



## UN-OHRLS

Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

### **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.

The United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 73/242, decided to convene the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries at the highest possible level, including Heads of State and Government, in 2021, with the following mandate:

- To undertake a comprehensive appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action by the least developed countries and their development partners, share best practices and lessons learned and identify obstacles and constraints encountered as well as actions and initiatives needed to overcome them;
- To identify effective international and domestic policies in the light of the outcome of the appraisal as well as new and emerging challenges and opportunities and the means to address them;
- To reaffirm the global commitment to addressing the special needs of the least developed countries made at the major United Nations conferences and summits, including in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework;
- To mobilize additional international support measures and action, in addition to domestic resources, in favour of the least developed countries and, in this regard, to formulate and adopt a renewed partnership between the least developed countries and their development partners, including the private sector, civil society and governments at all levels;

The Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries will be preceded by two regional preparatory meetings and two intergovernmental preparatory committee meetings.

## **Country level preparations**

In the same resolution, the UNGA emphasizes the importance of country-level preparations as a critical input to the preparatory process for the Conference and in the implementation of and follow-up to its outcome, and calls upon the Governments of the least developed countries to submit their reports in a timely manner. Broad-based and inclusive country-level preparations shall be undertaken by all LDCs with a view to assess progress, obstacles, constraints, and actions in the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action and to determine priorities for the next 10- year programme of action.

These national reports should be based on national level preparations and will feed into regional level preparations to be undertaken in 2020. Countries are encouraged to structure the report along the guidelines below, which will promote consistency and comparability. Countries are encouraged to include one or two concrete examples to showcase best practices and/or policies and strategies that have advanced implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action and potential to be replicated in other LDCs.

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

National Focal Points from LDCs will be invited to present a draft of their national report at the Annual Meeting for LDC National Focal Points to be held in 2019.

In order to effectively serve as input to the substantive preparations for the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, it is requested that the national reports be submitted to the Office of the High Representative no later than 30 November 2019, to the attention of Ms. Yuxin Ai, Programme Management Officer, email: [aiy@un.org](mailto:aiy@un.org) and Mr. Yeshey Dorji, Programme Management Officer, email: [yeshey@un.org](mailto:yeshey@un.org).

The national reports will feed into a synthesis report, which aims to highlight among others, initiatives, policies or actions that contributed to positive change in meeting the objectives set out in the priority areas of the IPoA. The rationale is to assess the progress made during the implementation of the IPoA at the national level. As such, the report will synthesise, among others, success stories to encourage peer learning and replication among LDCs. The report will also highlight challenges that hindered LDCs from meeting the objectives set out in the IPoA.<sup>2</sup>

## **Annotated structure and content of the National Reports**

- I. Executive summary**  
The report should include a 1-2 page executive summary.
- II. Introduction**  
This section may briefly describe key features of the country's context as it pertains to the implementation of all the all priority areas of the Istanbul Programme of Action. It may discuss the methodology that was adopted for the review, including its scope, depth and limitations, and challenges related to statistics. Information on the process for preparation of the national review may be presented, including, for example, how different stakeholders contributed to the report and, where applicable, whether the UN Country Teams were engaged.
- III. The national development planning process**  
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. References to the specific national policy documents should be provided.
- IV. 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 in 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 best practices and lessons learnt; highlight factors external or internal that

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<sup>2</sup> This report will build on an earlier report, which focussed on 'Lessons learned from five years of implementing the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries', see: at [http://www.ipoareview.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Lessons\\_Learned\\_5years\\_Implement\\_IPoA\\_LDCs\\_lowres.pdf](http://www.ipoareview.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Lessons_Learned_5years_Implement_IPoA_LDCs_lowres.pdf)

have impacted progress in each of the priority areas; illustrate outstanding challenges in each of the eight priority areas; and review progress towards graduation.

**a. Productive capacity**

This section should identify factors that have contributed to enhancing productive capacity to supply the domestic as well as export markets. This could emphasize growth in sectors with high value-addition, including services like tourism. It should highlight areas where the most progress was made to foster the structural transformation of the economy. For example, where changes observed in increasing 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; transport (including, better land, sea and air connectivity) and, where appropriate, gains in the value-addition in natural-resource based and agricultural industries. This section should 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 (both domestic and foreign) as well as actions to facilitate a business friendly environment, particularly towards SME development and entrepreneurship of women and youth.

**f. Human and Social Development**

*Education*

The report should provide an assessment of policy measures for education and training as well as factors contributing to progress – or lack thereof – in achieving universal access to primary education and increasing access to secondary and tertiary education. Progress in vocational

education as well as skills development should also be covered. Furthermore, it should 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 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 reversing 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 to maximize full potential of youth including improving full access to educational, health care services, skills capacity and towards full productive employment and entrepreneurship, especially towards young women and girls.

#### *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 contribute towards their empowerment 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 become 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. The report could provide an assessment of damage from the adverse impacts of climate change, including weather events, projected needs to address vulnerability, and experience to date with existing mechanisms, including climate change finance. The report could also provide information on debt, and experience in debt management.

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

*Domestic resource mobilization*

The report should indicate progress on mobilization of domestic resources. This should include an assessment of the evolution of domestic savings and financial inclusion as well as government revenue, including tax. The section should also include policies to increase domestic resource mobilization, including strategies towards the strengthening of institutional capacity.

*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 should highlight 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 impact 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.

*Remittances*

This section should 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.

**j. Progress towards graduation**

This section should report on progress towards graduation and smooth transition strategies including national development plans and institutional arrangements for graduation, and identify support measures to achieve sustainable and irreversible graduation.

**V. Coherence and linkages with the 2030 Agenda and other global processes**

The 2030 Agenda has placed the promise of leaving no-one behind at the centre of the global efforts to eradicate extreme poverty, build a future of shared prosperity and protect our planet. LDCs received special attention in the 2030 Agenda as the most vulnerable countries. The challenges and priorities are firmly embodied in the basic architecture of the 2030 Agenda.

The report should indicate how principles, actions and guidelines of the 2030 Agenda and other major international agreements 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.

**VI. Towards the next LDC agenda**

The next programme of action of LDCs to be adopted at the Fifth UN Conference on LDCs is expected to coincide with the remaining 10 years of the SDGs. Building on lessons learnt and good practices identified in preceding sections, this section should provide recommendations on measures to be taken at the national, regional and global level to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development in the LDCs, including accelerated graduation, over the next 10 years. It could also highlight priority areas of action that the Fifth UN Conference on the LDCs should address to support and facilitate attaining the SDGs in LDCs, including the roles of various stakeholders, and identify emerging challenges and associated policy measure.

**VII. Statistical annex**

Countries are encouraged to include an annex with data. They may highlight whether statistics were collected from the national statistical system.