



**Remarks at Launch of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
(UNSDCF) 2021-2025**

**By H.E. Rosa Malango, UN Resident Coordinator and
Designated Official for Security
State House Entebbe, Uganda | 9 September 2020**

His Excellency the President of Uganda, General Yoweri Museveni

The Right Honourable Prime Minister, Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda

Honourable Ministers

His Excellency Ambassador Adonia Ayebare, Uganda Permanent Representative to the UN

UN Heads of Agencies and staff

Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of the United Nations system in Uganda, I would like to express deep appreciation to His Excellency, President of the Republic of Uganda, General Yoweri Museveni and the Government of Uganda for the excellent partnership the UN in Uganda has enjoyed over the past three decades and convey our hope that we will continue to count on this partnership going forward. I would also like to thank His Excellency, the President for his leadership and vision that informed the process of formulation of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2021-2025, which is a critical milestone in the implementation of the UN Reform.

Your Excellency, today's milestone comes at a time when we are commemorating the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations and Uganda celebrates 58 years of independence and membership of the United Nations. The theme for the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the United Nations is "The future we want, the United Nations we need: reaffirming our collective commitment to multilateralism"

In addition, the UN Secretary-General declared 2020 as the commencement of the Decade of Action for accelerating efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through providing sustainable solutions to all the world's biggest challenges—ranging from poverty, gender inequality, climate change and closing the finance gap.

UN at 75 and the UN Decade of Action present great opportunities and momentum for massive youth involvement in discussions and actions towards acceleration of the SDGs. The focus is on mobilizing everyone, everywhere to ensure that no one is left behind as we embark on the final ten years journey of delivering the Global Goals with an extraordinary spirit.

Your Excellency and distinguished guests, this year, 2020, is the end of the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2016-2020, which included some 18 UN entities focused on humanitarian action and sustainable development. With the SDGs at its core, the UNSDCF enables 31 UN entities to implement programmes through three Strategic Priorities: 1) Transformative and Inclusive Governance; 2) Shared Prosperity in a Healthy Environment; and 3) Human Well-being and Resilience.

The Cooperation Framework reinforces the mutual accountability between the UN and the host Government by creating space for the Joint Statement of accountability at Ministerial and UN Country Team level, which was signed by the Right Honourable Prime Minister, the Chairperson of the National Planning Authority (NPA), UN Resident Coordinator and UN entities. The Joint Statement provides information on the capabilities and contributions of UN entities as well as the UN Country Team configuration.

The Cooperation Framework elevates the partnership between the UN and the Government of Uganda by also providing for a second step – State level recognition of this commitment through the signing of the UNSDCF by His Excellency the President on behalf of the Republic of Uganda and by the UN Resident Coordinator on behalf of the UN Secretary-General.

The signing of the UNSDCF will be followed by the formulation of Joint Work Plans by UN and Country Programme Documents by various agencies with Government and other stakeholders to ensure close alignment to the NDP III action plans and other national policies and strategies. I am

happy to mention that two agencies, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UNDP have already developed CPDs aligned to the UNSDCF. Going forward the UN in Uganda will focus on key priority areas as follows:

- a) **Addressing COVID-19 and its impacts** - We will focus on addressing the new challenges that have arisen as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the request of the Ministry of Health, the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) built a temporary screening terminal at Entebbe International Airport. This was through the UN Migration Agency's (IOM) Support Entebbe Airport's COVID Response project. More than 1,000 passengers a day are expected to pass through the Entebbe terminal once the Airport re-opens. In addition, the UN in Uganda, under the technical leadership of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), carried out a comprehensive joint study on the socio-economic impact of the pandemic which found that the service and manufacturing sectors will be disproportionately affected and are likely to cause massive loss of jobs; there is a likelihood that poverty will increase by two to eight (2-8) percentage points. In the tourism sector alone, the study predicts a direct loss of US\$5 billion during the period 2020-2025. As part of our response, informed by the findings of our analysis, ten UN agencies have partnered with Stanbic Bank to complement efforts of Government and other actors by setting up an Economic Enterprise Restart Fund (EERF) to provide low-interest refinancing to support survival and recovery of micro and small enterprises during and post COVID-19,. Furthermore, through WHO, the UN has supported the Ministry of Health to conduct COVID-19 tests by buying test kits and building the capacity of laboratories. An additional 300,000 test kits will be procured in the coming months. Also, through UNDP, the UN has supported Business Continuity of Government through the provision of virtual collaboration tools (zoom), as well as assortment of Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) gadgets to enable the Government to function virtually and to continue operations in several Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) during the lock down period and beyond. Government response has been excellent with several public sector meetings now regularly conducted online, for example, the National Coordination Taskforce for COVID-19 chaired by Office of the Prime Minister; the Justice, Law and Order Sector Coordination meetings and

virtual round tables; the National SDG Secretariat coordination meetings, including consultations on the preparation of the Voluntary National Report; Local Government Sector coordination meetings, especially National level engagement with Chief Administrative Officers and Town Clerks of hot spot districts in the borders and transport corridor. The potential savings to Government when this practice becomes the new normal will be significant. UNDP is now engaging with the National Information Technology Authority of Uganda (NITA-U) to structure a broader offer to government to accelerate digital transformation.

- b)** Through UN support, efforts are ongoing to strengthen the National Emergence Operation and Coordination Centre (NECOC). UNDP has supported development of an integrated multi-hazard Spatial decision-making tool to inform identification and prioritisation of intervention areas and level of support required for preparedness, response, and recovery. The spatial map integrates areas at risk of locusts, floods, landslides, and those affected by COVID-19. UNDP is working with the Office of the Prime Minister to strengthen NECOC and activate the Regional, District and Cross Border coordination mechanisms that support the functionality of NECOC through integrated innovation in disaster preparedness strategies to promote inclusive and multi-sectoral crisis management and response to COVID-19.
- c)** **Promoting e-commerce platforms to sustain supply chains for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).** In partnership with Jumia Food Uganda, UNDP launched an e-commerce platform to sustain supply chains for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and connect them with consumers online to sustain livelihoods as part of the response to the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Since 8th May 2020 seven markets in Kampala are connected including Nakasero, Wandegeya, Nakawa, Naalya, Kalerwe, Bugolobi and Kibuye. During the same period, over 1,210 vendors are registered and selling their assorted produce online.
- d)** **Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF)** - We will focus on providing catalytic support towards optimizing the use of existing resources as well as identifying new financing approaches and address impediments to

financing sustainable development. The INFF will help Government and its partners develop a better understanding of the national financial needs and coordinate efforts to mobilise and align a wide range of financing sources with the country's sustainable development priorities, making use of the full potential of all financial and non-financial resources. We will also strengthen partnerships to bring together a wide range stakeholder to support Uganda's development such as the Agri-LED in the Rwenzori Region.

- e) **Monitoring of Efficient Delivery** - We will use the national SDG dashboard to monitor service delivery at central government and district level to assist in timely decision making. We will work with the relevant institutions to use the dashboard for accountability and reporting and we look forward to being part of the Government Annual Performance Review (GAPR) and having the UNSDCF Joint Steering Committee once a year to keep track of progress on agreed targets.

- f) **Youth Skilling and Empowerment** - Uganda has the second youngest population in the world and this comes along with challenges and opportunities. The UN system in Uganda will join the Government in their efforts to skill the youth of Uganda. The UN System in partnership with the National SDGs Secretariat at the Office of the Prime Minister and Youth Coalition for SDGs are undertaking a nationwide the One Million SDG Solutions from Youth in Uganda Innovation Challenge. The challenge aims at identifying and providing a catalogue of solutions that are changing lives positively and linking them with support from partners, including from the private sector, to enable them to scale up. Furthermore, as part of the UN's support, a Youth4Business Innovation and Entrepreneurship Facility has been established by UNDP in partnership with Stanbic Uganda Holdings Limited, which was generously launched by His Excellency, the President during the International Youth Day. The Facility seeks to promote impact-driven entrepreneurship, foster innovation, and leverage business solutions to address the youth unemployment challenge. The Facility has made available an initial USD 10 million of grant resources and technical assistance; and up to US\$200 million in concessional loans at below market rates. It is already providing flexible funding mechanism that will stimulate faster

recovery of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) that have borne the brunt of the impact of Covid-19.

As I conclude, I would like to thank the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), National Planning Authority (NPA), Government Ministries, Development Partners, Civil Society, private sector leaders, youth influencers and other partners for engaging in the inclusive consultative process during the preparation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Uganda (UNSDCF) 2021-2025 that builds on existing successful and strong partnerships. I thank them all for working tirelessly through the COVID-19 lock down to help us ensure that the Cooperation Framework reflects the aspirations of the third National Development Plan (NDP III), Uganda's National Vision 2040, East Africa Community Vision 2050, African Union Vision 2063 and the 2030 Agenda and the 17 SDGs.

Finally, I would like to reiterate the commitment of the UN system to work together with the Government and other stakeholders to achieve greater impact of our work in support of the people of Uganda. I also reaffirm our commitment to continue working with the Government and all stakeholders to accelerate the SDGs and ensure that we Leave No One Behind in Uganda.

Thank you.