

## Role of the RC System in the Implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA) for LLDCs (2014-2024)

Prepared by the UN Development Coordination Office (DCO) based on survey responses by RCO Economists from LLDCs in March 2022<sup>1</sup>

**Summary:** *The Resident Coordinator (RC) system is already making efforts to integrate the Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA) in UN Common Country Analysis (CCAs) and Cooperation Frameworks (CFs). RCs are making efforts to coordinate strategic initiatives around VPoA and action areas in terms of joint programmes, policy advice/dialogues, partnership development and fundraising. While these initiatives covered all six priority areas of the VPoA, most of the initiatives focused on priority areas of “structural and economic transformation” and “regional integration and cooperation”. RCs are actively participating/organizing and involved with the LLDC National Focal Points Network. However, some challenges remain in terms of coordinating VPoA related work at the country level related to 1) financing and (implementation) capacity/capability; 2) characteristics of LLDCs; 3) VPoA support structure within the United Nations System (UNS).*

In its resolution 76/217, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit at its seventy-seventh session a report on the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA) for Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) for the Decade 2014–2024. The report will review the progress made in the implementation of the VPoA since the last reporting period, which is early 2021, highlighting the key achievements and constraints encountered and suggesting recommendations for accelerating the implementation of the VPoA and achievement of the SDGs in LLDCs. In this regard, the UN Development Coordination Office (DCO) organized a survey among the Resident Coordinator Offices (RCOs) (via RCO Economists) to provide relevant inputs on the coordinative role of the Resident Coordinator (RC) System in the implementation of the VPoA in the respective countries. This document brings together the key findings from this survey.

### 1. The Resident Coordinator system is already making efforts to integrate the VPoA in UN Common Country Analysis and Cooperation Frameworks.

The following countries explicitly mention the VPoA in their respective Common Country Analysis (CCA)/ Cooperation Framework (CF): Kazakhstan CF (2021), Paraguay CF (2021) and Zambia CCA (2021) (the Zambia CF is currently being drafted, RCO Zambia expects to include reference to the VPoA as well). Many countries report to have integrated in their CCAs/CFs topics that are closely related to the VPoA priority areas: Afghanistan CCA, Chad CCA, Ethiopia CCA, Mali CF, Mongolia CCA, Rwanda CCA and CF, Tajikistan CCA (and forthcoming CF). Countries that explicitly mention the VPoA in their respective CCA/CF:

- The Kazakhstan CF (2021) recognizes the country as being an active member of the Vienna Programme of Action. Furthermore, RCO Economists from five Central Asian countries (all landlocked) meet on a regular basis to consult and develop joint papers on common challenges faced by the countries in the region, in line with the VPoA. Finally, the five RCOs will also develop a common chapter for their respective CCAs that will deal with the cross-border challenges of the five Central Asian states.

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<sup>1</sup> DCO circulated a questionnaire among RCOs to provide relevant inputs on the coordinative role of the RC System in the implementation of the VPoA in the respective countries. The survey was completed by 16 out of the 32 Land-locked Developing Countries' (LLDC) RCOs, namely Afghanistan, Chad, Ethiopia, Kazakhstan, Lao PDR, Malawi, Mali, Mongolia, Nepal, North Macedonia, Paraguay, Rwanda, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Zambia, Zimbabwe. Of these 16, two RCOs (Nepal and Lao PDR) indicated “no action” on implementation of the VPoA so far.

- The Paraguay CF mentions the VPoA in three instances and explicitly notes that it is aligned with the VPoA along with other key international agreements. Furthermore, specific outcomes and outputs are linked to the VPoA focusing on productivity, trade and economic competitiveness as well as other areas (e.g. Output 7.2).
- The VPoA is integrated in the Zambia CCA (2021) in chapter 4. (The CF is currently being drafted, RCO Zambia expects to include reference to the VPoA as well).

Countries that integrate in their CCAs/CFs topics that are closely related to the VPoA priority areas:

- The Afghanistan CCA analysed the range of issues regarding regional connectivity, including the regional infrastructure projects which connect natural gas and electricity producing countries in Central Asia to India and Pakistan through Afghanistan; transport infrastructure projects, both road and rail, to provide links to the international networks; and digital challenges and opportunities.
- In preparing the Chad CCA in 2021, an emphasis has been put on infrastructure development and maintenance (priority area 2 of the VPoA) especially transport infrastructures which is important for country exports and imports.
- The Ethiopia CCA identifies inadequate services in energy, telecommunications, transport, financial systems, and trade sectors in Ethiopia. The Ethiopia CF also considers the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) as one of the key new opportunities for inclusive economic development in Ethiopia. Furthermore, the CF emphasizes the importance of innovation and digitalization, access to clean and affordable energy, and infrastructure.
- In the Mali CF, priority area 2 (infrastructure development and maintenance) is aligned with the CF's Axis 3 "Accessible, Quality Basic Social Services, and Inclusive Social Protection" (particularly on ITC to support education). Priority area 5 (structural economic transformation) is aligned with the CF's Axis 2 "Inclusive Growth, Resilience and Environmental Sustainability".
- The Mongolia CCA analyzed the challenges created by the country's landlockedness, including integration in global trade, dependence on Russia and China, increased logistics costs which affect prices of domestically produced goods and competitiveness, and lack of transport infrastructure. It also analyzed the potential impact of China-Mongolia-Russia economic corridor and Mongolia's accession to the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement. The CF prioritized trade and connectivity as key enablers of economic transformation in Mongolia. Given that the current UNCT doesn't include any UN agency with a specific trade mandate, the RC/O invited UNCTAD and ITC to participate in the new UNCT configuration and support implementation of the new CF.
- The North Macedonia CCA includes an overview of economic, environment and governance challenges, which are in the in the scope of VPoA, and provides recommendations on the way forward. The CF includes interventions that address the above challenges.
- Whilst the Rwanda 2021 CCA and the 2022 CF do not squarely mention VoPA, the six priorities are reflected in both the CCA and CF. For instance, the documents capture how the UN supports processes to remove obstacles to trade at national, cross-border and regional level, with the view to use trade as an engine of development and means to implement the SDGs. The CF also extrapolates on the Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) and blended financing towards the SDGs.
- Tajikistan's CCA underlines regional cooperation and connectivity as critical for long-term economic development. Also, a people-centered economic transformation is extensively discussed in the CCA. For a lower middle income country that is landlocked and vulnerable to climate change, green economic transformation is necessary for the country to achieve its development aspirations. RCO Tajikistan is in the process of preparing the next CF which has economic transformation as a key pillar. Specific areas where elements of VPoA will feature will become more explicit when all the outputs and work plans have been developed.

**2. RCs are making efforts to coordinate strategic initiatives around VPoA and action areas in terms of joint programmes, policy advice/dialogues, partnership development and fundraising. While these initiatives covered all six priority areas of the VPoA, most of the initiatives focused on priority areas of “structural and economic transformation” and “regional integration and cooperation”.**

12 RCOs (namely, Afghanistan, Chad, Ethiopia, Malawi, Mali, Mongolia, North Macedonia, Paraguay, Rwanda, Tajikistan, Zambia, Zimbabwe) report having coordinated initiatives/activities related to the implementation of the VPoA and its six priority areas. Several RCOs have engaged in VPoA related policy advice/dialogues, some RCOs have also coordinated initiatives/activities on partnership development, joint programmes, and fundraising.

While RCO initiatives/activities covered all six priority areas of the VPoA, most of the initiatives/activities focused on priority areas of “structural and economic transformation” and “regional integration and cooperation”. Notable VPoA related initiatives/activities include (but are not limited to) the following:

- In Afghanistan, the most notable project is related to the maintenance of the humanitarian supply routes through border-crossings of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan and Uzbekistan, which includes a tariff-free import of humanitarian supplies and the maintenance of electricity provision through the engagement with the bordering countries.
- In Chad, the most notable project is the finalization of the national African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) strategy which contributes to the priority area 3 (international trade facilitation) of the VPoA.
- In Ethiopia, multiple members of the UNCT have been implementing the industrial parks development initiative of the country (including agro-industry parks) which aims to promote structural transformation of the economy and export trade through expansion of light manufacturing.
- In Malawi, the UNCT provided technical and financial resources to the government to prepare a government-owned and led COVID-19 Socioeconomic Recovery Plan designed to recover the country from the negative socioeconomic impacts the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the country. The UNCT is mobilising financial resources for implementing the plan.
- In Mongolia, the most notable project in 2021 is the UN Joint Programme (JP) rolling out the integrated approach to the SDG financing funded by the Joint SDG Fund (implemented by UNDP and UNICEF under the RC/O overall coordination). The key outcome of the JP is the development of the INFF strategy to support implementation of the 2021-2025 socio-economic development programme of Mongolia.<sup>2</sup>
- In Paraguay, in 2021, in line with priority area 5 of the VPoA, UNDP launched the SDG Investor Map and Platform for Paraguay focusing on investment opportunities to increase competitiveness of many current and more innovative industries.<sup>3</sup>
- In Rwanda, the UN Rwanda Joint Programme on "Enhancing development finance and effectiveness in Rwanda through integrated and innovative approaches for National Priorities and the SDGs" supports realization of priority area 6. The JP aims at supporting and accelerating the Government of Rwanda's efforts to enhance and implement an INFF.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://inff.org/country/mongolia>

<sup>3</sup> See here the potential investment opportunities identified: <https://sdginvestorplatform.undp.org/country/paraguay>

### **3. RCs are actively participating/organizing and are involved with the LLDC National Focal Points Network**

Within the context of the “Roadmap for Accelerated Implementation of the VPoA (August 2020)” the RC System (in collaboration with OHRLLS) was asked to establish an LLDC National Focal Points Network and facilitate regular meetings. In total, six countries reported to actively participate in or plan to establish LLDC National Focal Points Networks.

- In Malawi, the RCO has participated in meetings of the LLDC National Focal Points network in the context of Covid-19 response.
- In Mali, the RCO is making use of the existing mechanism of the UNSDCF coordination to support the implementation of the VPoA, organizing national focal points at three levels: strategic level, functional level, and operational level.
- In Mongolia, the RCO closely collaborates with the the *International Think Tank for LLDCs* which is based in Mongolia. It also initiated a joint proposal on economic transformation in LLDCs that will engage the RCOs and national focal points in seven LLDCs, including Mongolia, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Paraguay, Central African Republic, Burkina Faso and Zimbabwe.
- In Paraguay, the RCO economist encouraged the formation of this type of network specifically to also analyse the impacts of COVID-19 on LLDCs and recommendations for an accelerated recovery - it was recommended that a special report and analysis be developed on LLDCs and COVID-19 accelerated recovery.
- RCO Tajikistan has not directly organized an LLDC national focal points networks but supported dialogue and knowledge-sharing events that were organized by UNECE, UNESCAP and others. Among others, regional dialogues have focused on trade, transport, food security, and climate change.
- RCO Zambia is in the process of establishing an LLDC National Focal Points network.

### **4. Some challenges remain in terms of coordinating VPoA related work at the country level**

12 countries informed about challenges they experience in coordinating VPoA related work and made suggestions for tackling some of these. The reported challenges can be broadly summarized as follows: challenges related to 1) financing and (implementation) capacity/capability; 2) characteristics of LLDCs; 3) VPoA support structure within the United Nations System (UNS). These are summarized below and with further details in the Annex. RCOs made suggestions for tackling challenges within the UNS and for improved coordination/collaboration with government and development partners.

Challenges related to financing and (implementation) capacity/capability:

- Lack of financial and human resource capacity to facilitate, coordinate and/or accelerate the VPoA implementation among key stakeholders .
- Country context of economic/political sanctions poses a challenge for implementing the VPoA in some countries as does the country context of a humanitarian and economic crisis with limited resources available channeled to priority social sectors (especially, health).

Challenges related to characteristics of LLDCs:

- Disparity in characteristics of LLDCs (LLDCs is a group of countries with little, if any, similarities in the economic and societal system) impedes the group of countries to come together

Challenges related to VPoA support structure within United Nations System (UNS):

- Insufficient commitment of individual UN agencies to VPoA implementation and allocation of the financial resources

Some RCOs reported that they are currently insufficiently equipped to leverage UN capacities to accelerate the VPoA implementation. This could be attributed to the fact that the UN agencies with specific mandates related to VPoA priority areas are not often present at the country level

Suggestions for tackling some of the above challenges include :

- Enhanced guidance from OHRLS on how the RC system can harness the relevant technical capacities on VPoA priorities could be helpful for creating joint UN offers from the UN system to further VPoA priorities under the leadership of RCs. Strengthened engagement of relevant UN entities and technical experts at headquarters and regional on VPoA in the preparation of CCAs and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (CFs) at the country level.
- All UN entities operational in LLDCs should view VPoA as a core guiding framework and should be encouraged to implement programmes on VPoA priority areas.
- Greater alignment and cooperation with the national government focal points on the VPoA to exchange on the UNCT's actions in support of the VPoA and the government's planning as well.
- Strengthened collaboration between humanitarian, development, and peace actors; strengthen data consistency. Approaches such as joint analysis, planning, programming and UN joint funding mechanisms could be used to develop integrated responses in LLDCs.
- More and improved coordination with relevant UN Agencies and International Financial Institutions (IFIs) is needed to further the VPoA priorities.
- More regular interaction between RCOs of LLDCs and sharing of best practices of integrating VPoA priorities into UN's work on the ground will be helpful for RCs.

**About this note:** This note was prepared by the UN Development Coordination Office (DCO) by compiling the inputs received from RCOs of LLDCs. Please reach out to Arun Jacob ([jacoba@un.org](mailto:jacoba@un.org)), Carmen Arguello ([carmen.arguello@un.org](mailto:carmen.arguello@un.org)) and Nina Thelen ([nina.thelen@un.org](mailto:nina.thelen@un.org)) of the DCO SDG Financing Team for any comments or feedbacks.

## Annex

**Annex Table 1: Has the Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA) or its action areas been integrated in the design/implementation of Common Country Analysis and Cooperation Framework?**

Afghanistan	The CCA analysed the range of issues regarding regional connectivity, including the regional infrastructure projects which connect natural gas and electricity producing countries in Central Asian to the markets in India and Pakistan through Afghanistan; transport infrastructure projects, both road and rail, to provide links to the international networks; and digital challenges and opportunities.
Chad	While preparing Chad CCA in 2021, an emphasis has been put on infrastructure development and maintenance (Priority 2 of the VPoA) especially transport infrastructures which important for country exports and imports as Chad is a LLDC. Therefore a section on infrastructures in the CCA.
Ethiopia	For instance, the CCA identifies that there is inadequate services in energy, telecommunications, transport, financial systems, and trade sectors in Ethiopia. The CF also considers African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) as one of the key new opportunities for inclusive economic development in Ethiopia. The CF also emphasizes the importance of innovation and digitalization, access to clean and affordable energy, and and infrastructure.
Kazakhstan	UNSDCF 2021-2025 for Kazakhstan recognizes the country as being an active member of the Vienna Programme of Action. Furthermore, RCO Economists from five Central Asian countries (all landlocked) meet on a regular basis to consult and develop joint papers on common challenges faced by the countries in the region, in line with the VPoA. Finally, the five RCO will also develop a common chapter for their respective CCAs that will deal with the cross-border challenges of the five Central Asian states.
Malawi	(1) Population management and inclusive human development programme - addresses the various root causes of rapid population growth which is a major contributor to high poverty levels in the country (2) Inclusive and resilient growth programme - is addressing climate change related issues, which have been identified a the catalysts to natural distorters that continually occur in the country and undermines the country already weak economic structure and growth and development prospects (3) Peace, inclusion, and effective institutions programme - is focused on building the capacity of the state and its institutions to deliver essential services to the population by addressing the root causes of poor governance
Mali	Priority 2: Infrastructure development and maintenance: Energy infrastructure and IT and communication This priority is aligned with UNSDCF's Axis 3 "Accessible, Quality Basic Social Services, and Inclusive Social Protection» (Particularly on ITC to support education) Priority 5: Structural transformation of the economy. This priority is aligned with UNSDCF's Axis 2 "Inclusive Growth, Resilience and Environmental Sustainability" .
Mongolia	CCA analyzed the challenges created by the country's landlockedness, including integration in global trade, dependence on Russia and China, increased logistics costs which affect prices of domestically produced goods and competitiveness, and lack of transport infrastructure. It also analyzed potential impact of China-Mongolia-Russia economic corridor and Mongolia's accession to the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement. RCO also used analytical reports of the LLDC International Think Tank for preparation of the CCA. The CF prioritized trade and connectivity as key enablers of economic transformation in Mongolia. Given that the current UNCT doesn't include any UN agency with a specific trade mandate, the RC/O invited UNCTAD and ITC to participate in the new UNCT configuration and support implementation of the new CF.
North Macedonia	CCA includes overview of economic, environment and governance challenges, which are ethe in the scope of VPoA, and provides recommendations on the way forward. CF includes interventions that address the above challenges



Paraguay	<p>The UNSDCF mentions the VPoA in three instances and explicitly notes that it is aligned with the VPoA along with other key international agreements. Furthermore, specific outcomes and outputs are linked to the VPoA focusing on productivity, trade and economic competitiveness as well as other areas (E.g. Output 7.2).</p> <p>For example, the UNSDCF mentions (p. 20 in Spanish) that "Landlocked Developing Countries. High commercial costs negatively influence the country's competitiveness in international trade and its ability to attract and retain foreign direct investment, factors that, in turn, affect growth and diversification of the economy, structural economic transformation and sustainable development of the country. Overcoming these difficulties requires greater investment for the development of transport, energy and technology infrastructure of information and communications, advances in the improvement of integration processes and in terms of trade facilitation, with the support and joint work of the Landlocked Developing Countries, countries in transit and their development partners, as established by the Vienna Program of Action in favor of LLDCs and is monitored by this same Program through its priorities and evaluations."</p>
Rwanda	<p>Whilst the UN Rwanda 2021 Common Country Analysis and the 2022 Cooperation Framework do not squarely mention VoPA, the six priorities are reflected in both the CCA and CF. For instance, the documents capture how the UN supports processes to remove obstacles to trade at national, cross-border and regional level, with the view to use trade as an engine of development and means to implement the SDGs (Priority 1); Support Rwanda's trajectory towards embracing technology across all sectors, with critical focus on bridging the digital divide by enabling marginalised and most vulnerable groups to benefit from technological advancements, including development of required infrastructure. Technology and innovation is used to support delivery towards a green, resilient, sustainable, and inclusive society. Promotion of eGovernance including online service delivery, solutions that contribute to green energy, as well as support to digital policy coherence and implementation (Priority 2); Strengthen small scale cross-border trade to combat poverty and enhance social cohesion, particularly among women, youth, and persons with disabilities and facilitate the realization of the AfCFTA (Priority 1, 3 and 4); job creation for women and youth through Joint Programmes such as Gender Equality and Women Empowerment; Youth Joint Programme; Creating peace dividends for women and youth through increased cross-border trade and strengthened food security; Rural Women Economic Empowerment (Priority 5).</p> <p>Cooperation Framework also extrapolates on the Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) and blended financing towards the SDGs. This includes climate financing to serve as an innovative model based on the global green banking experience, to unlock new private investment in key green sectors such as energy, clean cooking, and agriculture. Furthermore, boosting domestic savings and investments as well as design of a tax regime for agriculture to boost domestic revenue generation has been completed. (Priority 6)</p>
Tajikistan	<p>Tajikistan's common country analysis (CCA) underlines regional cooperation and connectivity as critical for long-term economic development. Also, a people-centered economic transformation is extensively discussed in the CCA. For a lower middle income country that is landlocked and vulnerable to climate change, green economic transformation is necessary for the country to achieve its development aspirations. We are now in the process of preparing the next UNSDCF which has economic transformation a key pillar. Specific areas where elements of VPoA will feature will become more explicit when all the outputs and work plans have been developed.</p>
Uzbekistan	<p>The VPoA is (implicitly) mainstreamed into the UN programming mainly through the Joint Work Plans. 2021-2022 JWPs to some extent cover all 6 priorities outlined in VPoA. Please refer to the following mapping of the UNSDCF/JWPs with the VPoA <a href="https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1-ZWY18OQq9Aa2c1EYqrvvUFj">https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1-ZWY18OQq9Aa2c1EYqrvvUFj</a>. The CCA also implicitly covers many of the dimensions of the VPoA ( <a href="https://uzbekistan.un.org/en/91556-united-nations-common-country-analysis-uzbekistan">https://uzbekistan.un.org/en/91556-united-nations-common-country-analysis-uzbekistan</a> )</p>
Zambia	<p>The VPoA is integrated in the CCA (2021), in chapter 4. The CF is currently being drafted, we expect to include it as well.</p>
Zimbabwe	<p>All priority areas are relevant and particularly infrastructure development and maintenance (priority 2); international trade and trade facilitation (priority 3); regional integration and cooperation (priority 4) and structural economic transformation (priority 5) as they form they are key in responding to local contextual challenges and need to enhance economic transformation, growth and competitiveness &amp; social recovery.</p>

**Annex Table 2: Have the RC/RCO coordinated initiatives/activities related to the implementation of the VPoA and its six priority areas? (Report on the most notable contribution that can be attributed to RC/RCO?)**

Country	What strategic support or coordination did the RC/RCO provide to the VPoA related initiative?	Which of the VPoA six priority areas does the initiative relate to?	Please provide additional details on the initiative coordinated by the RC/RCO, including any links to knowledge products/resources available on this regard.	Please share information on the single most notable project implemented by members of the UNCT in your country in 2021, relevant to the VPoA. If available, please provide links to the project webpage
Afghanistan	Partnerships development;	Priority 4: Regional integration and cooperation; Priority 1: Fundamental transit policy issues;	The Office of the DSRSG/RC/HC was responsible from the UN side for the organization of the 2020 Afghanistan Donors' Conference, which had specific sessions, side events and discussions with Member States from the region to support regional connectivity and cooperation with Central Asian countries as well as India and Pakistan. After 15 August 2021, the UN RC Office in Afghanistan supported the engagement with the regional stakeholders in the context of the 19th OIC Ministerial Level Conference on Afghanistan held in Islamabad, Pakistan. The engagement includes support for the transit of humanitarian supplies through the territories of bordering countries such as the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan and Uzbekistan, i.e. transportation by wheat and wheat and other humanitarian supplies from Turkey, Kazakhstan and other countries in the region by rail. It has also resulted in the establishment of humanitarian air connections with Kazakhstan, Pakistan and Qatar. Furthermore, the UN facilitated the engagement of Afghanistan's de facto authorities with bordering countries to ensure the continuing supply of electricity to Afghanistan from those countries, which was critical for avoiding further deterioration of the humanitarian situation.	Considering the prevailing context of Afghanistan post-15 August 2021, which has put the country into the sanctions environment, the most notable project is related to the maintenance of the humanitarian supply routes through border-crossings of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan and Uzbekistan, which includes a tariff-free import of humanitarian supplies and the maintenance of electricity provision through the engagement with the bordering countries.
Chad	Policy Advice/Di alogue;Joint Program mes;	Priority 2: Infrastructure development and maintenance; Priority 3: International trade and trade facilitation;	Recently the RCO coordinated the organization on a workshop on Trade facilitation in line with the AfCFTA targeted for Chadian officials	The most notable project is the finalization of the national AfCFTA strategy which contribute to the priority N°3 of the VPoA
Ethiopia	Policy Advice/Di alogue;	Priority 5: Structural economic transformation; Priority	RCO provided technical advice, support and facilitation to the relevant government authorities in the process of formulating 10	Multiple members of the UNCT have been implementing the industrial parks development initiative of the country (including agro-industry parks) which aims



		6: Means of implementation;	years perspective development plan (2021-2030) in which the emphasis has been on structural transformation and sustainable development. It has also been doing advocacy work in order that the country would not go off track in the implementation of this plan due to multiple crises such as drought and the ongoing conflict in the norther part of the country. Currently, RCO is initiating a process to support the government to develop integrated national financing framework (INFF).	to promote structural transformation of the economy and export trade through expansion of light manufacturing.
Malawi	Policy Advice/Di alogue;P artnershi ps develop ment;Fun draising;J oint Program mes;	Priority 5: Structural economic transformation;Priority 6: Means of implementation;	<p>In the context of the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, some of the initiatives coordinated by the RCO are the following:</p> <p>(1) Coordination of a Humanitarian Country Team, jointly co-chaired by the RC and government, that led to the development of a US\$ 213 million National COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan and a USD 140.1 million COVID-19 Flash Appeal to finance the gap in the national response plan</p> <p>(2) Resource mobilisation: The UN Resident Coordinator activated the Humanitarian Window of the Malawi SDG Acceleration Fund (national Multi-Partner Transfer Fund), as one mechanism available to support coherent and coordinated resource mobilisation efforts, which saw over US\$ 1 million mobilised to support the COVID-19 response. This was atop US\$50.2 million reprogrammed funds.</p> <p>(3) Direct support to economic recovery efforts: UN-Malawi provided immediate financial support to 202 micro, small and medium enterprises in an effort to prop up and help livelihoods recover</p>	The UN Country Team provided technical and financial resources to the government to prepare a government-owned and led COVID-19 Socioeconomic Recovery Plan designed to recover the country from the negative socioeconomic impacts the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the country. The recovery plan front loads priority policy reforms and interventions linked to the First 10-year Implementation Plan of Malawi's Vision 2063, which are aimed at boosting production in the short-to-medium term and thereby reinvigorate economic growth, create employment, and restore livelihoods, especially those of small businesses and vulnerable groups. When implemented, the recovery plan will greatly contribute to the resilience and structural strength of the country and its economy. Currently, the UNCT is mobilising financial resources for implementing the plan
Mali	Policy Advice/Di alogue;	Priority 3: International trade and trade facilitation;Priority 4: Regional integration and cooperation;Priority 5: Structural economic transformation;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RCO-MALI coordinated with UNCTAD the Virtual Stakeholder Engagement and Capacity Building Workshop to accelerate the implementation of eT Readies</li> <li>• The workshop was organized following the structured monitoring exercise of the implementation of eT Readies carried out by UNCTAD in 18 countries including Mali. It also contributes to give impetus to the development program of electronic commerce in accordance to the eT Ready action matrix and the political</li> </ul>	<p>'Renforcement des capacités et développement de l'auto-emploi des femmes et jeunes en milieu rural dans le cadre de la consolidation de la paix et la cohésion sociale (implement by FAO, IOM and UNESCO)</p> <p>ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE, RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT PROGRAM IN MALI (PAGEDD, UNDP)</p>

			priorities of each country, and at the same time, guide the strategies of development partners, all in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has accentuated the need to accelerate reforms and initiatives favorable to electronic commerce.	
Mongolia	Policy Advice/Di alogue;Jo int Program mes;Fun draising; Partners hips develop ment;	Priority 3: International trade and trade facilitation;Priority 4: Regional integration and cooperation;Priority 5: Structural economic transformation;Priority 6: Means of implementation;	The RCO coordinated the UN support to the Government of Mongolia in developing seven 10-year programmes, including on human development, social development, economic and infrastructure development, regional development, environment and climate change, governance, and national competitiveness. The RCO staff have been included as members of the government working group who coordinates development of the national programmes, and UN agencies staff have been included in thematic sub-groups. The RCO jointly with ESCAP supported macroeconomic modelling of different policy options <a href="https://unescap.org/events/2022/national-workshop-mongolia-building-forward-better">https://unescap.org/events/2022/national-workshop-mongolia-building-forward-better</a> , and also been working on preparation of the draft investment strategy. The RCO in Mongolia also initiated a joint proposal with the OHRLLS, DESA and UNCTAD on economic transformation in landlocked countries with focus on trade and investment policies. The proposal was submitted to Peace and Development Fund administered by DESA.	The most notable project in 2021 is the UN joint programme rolling out the integrated approach to the SDG financing funded by the Joint SDG Fund. It is being implemented by UNDP and UNICEF under the RC/O overall coordination. The key outcome of the joint programme is development of the INFF strategy that brings together different financing sources to support implementation of the 2021-2025 socio-economic development programme of Mongolia. <a href="https://inff.org/country/mongolia">https://inff.org/country/mongolia</a>
North Macedonia	Policy Advice/Di alogue;	Priority 5: Structural economic transformation;	RCO Analytical briefs Input for policy documents Quality assurance to joint projects	National Development Strategy 2022-42  Nationally Determined Contributions  Strengthening the Economic-Social Council  Joint UN/EBRD Green Financing Facility  Strengthening Central Unit for Infrastructure Investments
Paraguay	Policy Advice/Di alogue;Jo int Program mes;	Priority 5: Structural economic transformation;Priority 6: Means of implementation;Priority 4: Regional integration and cooperation;	The RCO has cooperated with the neighboring countries of Bolivia (an LLDC) and Argentina RCOs to strengthen regional integration and cooperation around the most disconnected and marginalised part of the country, which is a shared regional ecosystem with Bolivia and Argentina - the Gran Chaco Americano. This region and its unique ecosystem is also undergoing infrastructure and services development to increase its connectivity and trade potential through the	In 2021, in line with Priority 5 of the VPOA, UNDP launched the SDG Investor Map and Platform for Paraguay focusing on investment opportunities to increase competitiveness of many current and more innovative industries. See here the potential investment opportunities identified (Scroll down) <a href="https://sdginvestorplatform.undp.org/country/paraguay">https://sdginvestorplatform.undp.org/country/paraguay</a>

			<p>construction of its first paved roads and other services. The RCO also supports Mol for the country by initiating the INFF process at national level through a multi-stakeholder group.</p>	
Rwanda	<p>Joint Programmes; Policy Advice/Dialogue; Fundraising; Partnerships development;</p>	<p>Priority 5: Structural economic transformation; Priority 6: Means of implementation; Priority 4: Regional integration and cooperation; Priority 1: Fundamental transit policy issues; Priority 2: Infrastructure development and maintenance; Priority 3: International trade and trade facilitation;</p>	<p>Pleased to share the following links with more information on VoPA related interventions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="https://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/project/00122835">https://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/project/00122835</a></li> <li><a href="https://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/project/00092006">https://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/project/00092006</a></li> <li><a href="https://jointsdggfund.org/programme/enhancing-development-finance-and-effectiveness-rwanda-through-integrated-and-innovative">https://jointsdggfund.org/programme/enhancing-development-finance-and-effectiveness-rwanda-through-integrated-and-innovative</a></li> <li><a href="https://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/project/00120072">https://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/project/00120072</a></li> <li><a href="https://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/country/RWA">https://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/country/RWA</a></li> <li><a href="https://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/project/00120074">https://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/project/00120074</a></li> <li><a href="https://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/project/00127926">https://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/project/00127926</a></li> <li><a href="https://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/project/00120076">https://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/project/00120076</a></li> </ol>	<p>The UN Rwanda Joint Programme on "Enhancing development finance and effectiveness in Rwanda through integrated and innovative approaches for National Priorities and the SDGs" supports realization of Priority 6. The JP aims at supporting and accelerating the Government of Rwanda's efforts to enhance and implement an integrated national financing framework (INFF), by strengthening development finance and effectiveness through integrated and innovative approaches to support the implementation of National Priorities and the SDGs.</p> <p>The JP interviewed in four interconnected levels:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Strengthened policy coordination at strategic and programme planning level amongst stakeholders through existing governance and development partnership mechanisms</li> <li>§ Increased evidence generation to inform medium-term costing scenarios and SDG financing decision-making, including incorporation of COVID-19 risk factors</li> </ul> </li> <li>Systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Strengthened core functions of the Public Financial Management system to harmonize plans, budgets and financing more effectively.</li> <li>§ Enhanced institutional capacity of key stakeholders through trainings on the use of new guidelines and tools to accelerate delivery of NST1 and SDGs.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Private sector engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Enhanced enabling environment for private sector to align business operations and investments to the SDGs, including through scaling-up "shared value" approaches in key industries (e.g. agribusinesses) and new corporate social responsibility frameworks</li> <li>§ Capacity built to operationalize blended financing solutions and mechanisms</li> </ul> </li> <li>Accountability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Reinforced monitoring and oversight systems to track SDG implementation, including through budget analysis tools</li> <li>§ Promote more effective, inclusive participation, with emphasis on Parliament, decentralized entities and citizens.</li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p><a href="https://jointsdggfund.org/programme/enhancing-development-finance-and-effectiveness-rwanda-through-integrated-and-innovative">https://jointsdggfund.org/programme/enhancing-development-finance-and-effectiveness-rwanda-through-integrated-and-innovative</a></p>
Tajikistan	<p>Partnerships development; Policy</p>	<p>Priority 4: Regional integration and cooperation; Priority 5: Structural economic transformation;</p>	<p>RCO has participated and support Tajikistan's participation in several regional capacity building events. These included trade and transport, regional cooperation, and food security</p>	<p>There are projects directly and indirectly supporting structural economic transformation in Tajikistan. However, several initiatives related to regional cooperation are at an upstream policy level. These include capacity building events and</p>

	Advice/Di alogue;		and climate change, as well as financing for development.	policy dialogue some of which were organized with UNESCE and UNESCAP.
Zambia	Joint Program mes;Polic y Advice/Di alogue;	Priority 4: Regional integration and cooperation;Priority 5: Structural economic transformation;	we are working with ECA to assist Government of Zambia to reap the full benefits of the regional integration, including the AfCFTA.	We currently don't have it
Zimbabwe	Policy Advice/Di alogue;	Priority 5: Structural economic transformation;Priority 4: Regional integration and cooperation;	Leading and coordination of the integration of the VoPA components in the CCA and UNSDCF	UNIDO through supported development of an industrialization strategy linking particularly Priority 3A “ (b) Manufactured components of LLDC exports to diversified markets and products” and Priority 5 “(a) Increase value added in manufacturing and agriculture sectors to achieve Inclusive and Sustainable Development”.

**Annex Table 3: Has the RC/RCO participated or helped in organizing the LLDC National Focal Points Network? Please provide brief details (2-3 sentences max)**

Afghanistan	Currently, Afghanistan operates under sanctions, thus making its participation infeasible.
Malawi	So far, RCO has only participated in meetings of the LLDC National Focal Points networks. For example, the RC participated in the 2020 meeting and gave an update both on the COVID-19 situation in the country and efforts that were put in place to combat its spread and minimise its impacts
Mali	RCO organize national focal point with each other to support the implementation of the VPoA through the existing mechanism of the UNSDCF coordination. at three levels: v Strategic level: A National Joint Steering Committee (NCPC) composed of ministers from the relevant departments, representatives of civil society ridges and AFPs heads and co-chaired by the Minister in charge of international cooperation and the Resident Coordinator of the UNS, will provide strategic leadership of UNSDCF. v Functional level: THE UNS Country Team will provide guidance, coordination and monitoring of the implementation of various strategic components of UNSDCF. The EP will be based on six inter-agency working groups: v Operational Level: Three UNSDCF Results Groups (Governance, Inclusive Growth and Environment, Basic Social Services and Protection) made up of SNU representatives and national partners will provide business planning, monitoring and reporting. Ad hoc thematic groups will be set up as needed.
Mongolia	The RC/O closely collaborates with the LLDC International Think Tank based in Mongolia. It also initiated a joint proposal on economic transformation in LLDCs that will engage the RCOs and national focal points in seven LLDCs, including Mongolia, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Paraguay, Central African Republic, Burkina Faso, Zimbabwe
Paraguay	Yes, the RCO economist encouraged the formation of this type of network specifically to also analyse the impacts of COVID-19 on LLDCs and recommendations for an accelerated recovery - it was recommended that a special report and analysis be developed on LLDCs and COVID-19 accelerated recovery. The RCO economist also intended to participate with the RC in the 2022 meeting of LLDCs focal points network in Geneva but this was cancelled due to the Omicron variant.
Rwanda	No, but we do have VoPA focal point at UN level. At the moment there is no need to establish LLDC National Focal Points network, as the priorities of the Rwanda as LLDC are reflected in our Cooperation Framework which is aligned with the Government National Strategy for Transformation (NST1)
Tajikistan	RCO has not directly organized such networks but supported dialogue and knowledge-sharing events that were organized by UNECE, UNESCAP and others. Among others, regional dialogues have focused on trade, transport, food security, and climate change.
Zambia	we are in the process of establishing it.

## Annex Table 4: From the perspective of RC/RCO coordination function, what do you consider are the main constraints encountered for accelerating the implementation of the VPoA and achievement of the SDGs in LLDCs?

Country context of economic/political sanctions. Until the sanctions are lifted and internationally recognized national authorities are in place, the implementation of the VPoA would remain a challenge. Until the situation is normalized, it is difficult to identify other operational constraints.

The main constraint encountered for accelerating the implementation of the VPoA is the lack of resources.

Absence of dedicated human and financial resource capacity to facilitate and coordinate implementation of the VPoA. Institutional inertia and long-enshrined culture in UN agencies to work as one to accelerate progress towards the SDGs.

Rallying partners and stakeholders to mobilise resources to finance development priorities. Country requires huge financing to pay for its development needs. Yet, the government is struggling to raise financing even for its own recurrent needs. Budgetary resources are constantly falling short of even recurrent needs, with increasing deficits each year, which has contributed to an accumulation of a large and public debt. However, resources mobilisation efforts among partners and stakeholders are fragmented, currently.

At the United Nations level, the importance of effective partnership and collaboration between AFPs at country level and United Nations entities at regional and global levels is essential. There is also collaboration between the UNS at the country level and non-resident agencies, international financial institutions (IFIs) and other stakeholders to achieve tangible results.

It should be noted that the reform of the United Nations offered new opportunities to reduce the duplication of efforts and to work towards more streamlined and coherent engagement across the United Nations system. It should also be noted that closer collaborations between different entities of the UNS will be particularly important in LDCs given that their governments generally have limited capacity to manage multiple processes. In this regard, it is proposed to strengthen the engagement of relevant United Nations officials at headquarters in the preparation of Common Country Assessments (CCAs) at the country level in order to strengthen vertical collaboration.

Another important thing is the need to strengthen collaborations between humanitarian, development and peace actors, and to strengthen data consistency. In this case, approaches such as joint analysis, planning, programming and UN joint funding mechanisms should be used to develop integrated responses in LDCs.

The key challenges encountered by the RCOs include i) lack of commitment of individual UN agencies to VPoA implementation and allocation of the financial resources; ii) UN agencies having specific mandates related to VPoA priority areas are not present at the country level and provide little technical support to the governments; iii) RCOs do not have sufficient leverages, including funding and human resources, to accelerate the VPoA implementation.

Group of countries with little, if any, similarities in the economic and societal system

Greater alignment and cooperation with the national government focal points on the VPoA to exchange on the UNCT's actions in support of the VPoA and the government's planning as well.

a) Availability of funds: LDCs have small budgets and often need development partner support to operate basic services. While UN Agencies contribute to these needs, multi-lateral development banks often have significantly more funds than UN AFPs, while the UN has substantial expertise to offer to a Government. At the end of the day, LDC Governments need sustainable financing to reach the ambitious SDG targets which require increased right mix of financing (domestic resources, public and private, diaspora, ODA, trade finance, capital markets and banking sectors). In addition, within emergency contexts the overall requirements are quite high whereas in countries transition to development, there is a much smaller donor base and generally lower levels of resources available. Governments in upcoming MICs are often expected to prioritize budget allocations for the social sector, while also having to simultaneously prioritise several other sectors. Often this leads to lack of clarity from the Government on what they would like to prioritise, with support often welcomed as long as donors are able to provide external funding and technical expertise. At times the priorities of the government are not necessarily what donors have the appetite to contribute to.

b) Capacity of Government systems to deliver services and produce data: In many cases, government systems are not able to absorb financial resources or do not deliver services efficiently. Because of historical challenges with education, the capacity of government and other officials may not be strong at all levels, from national to provincial/regional and local levels. In addition, capacity to generate, disseminate and use quality disaggregated data aligned with the SDG to inform policies and strategies is a challenge. The One UN Rwanda has been supporting the Government in this area, but its support is insufficient due to inadequate resources to meet the demand.

c) Coordination: An example where harmonization would facilitate the joint work, is the different fiscal cycles for UN agencies and the Government, that sometimes hinder effective planning, prioritization, coordination and measuring and reporting of results as well as harmonization of joint support to the Government. While the CF is aligned with the Government fiscal cycle, individual UN agencies need to do more in its alignment given the difference in annual year end reporting (December for UN agencies and July for the Government).

The main challenge is the implementation capability of the member states. That varies from country to country, but for lower middle income countries limited capacities and financing are two major constraints. As a result, they are not able to translate international and regional commitments into concrete action that each member state has to take.

- Financing gap;
- human capacity;
- more coordination with relevant UN Agencies and IFIs.

- Country currently facing an economic and humanitarian crisis and the government is struggling to mobilise resources to meet humanitarian and developmental needs. Donors are stepping in to assist the situation, but the support is far from adequate.
  - The main challenges facing the the country with regards to implementation of VoPA would be the limited resources which have to be channelled to the priority social sectors, especially, health.
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