Output 3.3.3 (presumably this should be 3.3.2, as there is no 3.3.2): Empowering renewable energy services in Malawi.
  + From the 2022 Joint Work Plan it is unclear whether there are any activities in relation to assessing the viability and sustainability of renewable energy services, including hydropower which can have significant benefits but also potential tradeoffs with environmental and various social sustainable development objectives.