

## JOINT PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

### ITALY SEALS ITS FUNDING COMMITMENT WITH UNDP KENYA IN SUPPORT OF THE “CONSOLIDATING GAINS AND DEEPENING DEVOLUTION IN KENYA PROGRAMME” BASKET FUND

**NAIROBI, 4 December 2019:** The Ambassador of Italy to Kenya H.E. Alberto Pieri and the UNDP Resident Representative Mr. Walid Badawi today signed the agreement hosted at the Italian Ambassador’s Residence in Nairobi ratifying the Italian contribution to the *Consolidating Gains and Deepening Devolution in Kenya Programme*. The programme will be implemented from January 2020 to December 2022 and is co-funded with Sweden and Finland.

The **Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS)** is contributing 400.000 Euros in of support specific activities aimed at strengthening local finance management systems and enhanced transparent and participatory financial planning. By leveraging the comparative advantage and the close linkages with county and national government, **UNDP**, **UNICEF** and **UN WOMEN**, will through the Programme strengthen county governance capacity in areas related to Public Financial Management (PFM), performance monitoring and reporting, resilience to environmental risks, citizen engagement and inclusiveness (especially policy concerns of women, youth and persons with disability).

At the signing ceremony, Ambassador Pieri praised both the strong commitment of the UN Agencies that will implement this Programme to “*deliver as one*” under the leadership of UNDP, and the longstanding partnership between Italy and the United Nations in Kenya. “*A partnership that spans in sectors of utmost importance for the development of Kenya and which, with the contribution to this Programme, will now support central and local governments towards a sounder devolution system attentive to end harmful practices and policies against women, with stronger ownership, improved governance, and wider socio-economic development.*”

Thanking the Italian Embassy to Kenya and the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, UNDP’s Resident Representative, Walid Badawi, noted that, “*Italy’s support is very much appreciated, it is timely and targets a critical issue for Kenya; improved public financial management is a prerequisite to improving service delivery in Kenya’s counties and improving the lives of Kenyan citizens. This support will leverage Kenya’s own public expenditures and help Kenya achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.*”

###

**For more information contact:**

Giulio Di Pinto, *Communication and Institutional Relations*  
Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), Nairobi office  
[press.nairobi@aics.gov.it](mailto:press.nairobi@aics.gov.it)

Ngele Ali, *Head of Communications*  
UNDP Kenya  
[ngele.ali@undp.org](mailto:ngele.ali@undp.org)

### **About *Consolidating Gains and Deepening Devolution in Kenya Programme*:**

**Background/context:** Kenya has recorded sustained economic growth and progress in human development over the past five years. However, challenges remain on issues related to marginalization, equity, accountability, and the environment. The devolved system of governance instituted with the creation of 47 counties in 2013 offers great promise towards addressing these issues. The first five years of devolution have provided for the rapid and effective establishment of the counties, but much work remains to install the capacity at national and county levels to address social, accountability, and environmental issues.

Poverty rates remain above 80% in the remote, arid and sparsely populated northern frontier counties where poverty levels severely affect women, children, and other vulnerable groups. In order to address the urgent human development challenges of the most marginalized, this joint programme will target 14<sup>1</sup> of the most marginalized counties directly. The programme's reach will be extended and sustained through the use of national and regional institutions, such as the Council of Governors (CoG), the Kenya School of Government (KSG), the County Assemblies Forum (CAF) and the Frontier Counties Development Council (FCDC) for county-to-county capacity building and peer learning.

The joint programme will utilize a strong field presence and the UN Agencies' close relationships with county and national governments to focus on improving county governance capacity in areas related to Public Financial Management (PFM), performance monitoring and reporting, resilience to environmental risks, citizen engagement and inclusiveness (especially policy concerns of women, youth and persons with disability).

Close consultation with Kenyan partners in the development of the Kenya UNDAF 2018 - 2022 has identified that both devolution and marginalization issues are best addressed through a joint programme combining the strengths of multiple UN Agencies with expertise in key sectors and lead roles in the achievement of SDG goals.

---

<sup>1</sup> Garissa, Wajir, Mandera, Marsabit, Isiolo, Lamu, Tana River, Turkana, Samburu, Kilifi, Kajiado, Narok, West Pokot, Busia