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NITI AAYOG AND UNITED NATIONS IN INDIA SIGN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK FOR 2018-2022

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NITI Aayog

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NITI Aayog and United Nations in India signed the Sustainable Development Framework for 2018-2022 at a function in the capital today. The agreement is a reflection of the commitment and efforts made by India towards attaining the Sustainable Development Goals. The *Government of India-United Nations Sustainable Development Framework (UNSDF)* for 2018-2022 was signed by the CEO, NITI Aayog, Amitabh Kant and United Nations Resident Coordinator in India Yuri Afanasiev, at a special signing ceremony presided over by Vice Chairperson, NITI Aayog, Dr. Rajiv Kumar. Members of NITI Aayog and Heads of UN agencies in India were present on this occasion.

Dr. Rajiv Kumar, Vice Chairperson of the NITI Aayog, emphasized that 2018-2022 will be a crucial phase in India's development story since the year 2022 marks the 75 years of India'sindependence. In this backdrop, partnership instruments such as the UNSDF assume even more significance to accelerate the pace towards building a New India by 2022, an India that is free of poverty and equal for all.

The UNSDF outlines the development cooperation strategy between the Government of India and the United Nations Country Team in India, in support of the achievement of India's key national development priorities and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The UNSDF was framed following a highly participative process, in consultation with government entities, civil society representatives, academia, and the private sector. The focus areas include poverty and urbanization; health, water, and sanitation; education; nutrition and food security; climate change, clean energy, and disaster resilience; skilling, entrepreneurship, and job creation; and gender equality and youth development. Across outcome areas, the UN will support the Government of India on south-south cooperation, in partnership with the Ministry of External Affairs. The total planned budget outlay for the implementation of the UNSDF 2018-2022 is approximately INR 11000 crore, of which 47 percent is planned to be mobilized through the course of implementation from multiple sources, including the private sector and the government.

CEO, NITI Aayog, Amitabh Kant, highlighted the need to promote innovation in meeting India's development challenges and bringing on board the power of social entrepreneurs and the private sector to act on scale.

The UNSDF is underpinned by the overarching principle of the SDGs to leave no one behind, echoing the Government of India's message of SabkaSaathSabkaVikas (development for all). The programmatic work outlined in the UNSDF targets the seven low-income states (Bihar,

Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, MP, Odisha, Rajasthan, UP), the North-East region, and the aspirational districts identified earlier this year by the NITI Aayog. Work will focus on improving the lives of the most marginalized, poor, and vulnerable communities and people in the country, especially women and girls.

UN Resident Coordinator, Mr. Yuri Afanasiev, said that "The United Nations in India is committed to provide full support to the Government of India's development priorities, ensuring that the UNSDF outcomes are achieved. The solutions we find together can catalyze action across the global south-just as solutions from elsewhere in the world will be adapted to India. He added that together, the India-UN team will ensure that poor, vulnerable, and marginalized communities participate in and benefit from the country's robust growth trajectory."

The UNSDF also includes a set of UN flagship programs that are aligned with major government schemes. The flagship programs will be scalable innovative, multi-sectoral solutions to some of the most pressing development challenges that India faces, while also serving as catalysts for increased investment of development finance. The programmes range from affordable housing for the poor to increasing access to clean energy in rural off-grid areas; from protecting all children from vaccine-preventable diseases to quality education for all children and skilling for young people, especially young girls; and from ending stunting to improving the child sex ratio.

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