



**UN-OHRLS**

**COMPREHENSIVE HIGH-LEVEL MIDTERM REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
ISTANBUL PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE LDCs FOR THE DECADE 2011-2020**

**COUNTRY-LEVEL PREPARATIONS**

**ANNOTATED OUTLINE FOR THE NATIONAL REPORTS**

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## **Background and Mandate**

The Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA)<sup>1</sup> adopted at the Fourth UN Conference on Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in Istanbul, Turkey in May 2011, constitutes an ambitious policy agenda agreed by the international community to address the challenges faced by the LDCs, based on the fundamental tenets of mutual accountability and enhanced international cooperation.

The overarching goal of the IPoA is to overcome the structural challenges faced by the LDCs in order to eradicate poverty, achieve internationally agreed development goals and enable them for graduation from the LDC category. It also recognizes that the LDCs represent an enormous potential for world economic growth, stability and prosperity.

As the midpoint of the decade-long programme of action draws near, the UN General Assembly decided to hold the comprehensive high-level midterm review of the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action in June 2016, in Antalya, Turkey, for a period of three days (see resolution 69/231 on the *“Follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries”*). Participation shall be at the highest possible political level.

The high-level midterm review shall result in an inter-governmentally negotiated and agreed outcome in the form of a political declaration. The review will undertake an assessment of the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action by the LDCs and their development partners. It will share best practices and lessons learned and identify obstacles, constraints and actions and initiatives needed to overcome them, as well as new challenges and emerging issues. The midterm review will also serve to reaffirm the global commitment to address the special needs of the LDCs countries made at the Fourth UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries and to further strengthen the global partnership for development for LDCs in all priority areas of the Istanbul Programme of Action in order to ensure its timely and effective implementation during the remainder of the Decade, while taking into account the post-2015 development agenda as it relates to the LDCs.

## **Country level preparations**

As a critical input for the comprehensive high-level midterm review broad-based and inclusive country-level preparations shall be undertaken by all LDCs with a view to assess progress, obstacles, constraints, actions and measures necessary to further the implementation of the Istanbul Programme.

To assist in the preparation of national reports, the General Assembly requested the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, in her capacity as Chair of the United Nations Development Group, to ensure full involvement of the Resident Coordinator system and country teams in LDCs in the preparation for high-level midterm review, including in the preparation of national reports.

In order to effectively serve as input to the substantive preparations for the midterm review, it is requested that the national reports be submitted to the Office of the High Representative no later than 30 November 2015, to the attention of Ms. Margherita Musollino-Berg, Economic Affairs Officer, email: [musollino@un.org](mailto:musollino@un.org).

National Focal Points from LDCs will be invited to present a draft of their national report at the Annual Workshop for LDC National Focal Points to be held at UN Headquarters in New York in early July 2015 – invitation and further details to follow.

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<sup>1</sup> Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 : <http://unohrls.org/UserFiles/File/IPoA.pdf>

## **Annotated Outline for the National Reports**

### **I. Introduction**

### **II. The national development planning process, including key economic, social, political and environmental trends**

This section should include key aspects of the national sustainable development plans that have mainstreamed the goals and priorities of the Istanbul Programme of Action, including in particular strategies to achieve graduation out of the LDC category by or around 2020.

References to the specific national policy documents should be provided. The section should highlight economic, social, environmental or political factors that have impacted positively or negatively on the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action at the national level.

### **III. Assessment of progress and challenges in the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Decade 2011-2020**

This section should provide an assessment of the overall progress made against the overarching goal of overcoming the structural challenges faced by LDCs in order to eradicate poverty, achieve internationally agreed development goals and enable graduation from the LDC category as stated on Paragraph 27 of the Istanbul Programme of Action.

Based on the overall analysis related to the objectives of the Istanbul Programme of Action, the report should identify outstanding challenges in each of the Programme's eight priority areas. It should highlight best practices and lessons learnt and outline strategic priorities. The report should also identify factors, external or internal, that have impacted progress in each of the priority areas.

#### **a. Productive capacity**

The report should identify factors that have contributed to diversify the local and export-oriented productive capabilities with emphasis on strong value-added sectors. It should highlight progress in critical areas that have the potential to foster the structural transformation of the economy such as increased access in telecommunication services; development of the energy supply infrastructure, with a special focus on renewable sources of energy as well as improvement in generation and distribution of electricity; better land, sea and air communication networks and, where appropriate, gains in the value-addition in natural-resource based industries. This section could also incorporate an analysis of progress, as well as challenges, in the area of science, technology and innovation.

#### **b. Agriculture, food security and rural development**

This section should provide an overview of successful initiatives in the area of food security and rural development as a crucial component of a poverty reduction strategy, particularly for marginalized groups, women, children and the elderly. It should illustrate policies aimed at fostering gender equality and empowerment of women in the agricultural sector. It can also indicate actions taken in the context of diversification in the agricultural sector and enhanced agro-processing capacity and increased investment in agricultural infrastructure. The report should also indicate strategies to combat the impact of adverse climate events on agriculture. Lastly, this section should include strategies, actions and policies put in place to accelerate the eradication of hunger.

#### **c. Trade**

The report should include measures pursued to diversify and expand the export base of the country. It should indicate strategies, policies and actions taken to improve productivity and competitiveness as well as measures towards trade capacity-building in the context of the

national development plan. It should also identify critical constraints and barriers preventing greater integration of the country in global value chains.

**d. Commodities**

The report should highlight actions towards the reduction of vulnerabilities associated with external economic shocks, such as commodity price volatility. It should indicate progress towards greater productivity and vertical diversification. When appropriate, policies and actions oriented towards reducing commodity dependence should be highlighted. In this connection, the report should indicate resource management strategies as well as sector and commodity-specific measures that have contributed to maximize benefits derived from the national resource base and increase value retention.

**e. Private Sector Development**

The report should indicate measures and policies oriented towards supporting a socially responsible private sector as well as actions to facilitate a business friendly environment, particularly towards SME development.

**f. Human and Social Development**

*Education*

The report should provide an assessment of policy measures on education and training as well as factors contributing to progress – or lack thereof – in achieving universal access to free primary education, particularly through an increase in enrolment and retention rates, and also increase in secondary and tertiary and vocational education as well as skill development training. It should also indicate actions aimed at increasing the quality of education and training at all levels and progress in literacy and numeracy rates. A comprehensive assessment of progress towards the elimination of gender disparities in education and training is an essential aspect of this section of the report.

*Population and primary health*

This section of the report should also include an appraisal of strategies, policies and actions oriented towards reducing child and infant mortality and maternal mortality rates as well as progress towards the elimination of child under-nutrition. As part of the health policy framework, it should also indicate measures towards the provision of universal access to reproductive health, including with regards to the integration of family planning, sexual health and health-care services in national strategies and programmes. Progress towards the reverse of the spread of HIV-AIDS and the incidence of malaria and other major diseases should also be included.

*Youth development*

The report should feature policy measures and programmes for the integration of youth in economic, social and political life. It should indicate measures towards improving educational and skills capacity of youth and towards full productive employment.

*Water and sanitation*

The report should indicate progress towards ensuring access to water and sanitation as well as measures and strategies oriented at increasing water efficiency and productivity, particularly in relation to rural areas and disadvantaged populations. The report should highlight policies to improve the institutional and regulatory environment to improve access to water and sanitation, particularly in rural and remote communities.

### *Gender equality and empowerment of women*

An essential element of the report is a detailed assessment of the situation of women and girls, successful policies and actions that have contributed towards the empowerment of women and girls as well as a description of major challenges and constraints. The report should include policy measures on gender equality and the empowerment of women, particularly in relation to the achievement of equal access of women and girls to education, basic services, health care, economic opportunities and decision making at all levels; successful programmes, plans and support measures to ensure physical, mental and reproductive health of women and girls; and measures to promote women's rights and gender equality.

### *Social protection*

The report should describe policy actions towards the enhancement of social protection systems, particularly in relation of poor and disadvantaged groups. It should include success stories and measures that have been effective in bolstering resilience and decrease vulnerability of people living in poverty or at risk of becoming poor.

## **g. Multiple crises and other emerging challenges**

The report should indicate policy measures towards the reduction of vulnerability to a variety of shocks, including food, fuel, financial and economic and natural disasters. It should provide an assessment of the ability of the country to overcome the adverse effects of climate change, including through national adaptation plans and programmes, and highlight measures oriented towards the protection of biodiversity, prevention of land degradation and desertification, coastal erosion and effects of glacier melting as appropriate.

## **h. Mobilizing financial resources for development and capacity building**

### *Domestic resource mobilization*

The report should indicate progress on mobilization of domestic resources. This could include an assessment of the evolution of domestic savings or tax revenue as well as strategies towards the strengthening of institutional capacity. It should provide an overview of actions taken against corruption and towards increasing transparency.

### *Official development assistance*

This section should provide an analysis of the integration of ODA within national plans and priorities. It should provide an account of alignment of ODA flows with national development priorities, as well as an analysis of the contribution of ODA to progress on the priorities set in the Istanbul Programme of Action. It should also indicate challenges and constraints faced in relation to aid fragmentation, donor coordination, volatility and unpredictability of aid flows or other factors limiting the development impact of ODA.

### *External debt*

The report should provide an analysis displaying trends on debt vulnerability, particularly in relation to debt burden and debt servicing. It could share measures taken to achieve debt sustainability.

### *Foreign direct investment*

The report should also provide an appraisal of the impact of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) on national development. It should indicate the repercussions of FDI across key areas, including transfer of technology and skills, employment generation or poverty eradication.

The report should provide examples of policies put in place to attract foreign investment and ensure its positive impact on productive capacity building and economic diversification.

#### *Science, Technology and Innovation*

The report should include measures towards increasing the ability to acquire new technologies and to develop indigenous capacity on research and development, particularly in the context of productive capacity building in the LDCs. It should also highlight measures towards strengthening the science, technology and innovation base of the country.

#### *Remittances*

This section provides an opportunity to evaluate the impact of remittances on development as a complement to other sources of development finance.

#### **i. Good governance at all levels**

The report should indicate policies, strategic frameworks and actions taken in order to improve good governance, the rule of law, human rights, gender equality and democratic participation. It should include measures against corruption and aimed at increased transparency.

The report should also provide an overview of the ability of the country to participate in regional and international forums.

#### **IV. Coherence and linkages with the Post-2015 Development Agenda and other global processes**

The global community is set to establish the path for sustainable development through three major international meetings in 2015: the Third [United Nations International](#) Conference on Financing for Development, the United Nations Summit on the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the 21<sup>st</sup> Session of the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The report should indicate how principles, actions and guidelines of major international agreement are integrated in national development policies in order to accelerate progress on the priority areas set in the IPoA and ensure sustainable and inclusive development that fosters meaningful change to the lives of those living in the LDCs.

#### **V. Conclusion and Way Forward**

This section should highlight key messages arising from the above analysis and indicate the most important challenges and external factors that have emerged since the adoption of the Istanbul Programme of Action. Building on lessons learnt and good practices identified in preceding sections, it should provide recommendations on measures to be taken at the national, regional and global level to eradicate poverty and accelerate productive capacity building in the LDCs for the remainder of the decade.