WORLD SCOUTING

How to make the most out of the Action Plan Template for Environmental Sustainability of NSOs

Companion to the *NSO Governance Guidelines for Environmental Sustainability for NSO Leadership*

World Scout Bureau
Global Support Centre, Kuala Lumpur

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The guide is built to help NSOs and WOSM Consultants to develop the Action Plan template for Environmental sustainability. The Action Plan Template is in the form of an editable workbook that can be downloaded from >> this link <<.

Why an action plan is needed

An environmental sustainability commitment gives a National Scout Organization (NSO) direction. An action plan makes that commitment deliverable: it identifies the changes to make, who is responsible, when they will happen, what resources are needed and how the NSO will know it is making progress.

The plan brings governance, programmes, events, properties, partnerships and youth-led action into one coordinated exercise. It helps teams choose achievable priorities, make resource decisions early and carry learning from one year or event into the next. Its value comes from using and reviewing it regularly.

How the three tools work together

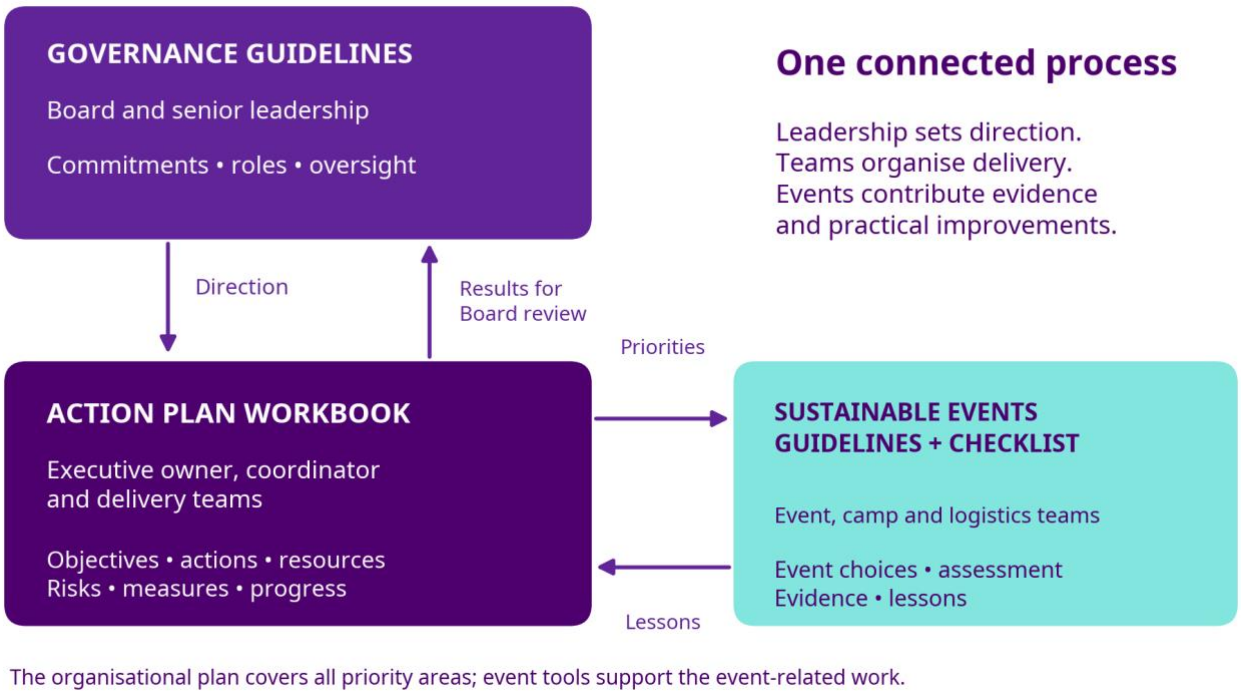


Figure 1: The Governance Guidelines support leadership; the workbook organises delivery; event tools support event planning and learning.

At NSO level, an approved policy or Board statement records the organisation's own commitments. The guidelines support the leadership framework; the action plan turns that direction into a defined programme of work. Evidence from delivery informs decisions about resources, priorities and future commitments.

Accompanying resource	Short description
Governance Guidelines for Environmental Sustainability for NSO Leadership. >> link <<	Guidelines to help NSOs embed environmental sustainability in governance, strategy, management and accountability.
Course for Governance on Environmental Sustainability. >> link <<	eLearning designed for primarily for NSO board members and national leaders focused on national leadership can embed environmental sustainability into organisational policies, decision-making processes, oversight mechanisms, and long-term priorities.

The Governance relationship / A continuous Learning Cycle

Keep direction and learning connected

An action plan is a working link between leadership commitments and everyday delivery. Teams use it to organise work and show results; the Board uses that evidence to review progress, resolve support needs and decide whether priorities should change.

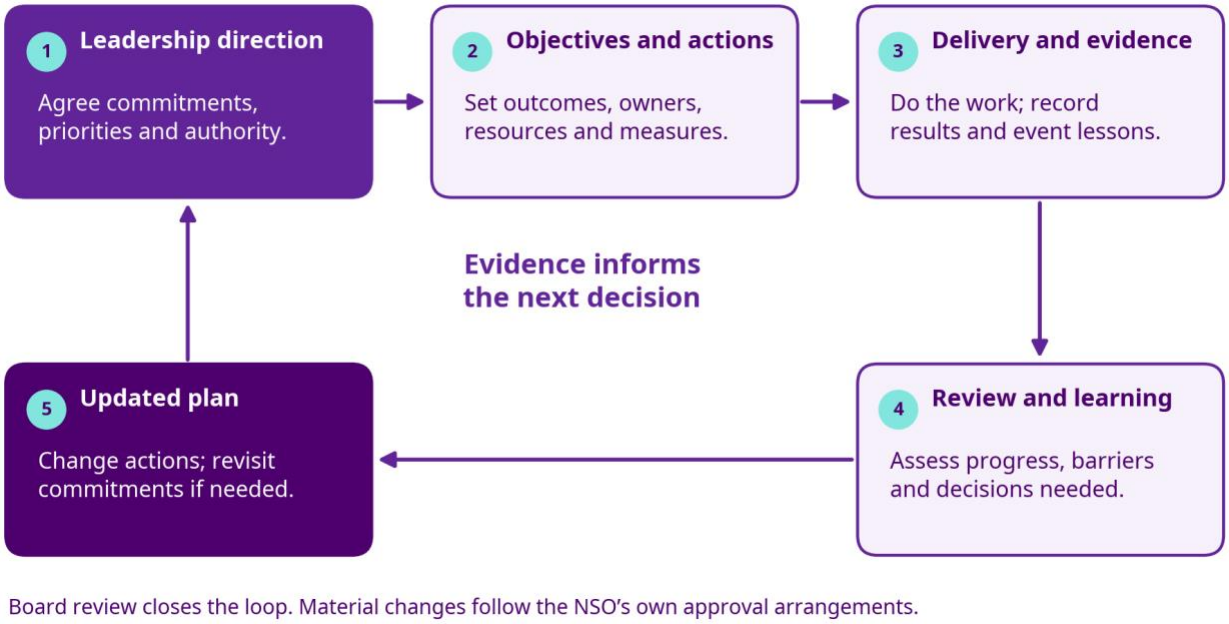


Figure 2: Evidence closes the loop: what teams learn changes the next plan and, where needed, the leadership commitments behind it.

What the Governance Guidelines contribute

The Governance Guidelines for Environmental Sustainability for NSO Leadership help leaders clarify commitments, responsibilities and oversight. Use the current guidelines alongside the NSO's strategy and approval arrangements when agreeing the plan's mandate, accountable leaders and review schedule. The relationships shown here follow the supplied action-plan material; the guidelines remain the reference for their full leadership expectations.

What should come back to leadership

Bring a concise view of progress, evidence, recurring barriers and decisions needed. For example, repeated event transport difficulties may call for a different event location rule, an earlier planning deadline or a resource decision. An activity record becomes useful when it helps leaders decide what to continue, change or stop.

How to use this guide before opening the workbook

Work through the planning steps with the people who will deliver the actions and with young people. Agree the choices together, then record them in the workbook. Complete one action's conversation, including resources, risk and evidence, before moving to the next. The short How-to-Use guide provides field-by-field instructions when you start entering the plan.

PLANNING STEPS 1–2 | (SUMMARY AND OBJECTIVES)

Prepare together and define the change
Bring the right people and information

The executive owner and sustainability coordinator should prepare the plan with the teams that will deliver it. Include youth contributors early, alongside programme, events, property, finance and partnership leads as relevant. Agree accessible ways for people to take part and allow time for consultation.

Bring the NSO strategy and sustainability commitments, previous plans and results, event lessons, available operational data and a realistic view of staff and volunteer capacity. Consider local environmental needs, cultural or political constraints and available partners. Gaps in information can become a first planning action.

Step 1. Agree the scope and responsibilities

The Summary creates a shared starting point. Decide which period and parts of the NSO the plan covers, who coordinates updates, who is accountable for overall delivery and which Board committee or focal point provides oversight. This prevents responsibility from being left with an unnamed "sustainability team".

Discuss: What is the plan period? Which major events are covered? Who can make delivery and budget decisions? How often will progress be reviewed, and who will prepare the annual update?

Record in Summary: the plan details, Board focal point, executive owner, coordinator/team, contact and review frequency. Keep the version Draft during preparation; record Board approval when received. Include the annual reporting deadline as an action in **2_Actions.**

Step 2. Set objectives before listing activities

An objective describes the change the NSO wants to achieve. An action describes work that contributes to it. "Strengthen sustainability learning" is an objective; "train adult leaders to use three practical activities" is an action. Start with a small set of outcomes linked to the NSO strategy and the governance commitments selected for this period.

Discuss: Why does this outcome matter to our NSO? What is happening now? What improvement is realistic by the end of the period? Whose experience and input should shape the target?

Record in 1_Objectives: the objective, relevant SDGs, why it matters, the baseline/current situation and the end-of-period target. If a baseline is unknown, say so and agree a collection method, owner and date; unknown is not zero.

Illustrative objective

Outcome: national events consistently use sustainability planning.

Baseline: no common checklist is used.

Target: every event covered by the agreed rule uses the checklist and provides a post-event handover by the end of the plan period.

Use SDGs to explain relevant contributions, not as a separate reporting task. The original plan highlights SDGs 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15. Select those connected to the work rather than adding them to every objective.

PLANNING STEP 3 | (ACTIONS)

Turn priorities into deliverable actions

Actions make the objectives practical. Choose about 8–15 priority actions, or fewer if capacity is limited. You do not need an action in every thematic area. Select work that addresses an important need, supports an objective and has an owner who can deliver it.

Talk through one action from start to finish

Before moving to another action, agree what will change, the main steps, an accountable person or role, a completion date, evidence of completion, resources and the most important barrier. Confirm the owner has agreed to the work. Discuss budget, risk and measurement together, then record the details in the linked workbook tabs.

Discuss: Is the action specific enough to start? What will prove it is complete? Are the resources available? How will young people help design, deliver or review it? What participation or accessibility support is needed?

Record in 2_Actions: one action per blank row beneath its thematic heading, using *Owner/Team*, *Timeline*, *Budget/Resources*, *Evidence of Completion* and *Progress Notes*. Use the same short action name in related budget, risk, KPI and dashboard entries.

Use the thematic areas as planning prompts

Workbook area	What it can help you decide
Governance and leadership	Policy or Board commitment, coordinator mandate, review arrangements and youth participation in decisions.
Programmes and education	Programme/badge content, adult leader and Scout training, and practical learning resources.
Events and camps	Checklist eligibility, early planning, transport/food/waste improvements and post-event handovers.
Offices, properties and campsites	Basic energy, water, waste or land-use records; feasible low-cost improvements.
Partnerships and procurement	Supplier questions, environmental partners, agreed roles, expected outcomes and review dates.
Monitoring, reporting and communication	A few useful measures, data ownership, review dates and an annual sustainability update.
Community impact and biodiversity	Locally suitable community service, conservation or nature-based action with youth co-design.
Youth involvement and inclusion	Accessible consultation, meaningful youth roles and participation support across the plan.

Table 1: Thematic areas as planning prompts

Make the action concrete

Instead of “promote sustainability”, write “train 30 adult leaders to deliver sustainability activities by 30 September; training lead responsible; completion evidenced by attendance records and the agreed learning activity”.

PLANNING STEP 4 | (EVENTS)

Connect event decisions to the NSO plan

Events are a place where organisational commitments become visible decisions. Venue, travel, catering, materials and programme choices should be considered while the event is still being designed. The dedicated event tools help teams work through these choices; the organisational action plan records shared requirements and recurring improvements.

Agree coverage and start early

Define which national, regional or local events must use the checklist, using a rule suited to the NSO. List the major events in Summary and assign a sustainability lead for each. The workbook's **3_Events** tab contains one checklist: duplicate that tab for each additional covered event.

Checklist category	Planning question
Venue and accommodation	Can location, accommodation and accessibility reduce travel and participation barriers?
Transport	Can travel be avoided, shared or shifted to feasible lower-impact options?
Food and beverages	Can inclusive catering reduce impact, prevent waste and use surplus food responsibly?
Programme and participants	How will people learn, contribute, protect nature and give feedback?
Goods and services	Can you reduce, reuse, rent or buy second-hand before buying new?
Waste	How will waste be prevented, sorted and responsibly managed, including wastewater?
Measuring and compensating	What data, review, emissions-related decisions and handover can the team maintain?

Table 2: Planning questions for events

Use assessment, evidence and learning together

Before the event, review the checklist and turn relevant gaps into planning decisions. During delivery, collect only the agreed feasible data. Afterwards, select an assessment in column E and use column G to record what was done, evidence, strengths and improvements. Keep calculated points and totals intact.

The checklist has 40 items, including 17 bonus items (*). Normal items score 0/1/2 and bonus items 0/2/4; the full maximum is 114. Not applicable scores 0 and reduces the applicable maximum. Explain N/A in the notes. The source benchmark of 75 points remains absolute and is not rescaled for N/A.

A score records how checklist items were addressed. It does not by itself establish an emissions reduction. Where feasible, add simple records of travel choices, food waste, reusable items, energy or water, with units, sources and estimates stated. Report CO2e only with a suitable documented calculation method; keep footprint proxies clearly labelled.

Close the handover loop

After each event, agree up to three strengths and three improvements. Add necessary follow-up actions to 2_Actions with owners and dates; include their budget, risk and measure implications. The Board reviews checklist coverage, recurring barriers and support needs rather than approving every checklist item.

PLANNING STEPS 5–6 | (BUDGET, RESOURCES AND RISKS)

Make the plan feasible

Step 5. Identify the resources and decisions

A plan is credible when it reflects the cash, people and time needed to deliver it. Sustainability work may involve volunteer hours, training, equipment, maintenance, partner contributions or accessibility support even when there is no additional cash cost. Agree what each estimate covers and who must approve or secure it.

Discuss: What staff or volunteer time is needed? Which costs belong to an existing event or programme budget? What is secured, requested or still unidentified? Can the action be phased if support is limited?

Record in **4_Budget**: the action/priority, estimated cost, human resources, funding source and decision required. Use the same action name as **2_Actions** and one currency. Count each cost once; distinguish approved funding from a possible source. A zero means no extra cash cost, while an unknown estimate should remain clearly marked with a costing owner and date.

Resource example
An adult leader workshop may need trainers, youth contributors, a room, learning materials and participation support. The budget decision should cover these needs and the intended audience, rather than only a single total amount.

Step 6. Anticipate barriers and support needs

Risk planning helps teams act early. Identify the main challenges, rate their likelihood and impact Low/Medium/High, and name a person responsible for the response. Include governance, engagement, cultural or political barriers and inclusion alongside finance, capacity and data quality.

Possible barrier	Useful response or support
Funding or volunteer capacity is insufficient	Phase the work, narrow the scope or request a named contribution before committing.
Event decisions are made too late	Introduce sustainability review at concept stage; identify who approves key choices.
Data is difficult or inconsistent	Start with a few feasible measures, agree sources and improve quality over time.
Youth participation is inaccessible or influence is unclear	Agree meaningful roles, accessible consultation and practical participation support.
Authority or engagement is unclear	Confirm the mandate and decision owner; use short check-ins, examples and clear explanations.

Table 3: Barriers and mitigating actions

Record in **5_Risk_Support:** the challenge, likelihood, impact, owner and mitigation/support. Specify the decision or help needed, who must provide it and by when. Put risk-progress updates with the response so leadership can see what remains unresolved.

Workbook note: column F is labelled *Status* but currently offers priority options. Use these as risk priority and record progress in column E, *Mitigation or support needed*. Action status is recorded separately in **7_Dashboard.**

PLANNING STEP 7 | (KPIs)

Choose evidence you can maintain

Monitoring should answer whether the action was delivered and whether it contributed to the intended change. A key performance indicator (KPI) is a chosen measure of progress. Evidence of completion proves an action happened; an outcome measure helps show what difference it made. Use a small number of useful indicators rather than collecting everything.

Define each selected measure. Agree the indicator, its baseline, target, deadline, review frequency and responsible person/team. State the source or method as well. Use consistent units and scope, and show the denominator for percentages. If measuring a reduction, compare equivalent sites, events or participant groups over an agreed period.

Record in **6_KPIs**: the area, indicator, baseline/current, target, deadline, review frequency and responsible person/team. The current result shares a cell with the baseline: retain both, for example "Baseline: 0; Current: 10, 31 March". Include the data source in *Indicator* where useful. Set a completion date in *Deadline*; use *Review frequency* for the monitoring cadence.

Area	Possible measure to adapt
Governance	Active focal point/committee with an agreed mandate; Board reviews held against the agreed schedule.
Education	Leaders or Scouts completing training; programme, badge or training resources with sustainability content.
Community impact and youth	Projects delivered, biodiversity or restoration results, and projects with youth in design and implementation.
Events	Eligible events using the checklist; comparable checklist results; events recording agreed footprint proxy data.
Properties and operations	Sites collecting basic data; water/energy use or single-use purchases compared with baseline; feasible lower-impact travel choices.
Partnerships	Active partnerships with roles and outcomes; joint environmental projects delivered and reviewed.
Plan delivery and data quality	Priority actions on track, using an agreed definition; selected KPIs with confirmed baseline, target, owner and review frequency.
Reporting	Annual sustainability update completed by its deadline and properly shared.

Table 4: Setting up the KPIs

Keep the meaning of the result clear

For training, attendance demonstrates participation; a short activity or feedback record may show learning. For events, checklist completion shows use of the process; footprint data can show changes in practice. For community projects, describe the local result as well as the number of activities. Note missing data and unintended effects honestly.

Indicator example

Eligible events using the checklist: baseline 0 of 3; target 3 of 3 (100%) by the deadline; event leads collect completed checklists after each event; the national events lead consolidates them for quarterly review. Keep eligible events in the denominator even if a checklist was missed.

Use simple qualitative evidence when numerical data would add little value. Collect personal or demographic details only where proportionate and useful. Validate any external calculators, methods or links before circulating them.

PLANNING STEP 8 | (DASHBOARD AND NSO BOARD REVIEW)

Use the plan for decisions and learning
Give leadership a clear oversight view

The dashboard brings the most important actions, status and support needs into a short leadership view. It is updated manually in the supplied workbook; it does not pull information from the other tabs. Refresh it from action progress, KPI results, budget decisions, risks and event lessons before each review.

Record in **7_Dashboard:** the key action, status and main risk/support for each relevant area. Use Not started, In progress or Complete. Mark Complete only when the agreed completion condition is met and evidence is available. If an action is delayed, explain that in Progress Notes and Main Risk or Support Needed, with a recovery step.

Confirm the plan before approval

The coordinator and executive owner should check that the priorities fit capacity; each action has an agreed owner, date and evidence; resources and funding gaps are visible; risks have responses; youth and accessibility needs are considered; event eligibility is clear; and measures and reporting dates can be maintained. Use the current Governance Guidelines to check leadership roles and oversight.

The Board reviews the proposed direction, resources and decisions within the NSO's own approval arrangements. Once approval is received, record the date and version in Summary. When an approved plan changes, record who agreed the change and why, and use Updated with a new plan date.

Review through the year

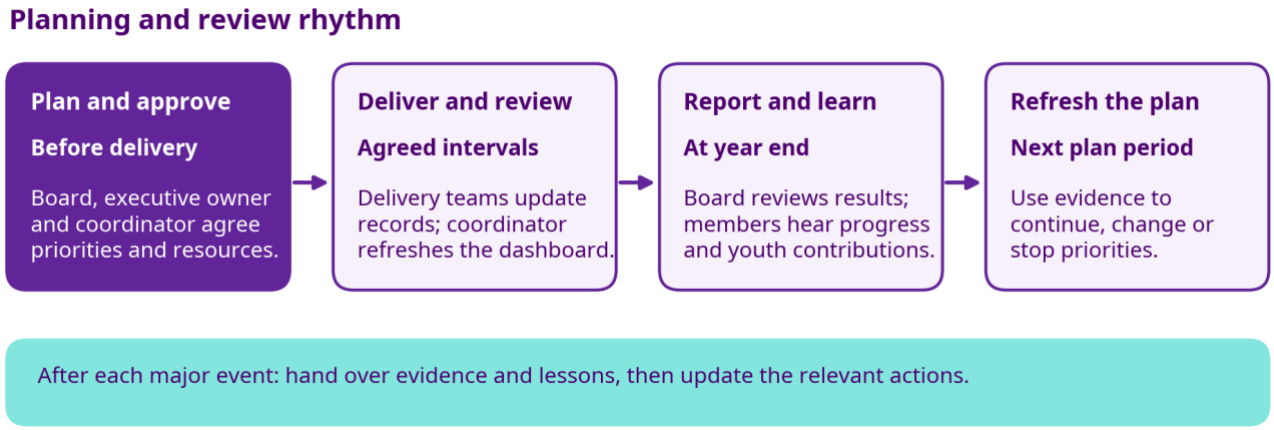


Figure 3: Agree dates that fit the NSO. Board reviews may be quarterly, twice yearly or annual; working check-ins should support delivery.

Update the working records first, then refresh the dashboard. Before leadership reports, the coordinator and KPI owners check current results, baselines, methods and missing data. Share a practical update with members and volunteers at least annually, and with partners or the public as agreed. Bring recurring governance gaps back to the Board.

Prepare a short annual update

A two- to four-page update can cover: progress and decisions; three to five achievements with evidence; event coverage and learning; how young people shaped the work; challenges, risks and unintended effects; and next-year priorities. Combine KPI results with one or two practical examples. Give the report an owner and due date in **2_Actions.**

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE | THEN OPEN THE WORKBOOK

See how the pieces connect

The example below shows a possible NSO choice, not a quoted requirement from the Governance Guidelines. Dates, event numbers and costs are illustrative. Use the same short action name, “Introduce event sustainability checklist”, across the workbook.

Planning decision	How it becomes a working record
Governance commitment	The NSO chooses to strengthen sustainability in its national events and review progress with the Board.
Summary — scope	Plan period 2027; national events lead accountable for delivery; coordinator consolidates updates; quarterly review; three eligible national events.
1_Objectives — intended change	Consistent sustainability planning at eligible events. Baseline: no shared checklist in 2026. Target: all three events use the checklist and hand over lessons in 2027.
2_Actions — delivery	Introduce the checklist at concept stage, brief event leads and collect completed checklists and handovers. Owner: national events lead. Deadline: 15 December 2027.
3_Events — event evidence	One checklist per event, with a named lead, assessments and notes. Record feasibility, participant feedback and agreed data; hand improvements back to the action plan.
4_Budget — feasibility	200 in the chosen plan currency, requested but not secured; coordination and event-team volunteer time. Decision: executive owner to approve the resource request before delivery.
5_Risk_Support — barrier	Teams start sustainability planning too late. Likelihood: Medium; impact: High. Response: review at concept approval; events lead owns the response.
6_KPIs — progress measure	Completed checklists / all eligible events. Baseline: 0 of 3; target: 3 of 3 by 15 December. Event leads collect; national events lead consolidates after events and quarterly.
7_Dashboard — oversight	At planning stage: Not started; resource approval needed. At review: update status, actual progress and remaining support needs from the working records.

Table 5: An example of a process summary

If a handover identifies reusable catering equipment as a recurring improvement, create or update an action with its own owner, deadline, resource decision and evidence. The event lesson becomes an organisational improvement; its results inform the next Board review.

You are ready to begin when...

You have a shared plan period and leadership direction; the right teams and young people are involved; a realistic set of priorities is agreed; baseline gaps are visible; and owners, resources, decisions and review dates can be discussed together. Start with Summary and work through the tabs, completing one action’s planning conversation before moving to the next.

You can download the workbook via >> this link <<

This publication has been developed within the project "A Sustainable Organisation" conducted within the Operational Framework of the World Triennial Plan 2024-2027.

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