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Draft country programme document for Belarus (2011-2015)

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1. The country programme document for Belarus (2011-2015) derives from the agreed outcome areas of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2011-2015. It was prepared together with the Government and is in line with the UNDP Strategic Plan 2008-2013 and strategic documents of the Government.

I. Situation analysis

2. Compared to most of Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, Belarus has preserved a central role for the State in economic production and transactions. Belarus has made considerable progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). At the same time, the country faces a range of challenges that have grown more acute owing to the global economic crisis.

3. In the period between 1996 and 2008, Belarus posted consistent economic growth of 7 per cent on average per annum. Such impressive growth has enabled the Government to provide effective social protection and good education and health services, reducing poverty significantly. Belarus today boasts one of the highest per capita income levels and one of the lowest poverty rates in the region.

4. These achievements derive from both internal and external factors. Effective domestic macroeconomic policies and prudent fiscal policies have fostered growth. But rising prices of energy imports, combined with a decline in prices and volumes of exports caused by the global economic crisis, have had a negative impact.

5. In the period covered by the new country programme, external pressures on the economy will continue to grow. Dependence upon favourable terms of trade in energy will induce Belarus to shield itself over time from commodity risks by diversifying its economic activities and broadening its export markets. This process will require structural reforms and improved productivity. Social safety nets will need to be developed to protect those vulnerable to the impact of structural changes.

6. Over the last decade, Belarus has made progress in natural resource management and environmental protection. Belarus has addressed the catastrophic effects of the Chernobyl accident of 1986 and also worked to reverse soil degradation, reduce water pollution, enhance biodiversity protection, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The legal framework for environmental protection has been improved and aligned with international standards. Belarus has acceded to many key environmental conventions. However, challenges remain in promoting recovery after the Chernobyl accident and strengthening the capacity of environmental institutions.

7. Despite progress in recent years, the Belarus economy remains highly energy-intensive by global standards. For this reason, the Government has oriented its energy strategy for 2011-2015 towards reducing energy intensity and energy dependence, and diversifying energy supplies by tapping into alternative sources.

8. While taking a cautious approach to a range of issues traditionally pertaining to effective and accountable governance, Belarus has engaged energetically in combating human trafficking and promoting humanitarian law. Furthermore, Belarus has successfully collaborated with UNDP in several other governance portfolio areas, such as human rights, justice and administrative procedures reform.

9. Belarus is an immediate neighbour of the European Union, bordering Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. To the east, Belarus has an essentially open frontier with the Russian Federation. This location between the European Union and the Commonwealth of Independent States makes Belarus an attractive transit route for irregular migrants, illicit drugs, and human trafficking. The Government has made visible efforts to counteract cross-border crime, but additional support is needed to improve the capacity of Belarus to address these issues.

II. Past cooperation and lessons learned

10. UNDP has established itself as a trusted partner for the Government of Belarus and enjoys a reputation for quality and transparency, as well as for forging new international development partnerships. The third country programme document (2006-2010) focused on five main areas: economic growth and increase in living standards; effective and accountable governance; environmental sustainability; rehabilitation and sustainable development of the areas affected by the Chernobyl accident, and cross-border cooperation.

11. A Basic Foundation of a National Poverty Prevention Strategy was developed and incorporated in the State Socio-Economic Development Programme for 2006-2010. With support from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), an Investment Policy Review was prepared to promote a better business climate for investors, and national capacity strengthened to facilitate World Trade Organization accession. UNDP provided policy advice to reduce administrative barriers faced by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs); promote microfinance; and improve business services for rural SMEs. Responsible entrepreneurship was promoted.

12. UNDP contributed to broader understanding and application of international human rights standards by legal professionals, and to enabling the national justice system to respond better to the expectations and needs of rights holders. UNDP also helped align government administrative procedures with international human rights practices. Support was provided not just to improve government entities but also to civic groups and organizations that rely on government services. UNDP also provided advice on improving the coordination and management of foreign aid.

13. UNDP Belarus has successfully implemented a number of projects seeking to support environmental sustainability, focusing on combating climate change and land degradation, sustainable development at the local level, biodiversity conservation, and environmentally sound management of international waters.

14. UNDP supported the Government in improving living conditions in communities affected by the Chernobyl accident through local social and economic development, focusing on four districts of the Brest, Mogilev and Gomel regions.

15. UNDP supported the country in strengthening the capacities of the law enforcement agencies to prevent and counteract illegal cross-border activities (illicit drugs, human trafficking, and smuggling of goods) by improving legal frameworks, and providing training and modern equipment. The HIV/AIDS epidemic remained at a stable level thanks to successful implementation of large-scale prevention programmes. National treatment guidelines were revised, and national tuberculosis laboratories received modern diagnostic equipment, which made them compliant with World Health Organization (WHO) testing standards.

16. UNDP deepened cooperation with a broad range of United Nations agencies and international organizations, particularly with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM), the Global Environment Facility (GEF) as well as the European Union. Owing to strong cooperation with the Government, two projects received cost-sharing worth a total of \$233,000. Civil society was involved in UNDP interventions, and UNDP maintained an active dialogue with the private sector, academic institutions, and government entities.

17. The UNDP country office continued to operate with limited core resources. This required considerable strategic focus to leverage impact across activities, while maintaining sufficient flexibility to respond to unforeseen resource mobilization and programmatic opportunities. During the third programme period (2006-2010) \$73.4 million in donor and trust-fund financing was mobilized.

18. Lessons learned in the previous programme cycle have informed formulation of the new programme. UNDP will promote a participatory approach through broader engagement of civil society and increased regional coverage; build new and strengthen existing partnerships with national and international partners to support synergies in programming and enhance resource mobilization; apply a results-based approach to all programme activities; and continue to develop value-added content with new innovative programmes. UNDP will continue to strive for strong national ownership, a prerequisite for programmatic success and sustainability of results.

III. Proposed programme

19. The new UNDP programme will focus on four main thematic areas: (a) economic development and social security; (b) energy and environment; (c) HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis; and (d) effective and accountable governance and human security.

20. *Economic development and social Security.* UNDP will strengthen the Government's capacity to develop and implement inclusive social policies, as well as to maximize resources earmarked for social protection, cope with the demands of an ageing population, and promote the development of public-private partnerships. In addition, UNDP interventions will contribute to better living standards in small towns and remote and rural settings, and upgrade employment and social services.

21. To enhance economic productivity and diversification, UNDP will focus on improving the business and investment environment, promoting technological adaptation and innovation, and integrating the country into the world trade system. UNDP will foster dialogue between the Government and business; promote business networking; and support institutions that encourage efficiency and value-added. Further efforts will be made to engage the private sector in the broader development process, and to advocate for responsible entrepreneurship.

22. UNDP will work to encourage entrepreneurship, particularly through initiatives that target vulnerable and disadvantaged groups; and assist in improving forms and methods of SME support as well as its sectoral and territorial structure.

23. *Energy and environment.* UNDP actions will address country priorities in environmental protection, ensuring national ownership of results by involving all stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and local communities. UNDP support will help in developing the country's capacity for climate change mitigation and adaptation, with emphasis on improving energy efficiency and using renewable energy sources. UNDP will provide capacity-building support to help meet obligations under environmental conventions ratified by Belarus. Priorities include sustainable use of natural resources, biodiversity conservation, combating land degradation and promoting integrated ecosystem management, and supporting integration of environmental concerns into national decision-making.

24. *HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis.* UNDP will focus on the implementation of four GFATM grants aimed at fighting tuberculosis and halting the spread of HIV in Belarus. UNDP will continue expansion of prevention programmes among the most at-risk groups, provision of treatment and care to people living with HIV/AIDS and strengthening the Government's capacity to respond to the HIV epidemic. Two new GFATM grants will be implemented in close partnership with governmental, non-governmental and community organizations. UNDP will support Belarus in minimizing the adverse effects of the tuberculosis epidemic through: improving detection, registration, monitoring and documentation; enhancing the quality of standardized supervised treatment, introducing and applying modern, WHO-compliant treatment regimens; and strengthening the system of management and supply of high-quality tuberculosis drugs.

25. *Effective and accountable governance and human security.* UNDP will build capacities of local governments and other institutions to increase their engagement in decision-making on social and economic issues, and enhance human security and expand economic opportunities for communities in areas affected by the Chernobyl accident.

26. UNDP will also assist in improving the physical security of small arms and light weapons (SALW), thereby reducing the risks of proliferation and, in collaboration with other international organizations and United Nations agencies, nurture national capacities in border management and combating human trafficking.

27. UNDP will continue its work with national authorities, international organizations and NGOs for constructive cooperation and strengthening national capacities in a human rights approach, the rule of law, and the administration of justice. This will include a focus on promoting an effective legislative framework.

28. *Cross-cutting objectives.* Further efforts will be undertaken to promote gender mainstreaming to facilitate equal benefit for women and men from UNDP interventions. Area-based and human rights approaches will be the common denominator of interventions within all thematic areas. Facilitation will be rendered to all the concerned parties in external resource mobilization, enhancement of capacities of organizations of Belarus participating in programmes and projects of international organizations as well as in enhancement of coordination of foreign aid.

29. *Resources.* The UNDP country office will operate with limited core resources of \$3.5 million. This will require considerable strategic focus to leverage impact across activities, while maintaining sufficient flexibility to respond to unforeseen resource mobilization and programmatic opportunities. For the new country programme cycle, UNDP plans to mobilize \$78 million in donor contributions.

IV. Programme management, monitoring and evaluation

30. UNDP will build on its relationships with government partners by working in greater coordination and collaboration with key national and subnational authorities, and providing targeted capacity-building initiatives to its partners. UNDP will enhance existing partnerships with civil society, donors, international organizations, including the European Union, the GFATM, the GEF, the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, and other United Nations agencies. It will also seek new partners, particularly through the instrument of the European Neighbourhood Policy. Joint programming will be undertaken in line with UNDP and national priorities. Working in greater strategic partnership will help ensure proper alignment of UNDP country programme implementation with the UNDAF and government strategic plans.

31. Projects and programmes will be implemented by government agencies, NGOs and other entities under the national execution modality. The Government will ensure national ownership by contributing to programmes and projects through cost-sharing, and by creating favourable conditions for them to achieve results.

32. Full application of the UNDP integrated resource management system will increase the transparency, accountability and efficiency of its work in Belarus. Monitoring and reporting will be fully integrated with ATLAS financial and project management modules. In addition to internal programme and project annual reviews, formal independent evaluations, programme audits and outcome evaluations will be conducted in line with the monitoring and evaluation plan and operational policies and procedures. UNDP will attempt to collect and report all project and programme data in a gender-disaggregated format. In close cooperation with other partners, UNDP will work to introduce a programmatic approach for new projects and programmes seeking to improve aid harmonization and effectiveness.

Annex. Results and resource framework for Belarus (2011-2015)

Intended UNDAF outcome #1: Sustainability of social and economic development is supported					
Programme component	Country programme outcomes	Country programme outcome: Baseline, Indicator(s) and Targets	Country programme outputs	Role of partners	Indicative resources (in thousands of US dollars)
Economic development and social security	<p>1.1 National capacity to develop and implement social inclusion policies and programmes at the local level, and to foster inclusive job creation and entrepreneurship are strengthened</p> <p>1.2. Enabling policy framework promoted for the growth of inclusive markets and incentives for investments and entrepreneurship</p>	<p>Indicators: (1) A social inclusion programme designed and implemented at the local level; (2) Employment growth/number of SMEs created in regions</p> <p>Baseline: (1) Undeveloped instruments to monitor social exclusion at the local level; 2) Rate of growth SMEs and/or unemployment rate at subnational level</p> <p>Target: (1) Enhanced capacity of national and local government to improve the targeting of social protection measures and provide better social services; (2) Average annual growth rate of employed in SMEs – 5%.</p> <p>Indicator: Belarus ranking on “ease of doing business”</p> <p>Baseline: Belarus ranked 58th in facilitating doing business terms out of the 183 countries in the world (2009)</p> <p>Target: Belarus to become one of the world’s 30 most business-friendly nations</p>	<p>1.1.1 Social diagnostics and protection policies improved to reduce vulnerability at the local level</p> <p>Indicator: Established mechanisms to monitor, prevent and reduce poverty and unemployment risks at the regional/district level</p> <p>Baseline: Most data on employment and income trends among the most vulnerable population groups are available only at the national and oblast levels of aggregation, are collected by different agencies and presented with a time lag</p> <p>Target: A comprehensive regional policy in place to monitor social development, quality of life and standards of living at the local level</p> <p>1.1.2 Employability and entrepreneurship of the population in regions, including in small towns, remote and rural areas, increased</p> <p>Indicator: Number of SMEs, low-income households, women and vulnerable groups provided with access to a broad range of income-generating, business support and microfinance services</p> <p>Baseline: Population in regions served insufficiently by local business development institutions</p> <p>Target: At least 1,000 new low-income households and SMEs, especially headed by women, benefit from access to business development/advisory support, micro-credit/deposit, grants leading to improved economic livelihoods</p> <p>1.2.1 Business climate improved to be more favourable for public-private dialogue, business-to-business cooperation and engagement of the private sector in a broader development process</p> <p>Indicator: A package of policy reviews and recommendations on enterprise development, improving its sectoral and territorial structure, increasing contributions to socio-economic development</p> <p>Baseline: SMEs contribute 9% of the GDP; account for less than 8% of industrial output; low level of business-to-business cooperation and business engagement in international economic and trade system</p> <p>Target: A package of policy reviews and recommendations on improving the financial, investment, tax, property and organizational support for the growth of SME in the real sector (manufacturing areas); promoting up-to-date modalities of business cooperation and networking (franchising, industrial clustering, subcontracting) shared with the Government</p> <p>1.2.2 National capacities strengthened to encourage trade and foreign direct investments</p> <p>Indicator: Cumulative number of workshops on international methodology on trade development and foreign direct investments; people trained</p> <p>Baseline: NA</p> <p>Target: 20 workshops and 500 people</p>	<p>National partners: Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Finance, National Statistical Committee, Oblast and District Executive Committees/Authorities, business unions, Association of Credit Unions and Micro-Finance Organizations</p> <p>Donors: Poverty, MDG Trust Funds, European Union</p> <p>National partners: Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, National Statistical Committee, Council for Enterprise Development, business unions</p> <p>Donors: European Union, Governments (Finland, Switzerland)</p>	<p>Regular 1,913</p> <p>Other 1,320</p>
Intended UNDAF outcome #2: People, especially vulnerable groups, are better protected from the risks detrimental to their health					
HIV/AIDS and	2.1 Population, especially vulnerable groups, has full	Indicator: % of people in need of antiretroviral treatment have access to	2.1.1: Decrease in HIV incidence among intravenous drug users, female sex workers, and men having sex with men by 2015 compared to 2010	National partners: Ministry of Health, NGOs Positive	Regular: none

tuberculosis	access to HIV prevention services and information, and all people living with HIV have access to treatment, care and support	treatment Baseline: 86% (2008) Target: 95% (2015)	2.1.2: Effective and sustainable system of mother-to-child HIV prevention established and applied 2. 2. National treatment and care programme providing universal access established Indicators: Percentage of injecting drug users who are HIV infected Baseline: 16,6% (2007) Target: <8% (2015) Indicators: Percentage of female sex workers who are HIV infected Baseline: 1,5% (2008) Target: <1% (2015) Indicators: Percentage of men having sex with men who are HIV infected Baseline: 3,1% (2008) Target: <1% (2015) Indicator: Number and percentage of pregnant women reached by voluntary counselling and testing services and received their HIV test results Baseline: 115,000 (85%) Target: 126,000 (95%) Indicator: Number of adults, including prisoners, and children with advanced HIV infection currently receiving antiretroviral therapy Baseline: 1,249 (2008) Target: 2,500 Indicator: Number of patients enrolled in multi-drug-resistant TB treatment Baseline: 200 (2009) Target: 2,000 (2015)	Movement, Belarusian UNESCO Clubs, Vstrecha, Ministry of Education Donors: GFATM	Other: 69,130
	2.2 Population, especially vulnerable groups, has full access to TB prevention services and information, and all people living with TB have access to treatment, care and support	Indicator: TB mortality rate decreased Baseline: 12.2 (2005) Target: < 8 (2012)		National partners: Ministry of Health, Ministry of the Interior, NGO Belarusian Red Cross Society Donors: GFATM	
Intended UNDAF outcome 3: Environmental sustainability increased					
Strategic Plan area energy and environment	3.1 Country's capacity to mitigate and adapt to the climate change strengthened	Indicator: GHG emission (tons of CO2 equivalent) into the atmosphere Baseline: 62,595 thousand tCO2 Target: 62,545 thousand tCO2	3.1.1 Energy efficiency in buildings improved Indicator: Amount of annual GHG emission (tons of CO2 equivalent) into the atmosphere reduced from improved energy efficiency in buildings. Baseline: Current emission in tons: 0 Target: Reduction in 45,000 tCO2 of direct annual GHG emission 3.1.2 National legal and institutional frameworks for the use of renewable energy sources, particularly wind energy, strengthened Indicator: Total installed power generation capacity of operating wind turbines Baseline: 1.3 MW Target: 13 MW 3.2.1 Biodiversity concerns are integrated into the territorial planning policies and practices 3.2.2 Sound management of chemicals (SMC) promoted 3.2.3 National system for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) created Indicator: Number of territorial plans with biodiversity concerns integrated Baseline: 0 plans Target: 10 territorial plans Indicator: A Road Map for mainstreaming the priority SMC issues in Belarus decision-making officially adopted by the Government Baseline: None Target: SMC mainstreamed into national decision in accordance with the adopted Road Map Indicator: A national law and guidelines on SEA exists	National partners: Ministry of Architecture and Construction, Energy Efficiency Department, Ministry of Environment Donors: GEF, European Union	Regular : 1,000 Other: 7,109
	3.2 Sustainable use of the country's natural resources promoted	Indicator: Environmental Code exists Baseline: No Environmental Code Target: Environmental Code regulating natural protection and sustainable use of the country's natural resources adopted		National partners: Ministry of Environment, Territorial Planning Institute, local authorities Donors: GEF National partners: Ministry of Health, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Industry Donors: Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management Quick Start	

			Baseline: There is no legal and regulatory framework for SEA in Belarus Target: National legal and regulatory basis for SEA is adopted	Programme Trust Fund National partners: Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Economy Donors: European Union	
Intended UNDAF outcome 5: Effectiveness of the national governance system is enhanced					
Effective and accountable governance and human security	4.1 Capacity of local government, civil society and community structures enhanced to promote community development in the regions	Indicator: Development initiatives implemented in inclusive, participatory and democratic manner Baseline: Basic capacity of national and local government on effective and democratic governance Target: Improved capacity of national and local government on effective implementation of development initiatives in inclusive and participatory manner	4.1.1 Participatory community development concepts in the region introduced and further expanded 4.1.2 Human security in the areas affected by the Chernobyl accident enhanced through creation of conditions for population to further sustain livelihoods and obtain safe residence skills Indicator: Participatory community development concepts introduced and further expanded in the targeted districts Baseline: Participatory community development practices are in place only in 5 districts Target: Participatory community development approach introduced and further expanded in 20 districts Indicator: Awareness of targeted local population of risks and of healthy lifestyles in Chernobyl-accident-affected areas Baseline: Level of awareness is low Target: Targeted local population better aware of risks and healthy lifestyles in the Chernobyl-affected areas and acts accordingly Indicator: Number of districts and population reached Baseline: 4 districts covered Target: 5 targeted districts and population of those districts covered	National partners: Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Belarus; district/community councils; executive committees Donors: European Union, United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security	Regular: 615 Other: 1, 271
	4.2. Government and local communities improve management of SALW	Indicator: Development of sustainable and effective security systems and infrastructure at selected SALW stockpile storage locations Baseline: Outdated infrastructure and lack of effective security systems at a number of military units Target: Effective security systems and modern infrastructure in place	4.2.1 Procurement and delivery of physical security improvements for the identified locations for SALW stockpile management is implemented and risks reduced Indicator: All infrastructure and physical security improvements at military bases are completed Baseline: 5 military units Target: 15 military units	National partners: Ministry of Defense Donors: OSCE	