



**Executive Board of the  
United Nations Development  
Programme, the United Nations  
Population Fund and the United  
Nations Office for Project Services**

Distr.: General  
18 July 2019

Original: English

**Second regular session 2019**

3 - 6 September 2019, New York

Item 2 of the provisional agenda

**Structured funding dialogue**

**Structured dialogue on financing the results of  
the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2018-2021**

*Summary*

In response to Executive Board decision 2018/16, which requested that UNDP review the format and content of the annual report on contributions and revenue projections for future years to improve the quality of the structured funding dialogue, UNDP has modified this report to focus on the funding requirements for implementing the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2018-2021. It also reflects on topics raised at strategic funding dialogues, including mutual commitments of the Secretary-General's Funding Compact.

The report includes an update on the status of funding of the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme.

In 2018, total contributions to UNDP increased by 6 per cent, to \$5.2 billion, from \$4.9 billion in 2017. Contributions to regular resources increased by 2 per cent, to \$624 million, reversing a downward trend dating to 2007. Other resources contributions increased by 6 per cent, to \$4.6 billion. The ratio of regular to other resources remained at 12:88. A more extensive update on 2018 funding is provided in documents DP/2019/26 and DP/2019/26/Add 1.

Against the 2018 contribution estimates set out in the integrated resources plan, 2018-2021, UNDP met the estimates for total and other resources, but fell short of the regular resources estimate by 1 per cent. UNDP reaffirms the importance of regular resources in its efforts to respond rapidly to national priorities; deliver integrated development solutions to help countries implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; ensure global development effectiveness; make strategic choices and investments; and ensure organizational stability.

*Elements of a decision*

The Executive Board may wish to:

- (a) take note of documents DP/2019/26, DP/2019/26 Add.1, and DP/2019/27;
- (b) note the importance of sufficient and predictable regular resources, which is critical for UNDP to offer the cross-cutting and integrated development solutions that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires;
- (c) recall the importance of funding predictability and urge Member States to prioritize regular resources and multi-year pledges for 2019 and future years, given that reductions in regular resources risk jeopardizing the ability of UNDP to achieve the results of the Strategic Plan, 2018-2021;
- (d) recognize the importance of the private sector in Sustainable Development Goals financing and encourage the development of new and innovative financial instruments to access private sector financing; and
- (e) urge Member States to continue their dialogue with UNDP, through the structured funding dialogues, on shifting from highly earmarked to regular resources, or flexible other resources, and to adhere to the mutually reinforcing commitments of the Funding Compact.



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## I. Introduction

1. The present report is prepared in response to Executive Board decision 2018/16, requesting UNDP to review the format and content of the annual report on contributions and revenue projections for future years to improve the quality of the structured funding dialogues, including by providing an overview of funding requirements for the implementation of the Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, taking into account both regular and other resources.
2. While this report provides a brief update on the 2018 funding situation, a more detailed update is presented in the annual review of the financial situation (DP/2019/26) and its addendum (DP/2019/26/Add 1).
3. The report focuses on the funding requirements for implementing the Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, and reflects on topics discussed at strategic funding dialogues, including the mutual commitments of the Secretary-General's Funding Compact. It also takes into account feedback from previous consultations and informal briefings with members of the Executive Board, as well as discussions with other United Nations funds and programmes.
4. The report also provides information on the status of funding for UNV.

## II. 2018 funding update

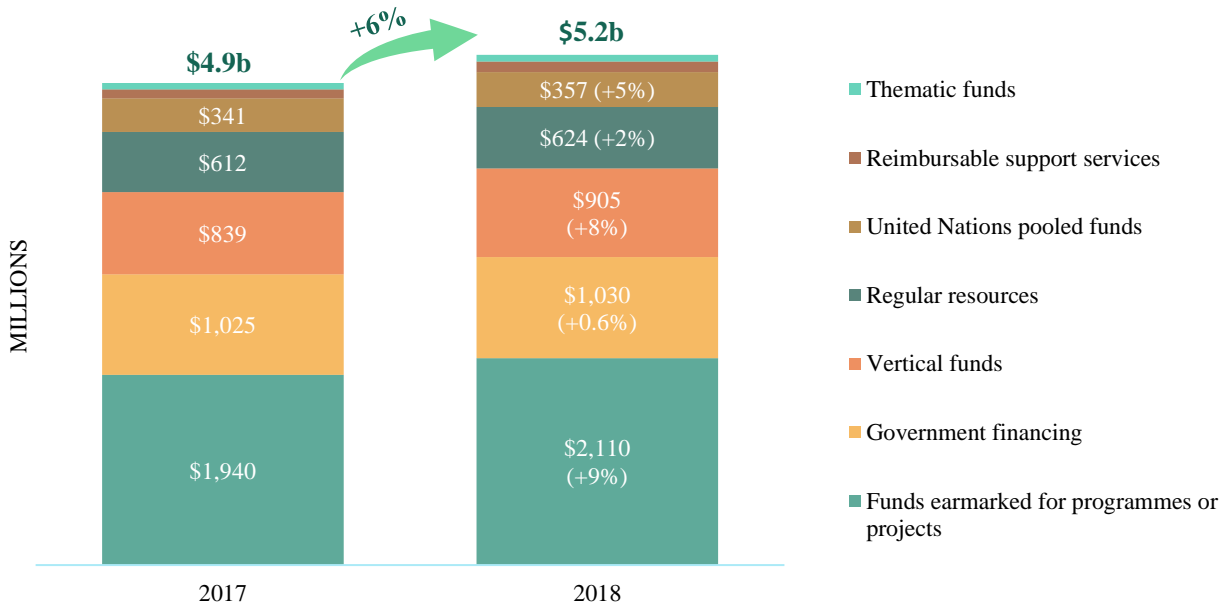
### A. Total contributions

5. For the first time since 2011, total contributions to UNDP surpassed the \$5 billion mark, totalling \$5.2 billion, a 6 per cent increase compared to \$4.9 billion in 2017. Of this, \$1 billion came from programme countries for investment in their own countries. Together with that milestone, UNDP reached a record level of programme delivery, \$4.6 billion – the highest in five years,<sup>1</sup> while effectively supporting the repositioning of the United Nations development system and re-staffing its country-level leadership cadre during the last and most critical quarter of the year. UNDP highly appreciates the support of all its funding partners, who greatly contributed to this success, particularly the 134 Member States that contributed to UNDP through its various funding channels.
6. Regular resources increased by 2 per cent to \$624 million, reversing a downward trend dating to 2007. However, regular resources, as a proportion of total contributions, remained at 12 per cent and fell short of the \$630 million target of the integrated resources plan, 2018-2021. UNDP will work with partners to increase the share of regular resources with the aim of moving it closer to the targets set in the Funding Compact.
7. Other resources increased by 6 per cent to \$4.6 billion, with all funding channels experiencing an increase, as shown in figure 1. Earmarked funding experienced the most notable increase at 9 per cent, contributing to the rising share of tightly earmarked resources, which may undermine coherence and the pursuit of common results. In 2018, 91 per cent of other resources received were in the form of tightly earmarked funding.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: DP/2019/10.

**Figure 1. Contributions by funding channel, 2017 versus 2018**



**B. Contributions to regular resources**

8. In 2018, UNDP received regular resources contributions from 52 Member States, and an increase of \$5 million in government local office costs (GLOC) over 2017. UNDP appreciates the increased contributions to regular resources from the Governments of Germany, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, the Republic of Korea and Sweden as well as the continued strong commitment of 35 Member States that maintained their steadfast contribution, led by the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada from the top 10 contributors. Individuals also contributed to UNDP regular resources through the Digital Good public platform. Of the total regular resources received in 2018, 43 per cent came from multi-year commitments, up from 29 per cent in 2017.

9. UNDP remains highly dependent on its largest contributors to regular resources, with the top 20 contributing \$613 million, or 98 per cent of the total (see figure 2 below). Broadening the core donor base remains a challenge for UNDP, as it does for the broader United Nations development system. The Funding Compact includes a commitment to increase the proportion of core funding to the United Nations development system, along with an explicit call to increase the number of core contributors. In line with the Funding Compact, UNDP will make all efforts to broaden its core donor base.

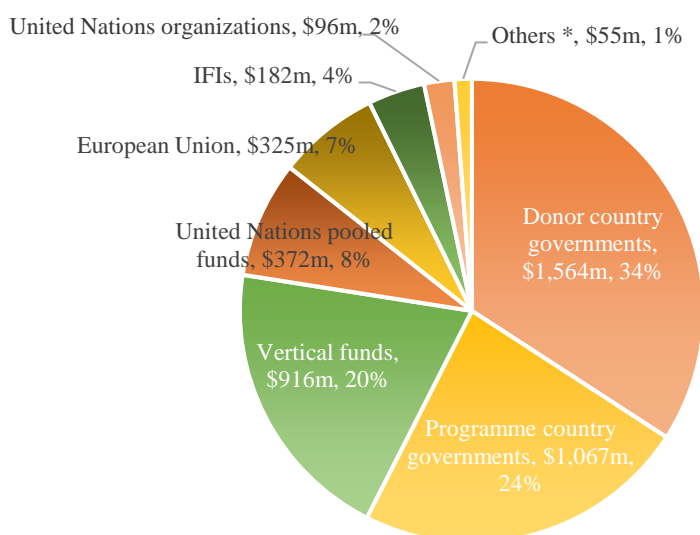
**Figure 2. Top 20 resource partners to regular resources, 2018**



**C. Contributions to other resources**

10. Total other resources contributions amounted to \$4.6 billion in 2018, a six per cent increase from 2017. Of this, \$1.6 billion was from donor country governments (a 7 per cent increase from 2017), \$1.1 billion from programme country governments (a 2 per cent increase from 2017), and \$1.9 billion from non-government partners (a 9 per cent increase from 2017), including \$372 million from United Nations pooled funds and \$325 million from the European Union. Figure 3 below shows the different partner types that contributed to other resources in 2018.

**Figure 3. Contributions to other resources by partner types, 2018**



Note: ‘Others’ includes contributions from private companies, foundations and NGOs.

11. Programme country governments contributed \$1.1 billion in government financing, primarily for investments in their own countries. In addition, over 20 programme countries contributed to the advancement of South-South cooperation by providing resources for the development of other programme countries. The increasing size of government financing illustrates the changing nature of development financing and UNDP relevance as a trusted partner in supporting countries' efforts to implement the Sustainable Development Goals. Through its mandate, expertise, global network, and integrated solutions offer, UNDP can effectively support programme countries in financing and implementing their activities for the 2030 Agenda.

12. Thematic funding in 2018 amounted to \$67 million, a 3 per cent increase from 2017. Despite the slight increase, thematic funding accounted for only 1 per cent of total contributions, the same level as in 2017. Table 1 shows partners who contributed to thematic funding in 2018. With the revamped funding windows, aligned more closely with the Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, UNDP hopes to see an increase in thematic funding.

**Table 1. Resource partners to thematic funding, 2018**

Germany	\$35,039,818
Denmark	\$15,732,845
Norway	\$4,630,365
Sweden	\$3,280,481
Luxembourg	\$3,009,259
Republic of Korea	\$3,000,000
Switzerland	\$2,022,245
Slovak Republic	\$179,204

13. UNDP received \$372 million in inter-agency pooled funds, an increase of 8 per cent from 2017. This accounts for 8 per cent of total other resources, the same share as in 2017. In line with the new way of working with humanitarian and other development actors, 45 per cent of the inter-agency pooled funds received by UNDP in 2018 were humanitarian funds, topped by those for the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan and Sudan. UNDP will work towards increasing joint programming, including by raising its pooled funds' share of non-core funding, using United Nations pooled funds for multi-stakeholder initiatives, and supporting joint programming through its role in fund design and administration of joint programmes and multi-partner trust funds, on behalf of the United Nations development system and national governments.

14. UNDP will continue to work with international financing institutions (IFIs) to leverage their technical expertise and concessional financing resources to better support the 2030 Agenda. Funding from IFIs and development banks amounted to \$387 million, a 36 per cent increase from 2017. This includes \$182 million in direct grants, \$173 million from the German development bank, KfW, reflected in the contributions of Germany to UNDP, and \$32 million in indirect contributions to support government loan implementation.

15. As a valued partner in designing and implementing financing schemes to address complex environmental and health issues, UNDP received \$916 million from vertical funds, a 6 per cent increase from 2017. The \$300 million in climate finance mobilized with the Governments of Bangladesh, Comoros, Georgia, India and Zambia from the Green Climate Fund is expected to improve the lives of nearly 20 million people.

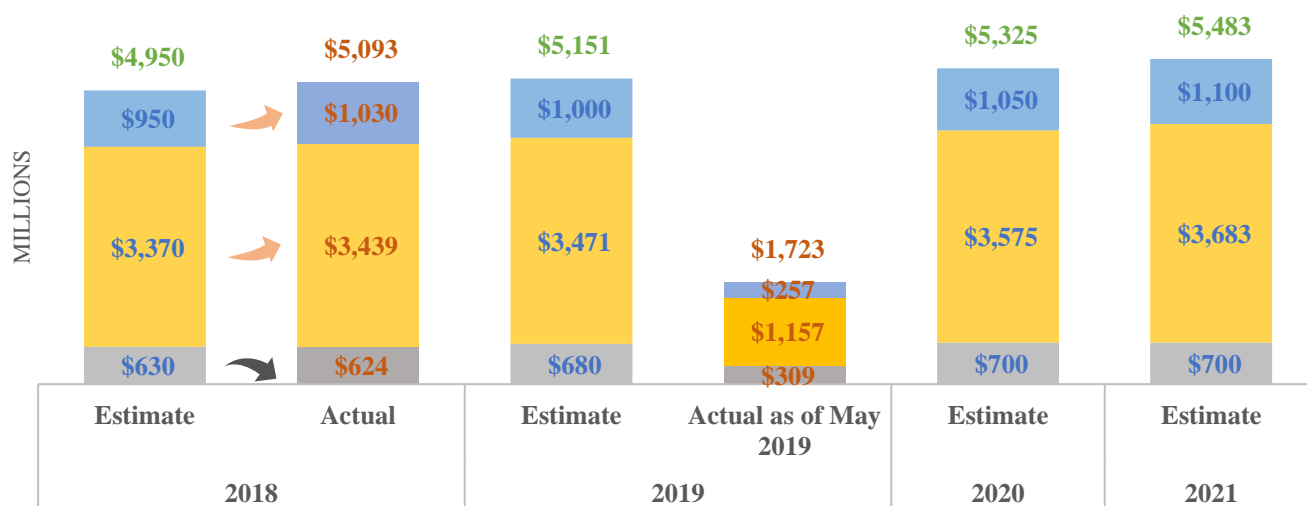
### III. Update on Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, integrated resources plan

16. The integrated resources plan (DP/2017/39), which sets out the financial resources to deliver the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, included a total estimated contributions amount of \$20.9 billion, factoring in an annualized growth of 5 per cent. The total is composed of \$2.7 billion in regular resources, \$4.1 billion in government financing, and \$14.1 billion in bilateral/multilateral contributions.

17. In 2018, total contributions, excluding reimbursable support services, reached \$5.1 billion, composed of \$1 billion in government financing, \$3.5 billion from bilateral/multilateral contributions, and \$0.6 billion from regular resources. While government financing and bilateral/multilateral contributions exceeded their respective targets, regular resources missed the target by 1 per cent.

18. In 2019, total contributions are estimated at \$5.2 billion, composed of \$0.7 billion in regular resources, \$1.0 billion in government financing, and \$3.5 billion in bilateral/multilateral contributions. As shown in figure 4, as of May 2019, a total of \$1.7 billion has been received, composed of \$0.26 billion from government financing (26 per cent of the target), \$1.2 billion from bilateral/multilateral contributions (33 per cent of the target), and \$0.3 billion in regular resources (45 per cent of the target).

**Figure 4. Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, estimated and actual contributions**



■ Regular resources ■ Other resources - bilateral/multilateral ■ Other resources - government financing

\* The above figures do not include reimbursable support services (RSS).

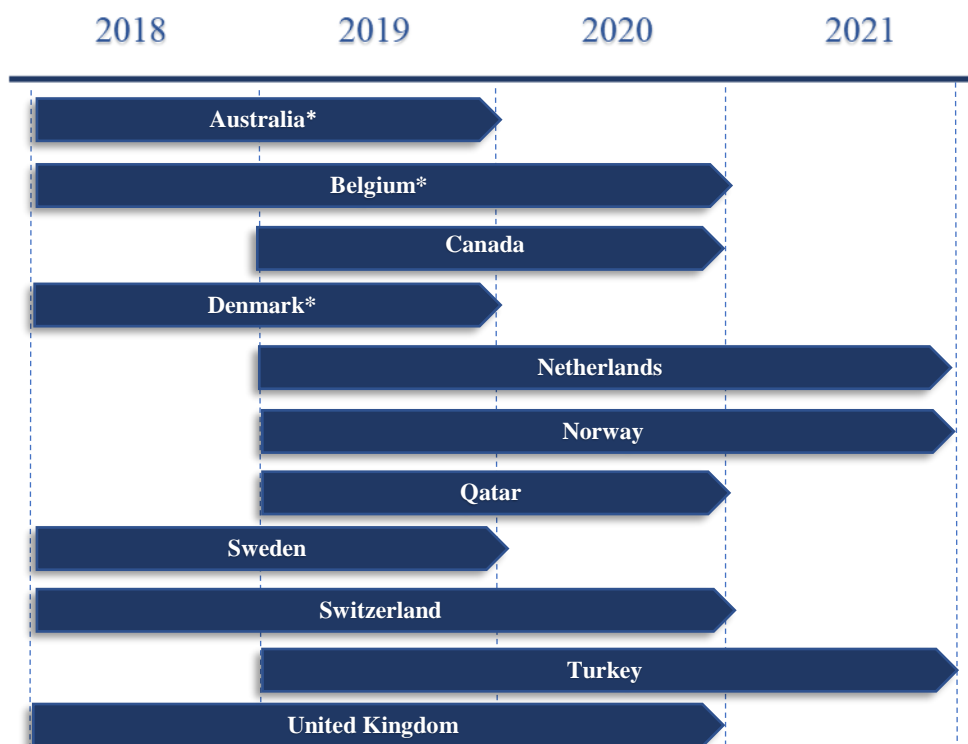
19. UNDP appreciates the continued support from the 41 Member States that have indicated their commitments, as shown in annex 1, and the 28 that have made full or partial payments, totalling \$309 million, or 45 per cent of the target. UNDP also appreciates the increased commitment for 2019 from France, Germany, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway and Switzerland; contributions from first-time contributors, the Philippines and Qatar;<sup>2</sup> and Member States that contribute regularly without formally expressing their commitment.

<sup>2</sup> Data as of May 2019.

20. UNDP is encouraged to note that the total amount of regular resources received, as of end May 2019, has been the highest since 2015. UNDP looks toward to more partners disbursing their payments early and in a timely manner.

21. UNDP values the new and existing multi-year commitments for regular resources contributions from the partners listed in figure 5, and looks forward to signing multi-year agreements with additional partners to improve the predictability of regular resources funding. Increased predictable funding enables UNDP to respond to countries' demands quickly, plan ahead and provide long-term strategic support.

**Figure 5. Multi-year pledgers to regular resources**

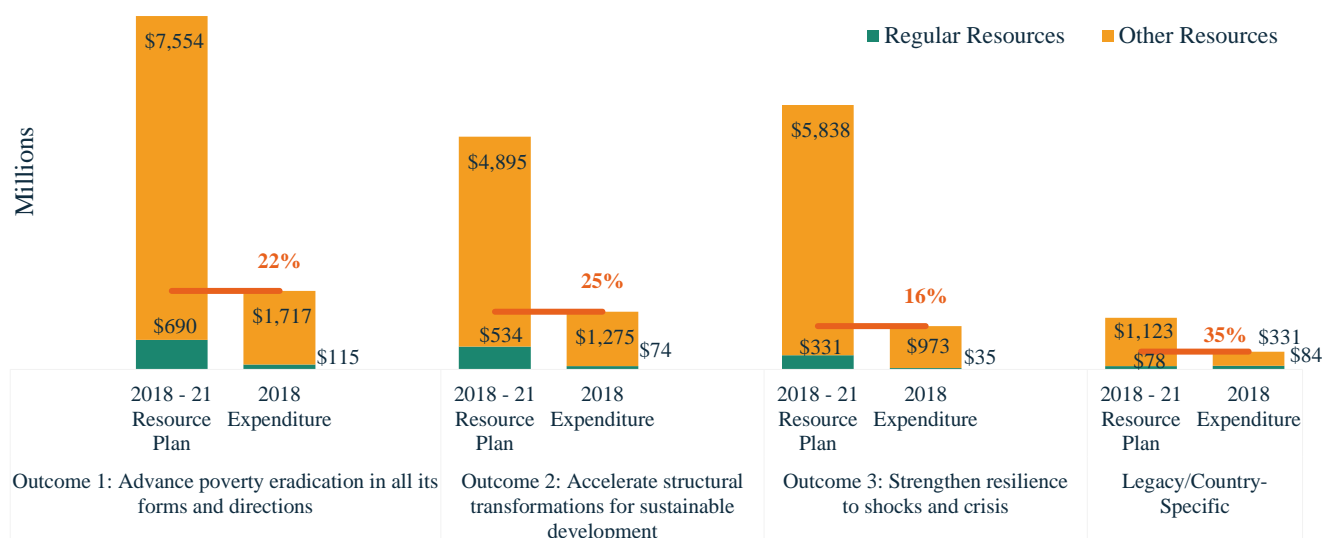


Note: The multi-year contributions of Australia, Belgium and Denmark began before 2018.

22. The integrated resources plan, 2018-2021, estimated a total programme delivery of \$21 billion across the three development outcomes of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021. In 2018, UNDP delivered \$4.6 billion in programmes or 22 per cent of the four-year resource plan, its highest delivery over the last five years. Figure 6 provides the 2018 programme delivery against the four-year strategic plan resource plan. During the first year of implementation of the Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, UNDP spent 22 per cent under outcome 1 (advance poverty eradication in all its forms and dimensions), 25 per cent under outcome 2 (accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development), and 16 per cent under outcome 3 (strengthening resilience to shocks and crisis).

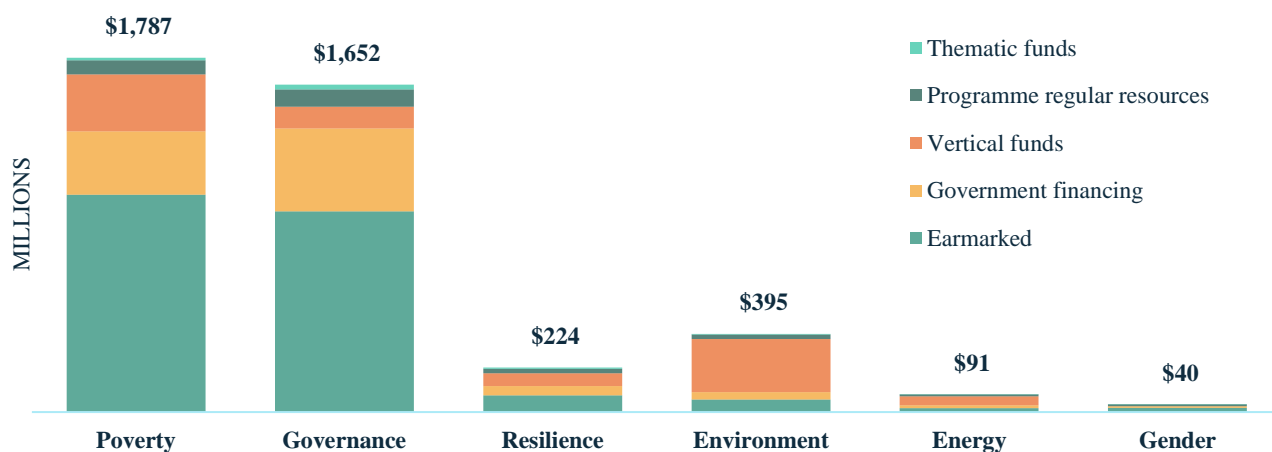


**Figure 6. Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, resource plan  
(2018 programme expenditures versus 2018-2021 resource plan)**



23. Figure 7 below breaks down the 2018 total programme delivery by the UNDP six cross-cutting approaches to development, known as the signature solutions. While regular resources funding was distributed across the signature solutions, earmarked funding and government financing mostly funded UNDP work in poverty eradication and governance. Vertical funds mostly supported UNDP work in resilience and environment; but given the cross-cutting nature of the signature solutions, vertical funds also funded a share of UNDP poverty and governance programmes. Regular resources are critical across all six signature solutions as a flexible funding source to eradicate poverty and inequality (mostly in the least developed countries), fund innovative solutions to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, and respond to the development needs of countries affected by crisis.

**Figure 7. Programme expenditure by signature solutions and funding channels, 2018**



24. UNDP is advancing results-based budgeting by improving its costing methods, reviewing project pipelines, analysing demand by programme countries using past spending patterns as a guide, and projecting income by sources of fund for 2018-2021. Results frameworks in country programme documents (CPDs) will be closely aligned with the integrated results and resources framework of the Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, with around 125 (out of 142 or 88 per cent) programme countries expected to sign new CPDs during the strategic plan period.

#### IV. Strategic reflections on key funding issues

25. This section of the report explores topics discussed in structured funding dialogues and reflects on current and future opportunities to position UNDP in a rapidly changing and evolving landscape of development financing.

*Funding Compact: a pathway towards meaningful engagement for development financing*

26. The changing landscape of international development finance is putting increasing pressure on the ability of the multilateral system to function effectively. The United Nations system relies on voluntary contributions by donors, and the **lack of flexibility and predictability in funding** often impedes the system's ability to support countries' progress towards the 2030 Agenda. In 2018, 91 per cent of UNDP total contributions were channelled through tightly earmarked funding. Such strictly earmarked and unpredictable funding jeopardizes the United Nations system's ability for longer-term, strategic planning and breeds unhealthy competition among United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) entities.

27. UNDP welcomes the Funding Compact as a means to **balance the share of core and non-core funding** and to steer the United Nations development system towards improved sustainable development results through better, more effective collaboration. To shift the balance towards the 30 per cent core target set out in the Funding Compact, UNDP must focus its efforts and engage with Member States that are currently below the threshold.

28. In line with the Funding Compact, UNDP is doubling down on maintaining its high **transparency** standards, improving its business model, increasing efficiency and improving results reporting. UNDP took steps to enhance the **visibility of contributors** to its regular resources and thematic funding windows, demonstrate the value of core funding by enhancing its donor profile pages, and provide guidance to country offices on engaging with core and thematic windows funding partners.

29. UNDP will advocate its **thematic funding windows**, aligned with the strategic plan signature solutions, as an attractive funding channel for partners to fulfil their commitments to the compact.

30. The Funding Compact calls for **increasing the share of multi-year contributions** to improve the predictability of funding. With 43 per cent of 2018 core contributions coming from multi-year commitments, UNDP is making progress towards meeting the compact's anticipated target.

31. The Funding Compact recognized a critical role for **pooled funds to advance the 2030 Agenda and spur collective actions** on the Sustainable Development Goals. As host of the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTFO), UNDP is optimally positioned to realize the potential offered by pooled funding and to support its engagement in humanitarian, transition and development activities. With its Sustainable Development Goals integrator function, UNDP will advocate for pooled funds for multi-stakeholder activities, demonstrating the value of working together with the rest of the United Nations system and other development actors and leveraging public and private financing for the Goals.

32. The structured funding dialogues will continue to play a crucial role in discussing progress on Funding Compact commitments. An initial analysis of the Funding Compact's implications for UNDP has identified a number of areas where UNDP can step up its efforts, and ways to **monitor and report progress** and challenges. Given most of the actions related to these commitments are expected to happen at country level, UNDP has developed internal follow-up mechanisms and support structures to communicate with and support its country offices (**annex III shows progress against the Funding Compact commitments related to UNDP**).

*Positive outlook on country-led efforts towards sustainable development*

33. Although funding from programme country governments (reaching a level of \$1 billion in 2017 and 2018) are mostly for investment in their own countries, a handful have invested in the development of other programme countries, signifying a change in the development finance landscape and demonstrating the unique UNDP relationship with programme countries and the trust it has earned over the years.

34. UNDP continues to be a major conduit and partner for South-South and triangular cooperation. In 2018, UNDP supported and advanced such cooperation among 180 countries through 900 initiatives. The United Nations Office of South-South Cooperation, hosted by UNDP, brought together 200 Southern think tanks to foster dialogue and research on development solutions that can be scaled up and replicated in other countries.

*Unlocking new financing partners and tools for the 2030 Agenda*

35. UNDP is strategically engaging with a diverse set of stakeholders – from governments to private sector to civil society – to diversify its partnerships and funding and to find innovative ways to respond to development needs. Its maturing collaboration with IFIs go beyond co-financing of development interventions to include joint work, for example, with the China Development Bank on sustainable financing and investment standards, with the World Bank on the *Pathways for Peace* report, and the Caribbean Development Bank on financing the blue economy.

36. UNDP is part of international efforts to advocate and support global initiatives that bring systematic changes to financing the 2030 Agenda. Recognizing the growing opportunities in the climate and environment sectors, UNDP is engaging with multiple partners and financing instruments for green economic pathways and sustainable energy. In 2018, UNDP leveraged \$6 billion from public and private sources, including a \$1 billion grant financing delivered across 110 countries for sustainable and clean affordable energy.

37. UNDP remains a strong partner to vertical funds, designing and implementing financing schemes to address complex environmental issues, and delivering last-mile health services. Vertical funds were the third largest source of funding for UNDP in 2018 (\$0.9 billion or 20 per cent of the total).

38. UNDP has been expanding its efforts to finance the Sustainable Development Goals. Notably, UNDP has established the 'SDG Finance Sector Hub' to facilitate and support teams across the organization to integrate the 2030 Agenda in the financing system, as well as in public finances, and deepen public-private collaboration. The hub will serve as an agile innovation platform that draws a critical mass of UNDP expertise, initiatives, new financial instruments and partnerships to support the mobilization and leveraging of significant resources for the Goals, at both national and global levels. The hub will have a few flagships that will serve to accelerate and scale up the work and lessons learned at the national level. An initial flagship is 'SDG Impact', which aims to generate and leverage private sector capital by authenticating Goals-enabling investments in the form of a certification. The three services of 'SDG Impact' are: (a) development of global process standards, which will serve as the basis for a third-party certification system for Goals-enabling investments; (b) preparing

market intelligence and data in the form of ‘SDG Investor Maps’; and (c) based on these maps, convening investor forums for the Goals that enable matchmaking between investors and enterprises.

39. UNDP is investing in capabilities and new and innovative instruments to work with different types of development finance, and to structure projects with blended finance that include a combination of grants, performance-based payments and credit instruments. UNDP is also increasingly helping governments conceptualize and implement innovative finance instruments, such as green bonds, social impact bonds and Islamic sukuk bonds. New financial instruments are being developed to enable UNDP to work with new partners, including NGOs and the private sector, to finance local, regional and national development priorities, and to collaborate with other United Nations organizations, particularly the United Nations Capital Development Fund. It is important to note that there are still limitations to implementing these new financial instruments and to maximizing their potential in serving Member States.

*Maintaining strong transparency and accountability*

40. UNDP has revamped its transparency portal ([open.undp.org](http://open.undp.org)) with state-of-the-art design and easy access to information on more than 4,500 UNDP projects, showing its programme portfolios in action using different approaches, their linkages to the Sustainable Development Goals, and results achieved by specific outputs.

## **V. The United Nations Volunteers programme**

41. In 2018, the first year of implementation of the UNV Strategic Framework, 2018-2021, the total UNV financial volume amounted to \$199.6 million, of which \$183.9 million were programme resources – including funds from United Nations entities for the recruitment of UN-Volunteers – and 3 per cent of programme resources were financed from the Special Voluntary Fund.

42. The UNV Special Voluntary Fund remains critical for the implementation of the Strategic Framework, 2018-2021, particularly in strengthening volunteer policy and infrastructure worldwide, integrating volunteerism into the 2030 Agenda, and supporting research and evidence on volunteerism. In 2018, the Special Voluntary Fund received contributions (including multi-year) amounting to \$5.2 million, a 41 per cent increase compared to \$3.7 million in 2017 and the highest level since 2009. The increase reflects historical fluctuations of annual and multi-annual contributions to the fund, indicating a challenging trend to predict the annual level of contributions. It is expected that the increased flexibility of the fund will continue to allow new financing partners to support UNV in sustaining its operations and programmes.

43. Contributions (including multi-year contributions) received for fully funded UN-Volunteers increased from \$13.2 million in 2017 to \$15.6 million in 2018. In 2018, 40 per cent of fully funded UN-Volunteers were deployed to UNDP, representing a financial volume of over \$6 million. UNV continued to diversify its partnerships, developing and implementing new partnerships with Member States and partners from the global South, positioning itself as a key actor in fostering South-South and triangular cooperation.

44. UNV received funding for institutional activities through UNDP regular resources of \$8.8 million, the same level as in 2017. UNV notes that it needs a stable and predictable level of UNDP regular resources to fulfil its mandate and provide high quality volunteers and innovative, cost-effective solutions to UNDP and other United Nations entities. Through the completion of its organizational transformation and strategic repositioning in 2018, UNV is now better focused and reorganized as a common service provider to the United Nations system and has expanded and diversified its services to its partners. UNV has embarked on a digital transformation plan and simplified business processes to enhance its efficiency and financial

sustainability, with overall UNV costs decreasing by 11 per cent (\$2.5 million) in 2018, compared to 2017. UNV continued to further strengthen its capacity at the regional and country levels and improved its responsiveness to partner needs through decentralized, more dedicated partner functions.

## VI. Conclusion

45. While UNDP continues to value all types of funding that allow it to deliver on its commitments, regular resources remain the most essential for offering cross-cutting integrated solutions and delivering results on the ground. Reductions in regular resources risk jeopardizing the ability of UNDP to achieve planned strategic results. In this regard, UNDP calls on Member States to prioritize regular resources, enter into multi-year pledges, and make early and timely disbursements to enable UNDP to respond to countries' demands quickly, plan ahead, provide long-term strategic support, and offer integrated development solutions to achieve the 2030 Agenda.

46. UNDP will continue to engage with the Executive Board and seek the support of Member States through structured funding dialogues to ensure that the principles of predictability, universality and progressivity can be sustained, to improve the flexibility and transparency of funding, and to better align its resources with the outcomes of the Strategic Plan, 2018-2021.

47. UNDP is committed to improving the quality and flexibility of its non-core resources and has redesigned its thematic funding windows to align more directly to the UNDP core mandate and Strategic Plan, 2018-2021. UNDP is also increasing the visibility of partners who contribute to the funding windows, and publishing real-time information on allocations and expenditures on the on-line public portal.

48. UNDP will continue to support the United Nations development system through its integrator role, with integrated policy and programme support, data analytics and finance for the Goals, and knowledge and innovation services in support of country efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda. It will offer programmatic and operational support to other UNSDG entities and promote joint programming, including through the use of United Nations pooled funds to achieve common results.

49. UNDP will cultivate new and existing substantive collaborations and funding partnerships with IFIs and the private sector, and develop new financing instruments to work with partners to leverage private financing and investments for sustainable development.

50. Recalling the commitments of the Funding Compact, UNDP urges Member States to: (a) increase or provide voluntary contributions in a manner consistent with their capacities; (b) contribute on a multi-year basis in a sustained and predictable manner; (c) shift contributions from highly earmarked to less earmarked flexible resources; (d) recognize the importance of the private sector in Sustainable Development Goals financing and encourage the development of new and innovative financial instruments; and (e) advocate among Member States to prioritize contributing to UNDP regular resources, in a timely and predictable manner, to enable UNDP to deliver the intended results of the strategic plan and lead a coherent United Nations development system in implementing the 2030 Agenda. For its part, UNDP will invest in selected areas to meet the Funding Compact indicators, regularly monitor progress at all levels, and communicate progress with Member States through structured funding dialogues.