

## **Initiative:**

# Leveraging the UN Reform at country level to accelerate achievement of ICPD priorities and UNFPA's Three Transformative Results

## **Countries:**

Georgia and North Macedonia

## **Category of success:**

Effective positioning of UNFPA in UN reform processes at country level

## **Objective:**

Ensure strategic integration of the UNFPA mandate in the UNSDCF and lead its implementation to influence national policy agenda and accelerate desired changes for achieving UNFPA SP results.

The Cooperation Framework guides the entire programme cycle, driving planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of collective UN support for achieving the 2030 Agenda in the country, while leaving no one behind. The Cooperation Framework determines and reflects the UN development system's contributions in this regard; therefore UNFPA's leading role and position in the planning and implementation of the UNSDCF relevant results is of critical importance for influencing national policy agenda, fostering collaboration among the UN agencies, mobilizing partnerships and resources for accelerating achievement of ICPD priorities and the UNFPA's Transformative results.

## **Strategy:**

The strategy included applying evidence-based advocacy, setting a clear vision, proactively engaging partners, and co-leading and actively contributing to the process of development of the Common Country Analysis and the UNSDCF. This resulted in the full integration of the priorities related to the ICPD agenda (reiterated in the national Nairobi Commitments),.

UNFPA's Head of Office and the team directly contributed at every stage of the CCA and UNSDCF development, influencing the formulation of the vision, issues, results framework, partners, etc. UNFPA successfully advocated with the UNCT to make strengthening of human capabilities, well-being and social equality as the UNSDCF's overarching strategic priority. This is directly linked to UNFPA's mandate and the Strategic Plan priorities; it is a clear shift from previous UN cooperation frameworks making emphasis on supporting social and economic development.

UNFPA continued to support the UNSDCF's implementation being a true example of the UN Reform devotee, resulting in leadership roles in UNSDCF's governance structures (Joint Steering Committee member, Results Group Chair, MEL Group Chair, UN Youth Theme Group Chair, etc).

## Impact:

### In North Macedonia:

- **Full integration of the three TRs in the UNSDCF**, confirmed by the desk review conducted by UNFPA HQ in 2021.
- **UNFPA's leadership positions in the UNSDCF's governance structures:** Without an International Representative, the HoO is a member of the Joint Steering Committee, HoO chairs one of the most complex outcome groups - Quality Services for All, covering three sectors, health, education, and social protection; UNFPA Chairs the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning group, providing UNFPA with a leadership role for data, SDGs and population dynamics.
- **Resource mobilization:** The UN Reform enabled UNFPA to expand its strategic partnerships, mobilizing over 92% (\$1,754,000) of its indicative other resources in the first two years, stated in the CPD. In only two years: **four Joint Projects** (Migration MPTF - UNFPA, IOM, and UNHCR; PBF - UNFPA and UNDP; UNPRPD MPTF - UNDP, UNICEF, and UNFPA; COVID MPTF - UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO), **UK funded Project on GBV** - positioning UNFPA as the lead agency on GBV.
- **Partnerships:** UNFPA as a Chair strategically positioned in the education, social protection, and health sectors. Furthermore, it stimulates collaboration with the EU, thus increasing the absorption of IPA funds.
- **Leave no one behind:** Access to SRH services was obstructed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, especially for women and girls in underserved areas. UNFPA, through the Joint Project, brought lifesaving services for cervical cancer prevention closer to the affected population, through mobile clinics, enabling check-ups for around 2000 women and girls. The developed model of services was adopted and funded by the national partners, allowing for an expanded menu of services.

### In Georgia:

- **The UNSDCF reflects UNFPA CPD priorities and Transformative Results** and UNFPA contributes to achieving three out of five UNSDCF outcomes.
- **UNFPA's leadership positions in the UNSDCF's structures:** Without an International Representative, UNFPA HoO has been leading the Results Group covering three major sectors – Health, Education and Social Services. This positions UNFPA strategically to facilitate policy discussions and collaboration; UNFPA is chairing the UN Theme Group on Youth and the UN Joint Team on HIV/AIDS.
- **Partnership and resource mobilization:** Since the launch of the UNSDCF, UNFPA has been participating in seven UN Joint Programmes and one partnership project funded by the USAID. Among those is the first UN Joint Programme (WHO, UNICEF, UNOPS and UNFPA) in the area of Health, supported by the EU Delegation - the partnership initiative with the government to introduce innovative telemedicine solutions, including in the area of Sexual and Reproductive Health, to increase access to quality ANC and FP services and make positive impact on health and well-being of women, including those who are furthest behind.

- **The furthest behind first:** UNFPA, as a lead agency in addressing the rights and needs of Women with Disabilities, within the frames of the UN Joint Programme supported by the SDG Fund, has supported integration of rights and needs of women with disabilities in the SRH and GBV services and empowering organizations of women with disabilities to advocate for universal access to quality SRH and GBV services.

## Lessons learned

- Establishing an excellent working relationship with the UN RC and the RCO, offering high-quality knowledge and technical expertise throughout the UNSDCF elaboration and implementation process is of critical importance;
- Encouraging and empowering the Country Office staff to actively contribute to the UNCT processes;
- Bring value to the CCA/UNSDCF process in the form of constructive partnership, willingness to do the leg work, evidence, and analysis gives UNFPA a seat at the (head of) the table;
- Applying critical thinking and creativity for finding entry points for positioning UNFPA's mandate prominently in the UNSDCF architecture and at the national level;
- Early positioning in the UNSDCF process, starting from the CCA, is key to ensuring that UNFPA issues are on the agenda;
- Persistency, consistency, and continuous engagement are crucial for keeping a seat at the table and being part of the solutions.

## Advice to colleagues:

- Start being actively engaged in the CCA/UNDAF process as early as possible;
- Have a clear vision regarding the UNSDCF framework and entry points for integration of the UNFPA mandate;
- Focus on the results to achieve;
- Influence the formulation of the strategic priorities, outcomes, outputs, indicators;
- Build good working relationships with the UNRC and the RCO;
- Be a reputable partner of choice for the national partners;
- Volunteer to lead the UNCT/UNSDCF processes and ensure delivering quality results;
- Be creative in how you will lead Outcome Groups - bring in partners, stimulate joint planning; give UN entities leadership roles at the output levels.