# Executive Summary

The UN agencies operating in Syria pursue their specific mandates under the framework of the Resident Coordinator System and the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). The current UNDAF for the period 2007-2011 is the first in Syria, and as such it constitutes a significant step in the evolving process of enhancing coherence and harmonization of UN work in the country.

Based on a Common Country Assessment (CCA) conducted in 2005, national priorities as identified in the Government’s 10th Five Year Plan (FYP), the MDGs, and with the participation of national government and civil society partners, five statements of shared goals were translated into five UNDAF outcomes: (1) Economic growth with equity, (2) Basic Social Services, with focus on disadvantaged areas, (3) Governance, (4) Environment, (5) and Disaster management.

Since the development of the UNDAF, however, national priorities and circumstances have evolved significantly. Syria has witnessed an increasing influx of Iraqi refugees, major drought in the Northeastern region, and the risk of pandemics including the H1N1 virus. While the UNDAF has been flexible enough to accommodate UN response to changes in the national scene, a Midterm Review (MTR) has been necessary to outline the nature of the evolving circumstances and the UN’s response, to focus joint programming efforts where impact is most needed, and to pave the way for the next UNDAF cycle.

During the first three years of the UNDAF cycle, the major achievements made by the UNCT have been most evident in UN support to the development of legislative and institutional frameworks, policy and strategy formulation, as well as the generation of a vast database for informing evidence-based policies. The lessons learnt during this implementation period have shown that:

* The UNDAF has enhanced UN coordination through joint programming and joint programmes, which provided a momentum that needs to be maintained and reinforced;
* Enhanced linkages between humanitarian and development activities demonstrated added value to coordination among UN agencies as well as with national partners;
* National ownership of development programmes could be enhanced through greater focus on programming as a tool for better implementation, monitoring and evaluation (M&E);
* The knowledge-base generated over the past three years helped facilitate dialogue and advocacy for new interventions, and it will benefit the development of the 11th Five Year Plan as well as the next UNDAF.

Based on the lessons learned, and in response to evolving national needs, the priorities identified for the remaining two years of the current UNDAF cycle focus on:

* Joint programmes in two thematic areas: Adolescents and Youth Development, and Up-scaling of MDGs/Community Development; mainstreaming Decent Work approach as well as other national priorities such as HIV/AIDS prevention, Gender and disaster risk reduction.
* Enhancing linkages between humanitarian and development programmes/projects;
* National capacity development through transfer of knowledge at central and decentralized levels;
* Enhanced south-south cooperation, especially in areas of youth and climate change.