

# DELIVERING AS ONE 2008 STOCKTAKING SYNTHESIS REPORT

Joint Reports by Governments and UN Country Teams



**UNITED NATIONS  
DEVELOPMENT GROUP**

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# Overall Synthesis

## INTRODUCTION

This 2008 Stocktaking Synthesis Report compiles the major accomplishments reported by the Governments and the United Nations system in the Delivering as One pilot countries. The report clearly marks innovations in resolving key challenges in 2008, identifies major challenges that remain, and highlights the key lessons learned emerging from the second year of Delivering as One. It also provides key elements for moving forward with the greater UN coherence and effectiveness agenda both at the country and corporate levels.

The main body of the report is a direct reflection of the contents of the individual country reports. It is divided into specific sections focusing on:

- what is being done differently,
- what are the major challenges,
- what are the major lessons learned,
- other issues, and
- focus of Delivering as One pilot countries in 2009.

Under the principle of “one size does not fit all,” the experiences from the pilots are varied, which makes generalizations difficult. At the same time, it is important to capture observations from individual countries or from a limited number of countries for their diversity and relevance. This diversity adds to the richness of the experiences, but at the same time has to be appropriately qualified. There are many points in the main body of this report where the country stocktaking reports identify key areas of progress and innovation with corresponding subsequent observations that highlight major challenges that remain on that same issue. This is a reflection of the complexity of the process and that Delivering as One can have very different outcomes given the varied contexts of the pilot countries.

## OVERALL OBSERVATIONS

The reports show that the important achievements seen in the 2007 Stocktaking Reports, such as the leadership that national governments have played in the UN Country Teams’ efforts to Deliver as One and alignment with national priorities and development plans, have been sustained. Although there is continued progress and convergence at the country level, significant challenges still remain.

The reports show that there has been a consolidation of the progress made in 2007 and a clear shift from a focus on processes in 2007 to working on implementation and tangible results in 2008. Progress has been made in nearly all areas of Delivering as One, however it is equally clear that this progress has come at an increased short-term cost to all UN agencies at the country level.

Consistent with the principle established at the start that “no one size fits all,” there is also a great deal of variety in the experiences of each pilot, even when dealing with very similar situations and problems. While there is commonality in the lessons emerging and the challenges being faced in a number of areas, there are also significant varied experiences which are specific to the country situations. Each model will need to be assessed very closely to understand the costs and benefits of each country experience. The progress made in areas such as national ownership and joint communication, for example, needs to be documented more systematically.

A number of pilot countries are continuing to report an increase in national ownership, with the Governments increasingly guiding UN agencies on where they would like to see the UN system's contributions and where UN agencies are best suited to address national priorities, in line with the UN system's comparative advantages. The emergence of this strong ownership and leadership has helped to ensure that external assistance is closely aligned with national priorities. At times this requires the Government and the UN to make tough decisions on where they want to see the UN prioritizing its work.

The current reports show that the engagement of line ministries and social partners in the planning and implementation of UN development assistance at the country level has increased when compared to the situation prior to the piloting experience, although this is an area where further progress needs to be made. The involvement of line ministries at the strategic level is important to ensure alignment with national priorities and plans. There is a greater focus on the participation of civil society at the strategic level in the planning and implementation of the UN system's development assistance at the country level in some of the countries. Communication between the UN, Civil Society and Government, and direct engagement of these and other national development partners, is increasing.

Specifically with regards to the specialized agencies, there seem to be higher costs associated with participating in the various activities and processes in the pilot countries, especially in the initial period of the pilot experience. It remains to be seen how far these increases are temporary and to what extent they might be reduced in the longer term. Many specialized agencies have increased the number of their regional focal points, who act as interlocutors in cases where the agencies are participating as Non-Resident Agencies at the country level. Non-Resident Agencies are playing an increasingly important role in the pilot countries, showing that Delivering as One has allowed the UN to bring the assets of the wider UN family to support national governments. This has been made possible due to the ability of the UN at the country level to access relevant technical support from Non-Resident Agencies and respond "as one". However, more needs to be done to enhance the capacity of these agencies to provide field level support.

Inter-related principles and thematic issues such as HIV and AIDS, gender equality, the environment, and employment and decent work have been handled very differently in each of the pilot countries depending on the issue and the country context. Reports indicate a greater focus on issues such as human rights, gender and the environment in the programming that is being undertaken in the pilots, as reflected in the One Programmes and joint programmes.

Country-level capacity assessments of the UN Country Teams (UNCTs) have been used to determine the need for change. The assessments clearly show a disparity between the needs of the countries for upstream UN support (such as greater policy support) and the current staff profiles of the UN at the country level, which—when the profile of the UN Country Team is taken as a whole—is more geared towards programme management and service delivery. Clearly, the picture varies between the funds and programmes and the specialized agencies, with the latter already geared towards a policy advisory role through their mandates and the nature of their country support.

The use of One Fund has had a noticeable impact in providing country-level resources for the implementation of One Programme. It has the potential to be an important source of predictable country-level funding. However, whether the One Funds have had an impact on agency-specific resource mobilization has yet to be analyzed. Despite important progress on this front, funding for the UN system's programmes at the

country level is still a concern. This is especially the case with regard to the predictability of funding at the country level and in view of the observation that some donors are now earmarking their contributions within the One Funds. It is also still apparent in some pilots that the development of programmes is being driven by resources rather than strategic objectives and/or the comparative advantages of the UN vis-à-vis other development partners at the country level. Performance-based allocation criteria have also been developed for the One Funds and are being used, thus overcoming some of the initial challenges in this regard.

A number of pilots have indicated that there are potential savings due to the decrease in the transaction and operational costs of the UN at the country level. However, these estimates need to be looked at very carefully in terms of what can be quantified in monetary terms and considered to be "net savings" after factoring in cost increases in other areas such as the increased UN transaction costs that Delivering as One has entailed, at least in the short run. It also needs to be recognized that some of the savings are one-time and once reflected would simply become the way of working in the country. The pilot countries are looking for guidance on the proper identification of transaction costs, efficiency and savings in operational costs and thereafter the feasibility and possibility for transferring operational savings into programmable activities at the country level that have been called for by the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCPR). The UNDG is further exploring the feasibility of transferring operational savings into programmatic activities at the country level, as called for by the TCPR. The UNDG is further exploring the feasibility of transferring operational savings into programmatic activities at the country level, as called for by the TCPR.

There has been an increased impact from the UN speaking with one voice in supporting policies and influencing legislation at the country level in line with the UN system's normative frameworks. This has also allowed the UN to increasingly respond collectively to government requests for policy assistance in key priority areas such as climate change, the food crisis and the current financial crisis.

There is now a stronger link between Delivering as One priorities and aid effectiveness objectives, including those outlined in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, through a greater congruence between Delivering as One and Paris Declaration indicators in a number of countries. The UN in these countries is supporting the national Government in implementing its reform agenda (including the Paris Principles) by promoting UN principles for greater coherence in the institutional arrangements for development assistance provided by all donors to the country. Related to this is a greater emphasis on strengthening national capacities and/or the increased use of national systems and procedures. However, many of the stocktaking reports also indicate that the effective use of national systems, as called for by the Paris Declaration, needs an increased emphasis.

## **KEY CHALLENGES REMAIN**

- Virtually all pilots have called for a single planning and reporting document for all agencies at the country level.
- For six of the pilot countries, 2008 was the first year of programme implementation, while the other two pilots were still developing their One Programmes. It is therefore recognized by the pilot countries that it is still early days in terms of showing development impact from Delivering as One.
- The reports show that there is an urgent need for further clarification of what can be classified as "transaction costs" and thereafter how changes in them can be measured. This is increasingly a key concern of all partners at the country level and changes in transaction costs must be carefully

measured and reported on so as not to give misleading messages to national partners, donors and UN staff.

- Virtually all the pilot countries have highlighted the need to accelerate the harmonization of business practices at the global level. Most of the country teams in the pilot countries wish to be in common premises in order to achieve greater efficiencies through improved programme coordination and through their operational activities, but have noted that there are significant financial constraints to doing so.

All of the 2008 stocktaking reports cite the need for more support from headquarters, especially on the harmonization of business practices. The UNDG is addressing the specific requests for support from the pilot countries, especially in the areas of business practices and common country programming.

# Detailed Synthesis Report

The following section provides information taken directly from the pilot countries' 2008 Stocktaking Reports. It maintains the original language used in those reports to the extent editorially possible and provides more detailed examples on the work of the pilots using their language, nuances and emphasis.

## A. WHAT IS BEING DONE DIFFERENTLY?

### UN COUNTRY TEAM LEADERSHIP

1. For some of the Pilots, the Resident Coordinator (RC) function was further strengthened following **improved clarity on the division of labour within the UN system**, further clarity on the role of the RC and the firewall and the practical application of the core management principles adopted the previous year. The Office of the UN Resident Coordinator is increasingly used as a one-stop window for the Government for broader UN system support.
2. **The UN Resident Coordinator represents the UNCT in major partner-wide coordination groups.** UNCT members from the various agencies speak on behalf of the whole UN system in various external forums and coordinate their input amongst themselves.
3. **In some cases, a voluntary Memorandum of Understanding (MoU - referred to as UNCT Terms Of References and Working Principles)** outlining the enhanced authority and accountability framework for the Resident Coordinator was locally developed and signed by all UNCT members. In the Memorandum of Understanding, the following principles were incorporated:
  - the One Leader has the authority to give guidance on the One Plan;
  - the One Leader is the ultimate decision maker on the allocation of funds from the One Plan Fund; and,
  - while the One Leader acts as one voice on behalf of the UNCT, equally through the close coordination within the UNCT and with the RC, the lead agency in a particular area can act as one voice on behalf of the UN.
4. **Various mechanisms for UN Country Team interaction which had been developed for Delivering as One have now been institutionalized.** These include:
  - **Joint Steering Committee**—the core decision making body of the Government-UN (and possibly Donor) governance structure. In some cases, a **Joint Task Force** supports the steering committee by providing recommendations and guidance on the implementation process of the Delivering as One pilot.
  - **Interagency Programme Committee** (or multiple **Programme Management Committees**)—an interagency advisory body that reports to UNCT on issues relating to the implementation and development of the One Programme and other programme matters.
  - **Operations Management Team**—an inter-agency working group that seeks to harmonize operational processes, procedures and systems among various UN agencies.
  - **UN Communication Group (UNCG)**—The UNCG is an interagency working group consisting of communication focal points from all resident UN agencies. The key responsibility of the UNCG is to strengthen communication internally within the UN system and externally with key stakeholders by implementing the Communication Strategy to promote Delivering as One.

5. **Some experiences have shown that an effective governance framework and strong and cohesive UN Country Team** ensures Government leadership, as reflected through the Steering Committee, of the reform process through sound and transparent management of programmes and resources. A strong and cohesive UN Country Team has allowed for ambitious decisions to be taken rapidly, ensuring an acceleration of the Delivering as One process especially on operational and common services issues.

6. **The enhanced role of the UN Resident Coordinator is increasingly recognized and appreciated** by national and international partners and by participating UN agencies. The UN Resident Coordinator has successfully led the shaping of the One Programme with the Government as well as facilitating the formulation of joint programmes (Lead Agencies are responsible for the actual formulation of joint programmes) and building broader support and partnership for Delivering as One. The UN Resident Coordinator is called to advocate for and represent the broader UN agenda in the country. The **appointment of a UNDP Country Director** to manage the day-to-day operations of UNDP allows the UN Resident Coordinator to devote undivided attention and time to the UN system and to provide increased strategic guidance for the implementation of the One Programme.

7. In one instance an internal **UN Division of Labour** was developed and agreed by the UNCT to specify Lead, Active and Delegating agencies within all sectors/thematic areas as defined by the Government. One UN Lead per sector was chosen to ensure effectiveness and address the issue of overcrowding of UN agencies in some sectors. The new Division of Labour aims to improve internal coordination in sectors and themes based on UN agency capacity and mandate.

## PROGRAMME

8. All Delivering as One Pilots have now either **initiated their One Programmes** or have completed their first year of implementation.

9. Delivering as One, especially the **mechanisms for joint programming, has allowed for a more inclusive approach**, bringing UN organizations together and ensuring effective use of the differentiated expertise of the UN, including of the specialized and non-resident agencies.

10. The introduction of a mechanism of **Joint UNDAF Annual Review**, by the Government and the UN agencies, eliminated the previous approach through which each agency would conduct separate reviews with their respective line ministries. Harmonizing the UNDAF review and planning process had led to a reduction of transaction costs and staff time, ultimately having a positive impact on the review and planning results.

11. The **One Programmes, recognizing the different approaches of the pilot countries, have paved the way for a reformed UN by focusing on a sub-set of outcomes** within the context of the UNDAF that leverage the comparative advantages of the UN organizations participating in the One Programmes and illustrate the UN system's added value in the new aid environment and the overall development context at the country level. The manner in which the One Programmes have been designed in the pilot countries varies and they do not necessarily cover all the UN organizations in the country or all the areas of the UN system's work at the country level.

12. In the areas for which One Programmes have been designed, the One Programmes clearly articulate where there is **scope for more effective inter-agency collaboration, whether in specific geographic**



**regions or on specific themes and activities**, and they identify areas of duplication amongst the participating UN agencies, as well as gaps where the UN should play a more robust role.

13. Though results vary across countries and programmes, there is evidence from at least one country that the implementation of an increasing number of **joint programmes focused on engaging in key national policy and planning processes has accelerated progress** and contributed to an enabling environment for the achievement of results.

14. At least one country reports that the One Programme also provided support to the **development, revision and dissemination of norms, standards, tools and guidelines in various sectors**. Through these processes, the UN contributed to enhanced quality in the planning, management and delivery of initiatives included in the programmes. All the joint programmes included a component of normative and technical support, which was seen as an integral part of the assistance provided.

15. Recognizing the importance of capacity-building initiatives and the comparative advantage of the UN in this area, One Programmes have increasingly included a focus on **improving relevant human resource capacities, knowledge and skills, and also various systems and processes at both national and sub-national level**. Capacity-development initiatives have resulted in improved access to, and knowledge of, vulnerable groups and also increased capacity related to the design and monitoring of programmes.

16. **Civil society engagement and partnerships have been uneven within the pilot countries, but in countries where civil society has been more engaged its role has been strengthened**, including through an increased focus on facilitating participatory planning and review processes. In some pilots, civil society's participation and contribution to Delivering as One has been promoted through existing channels and through newly developed coordination mechanisms for Delivering as One. Since the role of civil society is key for Delivering as One, and in particular for the One UN Programme, in one pilot a joint programme geared specifically to strengthen civil society capacities has been designed with civil society inputs.

17. **One important aspect for the implementation of a One Programme has been the establishment of Programme Coordination Groups** (PCGs, also referred to as Thematic Working Groups in some countries) responsible for achieving results in each of the outcome areas. The PCG approach is in its early development stages and results are inevitably evolving. The PCGs are essentially a modality to foster joint programming, and the objective is to facilitate the delivery of results in the One Programme in a more coordinated and effective manner. PCGs introduce the new concept of dual accountability: PCG team members will work together on a common topic area and are accountable to both their individual organizations and to the PCG itself. PCGs coordinate the implementation of a specific set of outputs from the One Programme and, in doing so, recommend which participating UN organizations are best placed to take the lead in various programmatic areas, and eventually may advise on allocation of resources from the One Fund.

18. The effective functioning of the Programme Coordination Groups (PCGs) has implied an increase in transaction costs for UN staff, since this is a process that improves and goes beyond the typical UNDAF Theme Groups. However, at least one pilot country reports that this **initial increase in transaction costs is considered cost-effective as it results in the increased effectiveness of the UN** in terms of:

- enhancing interaction between programme stakeholders;

- allowing the UN to provide policy leadership in priority areas;
- developing effective joint advocacy positions when interacting with other stakeholders; and
- allowing the UNCT to increase the use of joint analysis and to coordinate an increase in the number of joint missions.

19. A few pilots are currently working to set up a **One Programme database** to monitor the situation at the country level as it relates to the One Programme outcome level against existing indicators using available sources. In 2008, **inception workshops and basic training on DevInfo were held for key UN Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) staff and government partners** to establish the database, with technical support from DOCO and the DevInfo Support Group.

20. In some countries, **M&E frameworks for the joint programmes were finalized** and a Joint M&E database (using DevInfo software and a One Programme database) was designed. Available data from various government surveys was loaded into the database. As given in the logframes, joint programme outcomes and outputs along with their measurable indicators (both qualitative and quantitative) are reflected in the joint programme M&E frameworks. The additional information in the frameworks is the baseline data (if required and available), the authentic data sources from which the baseline data has been collected and the appropriate target for each of the indicators to help measure the progress and performance over time.

21. As some pilots have progressed with their implementation of their One Programmes, some have already conducted **interagency “review and planning processes” with National Implementing Partners**. This involved bringing all participating UN organizations together on joint deadlines for annual reports and review meetings, annual workplans for 2009, and various common reporting and planning formats. The joint reviews provide a unique opportunity for UN agencies to identify and address challenges highlighted by partners. Furthermore, the exercise added transparency and mutual accountability to the work of the UN system. A lessons learned exercise on this new review and planning process is now being conducted. It will allow UNCTs to revise and further streamline the review and planning process for subsequent years.

22. At least one of the pilot countries **made efforts to improve their joint programmes’ strategic focus and results logic. A systematic review of the monitoring and evaluation matrices has been done to smarten indicators and targets**. Through this exercise, the managers of joint programmes have been able to identify, analyze and address challenges to new operating modalities and have established mechanisms and processes that provide the basis for accelerating the implementation of the joint programmes.

23. The **clear division of labour among agencies participating in the joint programmes**, based on their respective strengths and competencies, and the coordination of each programme by the Convening/Managing/Lead Agencies, resulted in enhanced collaboration and efficiencies.

24. **Joint programmes are using standardized progress and financial report formats for their quarterly, mid-year and annual reports**. The progress report covers all inputs and outputs of the joint programmes and the financial report covers all funding regardless of source, i.e. both One Fund and core resources.

25. **Realignment of the One Programme cycle at country level to the Government's fiscal cycle**, i.e. planning programming and allocation stages to ensure that the One Programme will be synchronized with the Government's planning, budgeting and fiscal cycle will ensure:

- activities are captured and reflected on to the national plans and budget;
- implementation and reporting takes place in sync with national calendars, reducing transaction costs on government partners; and
- increased delivery rate and government absorption capacity.

26. **A key element in moving towards upstream policy advisory services has been the recruitment of policy advisors**. The policy advisors are responsible for providing analytical support for decisions taken by the UNCT and for coordinating the participation of UN technicians in policy discussions to ensure that the UN speaks with one voice regarding key policy issues.

27. **At least one country reports that some joint programmes have only one Programme Coordinator/Chief Technical Advisor**. While they are recruited by one UN agency, they provide services to all participating agencies within the joint programme. This results in clear savings for agencies and for the joint programme, given that agencies do not need to have agency-specific programme managers. This results in savings both in terms of contract management time and resources.

28. In one example a **capacity assessment of the UN agencies looked at UN agency mandates, human resource capacity and presence in the country**, among other criteria, which has allowed agencies to identify individual strengths and combine them to emerge as a stronger UN and thus a more effective development partner for the Government and other national partners.

29. One country reported that **One UN governing structure and fund management modalities** were developed. These principles and procedures provide a roadmap for effective management of the joint programmes which explains the institutional arrangements and the roles and responsibilities of various bodies specifically established to oversee the joint programmes' implementation. The apex body in the governing structure is the High-Level Committee (Steering Committee) which is a joint body of the UN, Government, donors and other partners. Under the High-Level Committee various other bodies were established such as the Executive Committee for One Programme, Joint Programme Steering Committees, Joint Programme Finance Sub-Committees, Convening Agents, and Taskforces. UNDP was designated as the Administrative Agent to facilitate the flow of financial resources through Pakistan's One Fund.

30. In one country, the thematic and geographic prioritization through situation analyses and consultation with the stakeholders at different levels was an agreed principle to help the UN better target its limited resources for long-lasting visible impact. **Coherent programming thus contributed to safeguarding the interest of vulnerable groups of society in disadvantaged regions**. This process also helped the UN agencies speak the same language regarding all cross-cutting issues and mainstream them into the programmes to the greatest extent possible as the entire UN system at the country level internalized the concepts and importance of the agreed cross-cutting themes.

31. In one of the pilots, UN agencies participating in the various joint programmes conducted an 'internal' assessment of their existing capacities vis-à-vis their role in implementing and delivering the joint programmes. The purpose of this capacity assessment was to identify 'internal' capacity gaps to implement the joint programmes. Keeping in view the capacity gaps identified through this internal

assessment, the individual UN agencies will formulate strategies to put in place the missing **capacities which are required to effectively implement the joint programmes**. The assessment was carried out around mandates, resources—human and otherwise—geographic spread and technical capacities.

32. The **CEB Toolkit on Decent Work and Productive Employment** was successfully applied in Tanzania, and it has helped maximize the employment and decent work impact of the seven joint programmes. This tool is available to be used by other pilots, where it will help identify and highlight measures the UN can help governments to take in addressing the impact of the financial and economic crisis.

33. **Delivering as One has been shown to be a way of facilitating non-resident agency initiatives at country level.** Increasingly, non-resident agencies have contributed with their specialized expertise in joint programming and policy dialogue. In some examples, non-resident agencies represent over 30 percent of the One Programme budget.

34. Within the Delivering as One pilot countries, **non-resident agency participation has been enhanced** specifically through:

- better communication and coordination between RCO/UNCT and non-resident agencies;
- increased knowledge among non-resident agencies of UN country activities;
- more effective participation of non-resident agencies in country activities; and
- more inclusive UN system assistance delivery at country level.

In one instance the UNCT has **removed the distinction between resident and non-resident agencies**, replacing this with the term “Participating Agencies” when referring to agencies that are part of the One Programme.

35. **The inclusion of non-resident agencies in the UN reform process at the country level has been a significant achievement**, resulting from an overall culture of inclusiveness as well as identification of staff that are specifically dedicated to ensuring an effective flow of information. Some of the non-resident agencies have boosted their field presence, whereas others have increased the support to missions from regional offices or headquarters. Non-resident agencies have benefited from additional support provided through an additional Non-Resident Agency Coordination Analyst within the Resident Coordinator’s Office. Where they exist, these analysts are often the first port of call for non-resident agencies carrying out activities in the country.

## GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP

36. **A number of countries report that Governments also increasingly guide UN agencies** on where they see their contribution and where UN agencies are best suited to address national priorities, in line with the UN system’s comparative advantage. The emergence of strong ownership and leadership helps to ensure that external assistance is closely aligned with national priorities. This requires the Government to make tough decisions at times on where they see the UN working best. This observation must, however, be tempered by the fact that engagement of government counterparts varies between programmes and theme groups. This is a reflection of both the capacity of the government and the manner in which various theme groups have been operating.

37. National Governments took the lead in the **intergovernmental dialogues on System-wide Coherence**, especially the Delivering as One pilot process, through the **Maputo Seminar**.

38. A number of countries report that steering committees were strengthened with the **increased membership of relevant Government departments**. The roles and mandates of the steering committees have changed to providing actual oversight of the implementation of the One Programmes, including outlining programme priorities for the coming year. Based on the approved set of strategic priority criteria and actual available funds they provide overall guidance and recommendations on the allocation of funds.

39. In a number of cases the Government decided on the **creation of tripartite<sup>1</sup> groups or steering committees** that include the donors alongside the Government and UN agencies, to further enhance the collective ownership of the process under government leadership. But in other cases the donors were not part of such committees.

40. One country reports the **involvement of members of parliament** in the steering committee which is seen to add to the national ownership of the UN system's development assistance at the country level.

41. At least one country reports that Delivering as One and its tools and mechanisms, such as the budgetary framework and One UN Programme Work Plan, provides a clear overview of the UN's work and resource allocation, helping the Government in its effort to strengthen and harmonize donor assistance. Although much still remains to be done in terms of using national financial systems, the **coordination role of the Government has been strengthened** vis-à-vis the UN family.

42. The involvement of line ministries in Delivering as One has been mixed, depending on their varying capacities and the functioning of the Programme Coordination Groups. **Ministries with strong teams and strategic leadership were more involved and led prioritization of the UN's work**. Overall coordination on the Government's side is usually conducted by a central department (Economic Affairs, Finance, etc.), which consults regularly with line ministries on on-going and up-coming programmes. Line ministries involved in UN joint programmes started to change their attitudes and began working with the various agencies involved as part of a single entity.

43. To increase leadership of line ministries in the One UN Programme, some UNCTs and their host Governments have agreed for **relevant line ministries to participate in key meetings of the Programme Coordination Groups** (or Thematic Working Groups). The effectiveness of this participation, however, needs to be judged in the context of its mixed and variable nature and the capacities of the governments to engage in such increased coordination.

44. In one country, the joint design, formulation and implementation of the new joint programmes with Government partners provided an **opportunity to change the way of coordinating between the UN and Government**. Prior to the launching of these new joint programmes, the UN and the Government had not participated in similar inter-agency initiatives.

45. In one of the larger pilot countries, **consultations were held at all levels of government**. This not only included provincial government counterparts but also civil society organizations and other key stakeholders, to assess and analyze the current needs and initiatives in line with the national and provincial priorities as identified by the federal or central government. The consultations prioritized and

<sup>1</sup>The reference to "tripartite" groups should not be confused with the tripartite constituents of the ILO. The tripartite groups comprise the UN, the government and donors, whereas the tripartite constituents of the ILO are: governments, trade unions and employers' associations.

realigned the joint programme logical frameworks with national/provincial priorities and strategies, leading to endorsement and ownership by the provincial governments of the One Programme. This country experience highlighted the even greater complexity and challenges of Delivering as One in large country context, but also its importance, and the importance of planning with different levels of government since implementation would be through those levels as well.

## FUNDING

46. **In all the pilot countries, the Budgetary Frameworks and One Funds have been fully operationalized, but there are funding gaps for most of the One Programmes.**

47. **Coordinated funding by donors that have not earmarked their contributions to a central fund** of the UN at the country level is a central element of Delivering as One. This innovative mechanism is different from direct budgetary support and reflects a fundamental change in how cooperation is conceived.

48. One of the pilot countries decided that a “realistic” One Budget would be essential and therefore developed **criteria to keep the size of proposed programmes in check**. The ability to deliver quality development programmes by participating agencies would be indexed by their historic disbursement levels and availability of technical backstopping, with resource requirements for the One Programme not to exceed the historic delivery capacity (average over past three years) by more than 50 percent.

49. Some of the countries report that the One Fund has also significantly **improved the transparency of the UN** and enhanced inter-agency collaboration and coherence in monitoring and financial reporting obligations. In addition, it has considerably reduced the time required and transaction costs related to overseeing the effective implementation of One Programme for all stakeholders within and outside of the UN.

50. Even though it is too soon to conclude, the early experiences for at least one country suggest that **the UN’s long-term planning capacity and funding predictability have been improved** through the One Fund mechanism.

51. At least one pilot country reports that progress has been achieved in terms of increased use of national systems. Financially, there has been an increase in the volume of resources transferred for national execution, which is reducing transaction costs for the Government.

52. Joint programmes are using **standardized progress and financial report formats** for their quarterly, mid-year and annual reports. The progress report covers all inputs and outputs of the joint programmes and the financial report covers all funding regardless of source, i.e. both One Fund and core resources.

53. Some pilots have developed **specific allocation criteria** that determine fund allocations based on performance. Annual and mid-year reviews can assess financial progress and help re-orient activities/plans. Most agencies can receive additional resources; however, some agencies may not request their remaining funds, or are not allocated the remaining funds if performance was deemed unsatisfactory.

54. In some pilots the practice of submitting specific **annual progress reports at project level to the donors that have provided earmarked resources** has also been abolished to the extent possible,

respecting legal obligations. This saves important transaction costs within the UN for staff previously devoted to reporting on projects, as well as within the donor community at country level as there are far fewer reports to be assessed and administratively processed. The need for additional and, preferably, un-earmarked, multi-year contributions to the One Fund is indispensable in order to deliver the anticipated results.

## CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS PRACTICES

55. Joint **negotiation of services** has also resulted in smaller increases in costs than otherwise would have been incurred. For example, in one pilot the joint negotiation of security services by UN agencies resulted in costs increasing by 10 percent instead of the initially-proposed 55 percent.

56. The adoption of **common ICT infrastructure** at the country level is expected to provide much better, more reliable and resilient connectivity and services for the same costs that agencies are currently incurring.

57. One pilot country has reported new **off-net international telephone call rates** and the establishment of a Common Data Center to back up agencies' vital data centrally, contributing to UN Business Continuity Management activities.

58. **The implementation of the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT)** by agencies at the country level in some of the pilots has resulted in **cost reductions for the participating agencies, strengthened the capacity of implementing partners** and created an expedited system to process financial advances. Governments are interested in all UN agencies participating so as to maximize efficiencies.

59. Some UNCTs have developed **integrated change management plans** which include all aspects of Delivering as One into one project document, therefore accounting for the interdependencies of the change process and establishing a comprehensive work plan for the UNCT that is executed by all UN agencies. Activities are generally organized into the following five areas: Building Common ICT Infrastructure and Services, Establishing Common Premises, Harmonizing Business Practices, Increasing Capacity, and Ensuring Staff Inclusion, Training and Welfare.

60. The development of a **common ICT infrastructure** is one of the major achievements in the area of common services. In one pilot a Common Data Center has been established that includes the following: Common Emergency Operations/ Situation Room, Common Radio Room, Common Server Room, area for Common Help-Desk and ICT Lab, as well as storage and reception areas.

61. Other ICT innovations included the installation and commissioning of **common VSAT dishes** to serve as common Internet access satellite ground stations and the establishment of wireless systems with properly configured network access authentication systems and other networking equipment. Training sessions were conducted for ICT teams at country level on maintenance and troubleshooting of the systems, ensuring sustainability of the system as well as increased participation of ICT staff from all agencies.

62. An interagency human resources (HR) task team provided support to UN Vietnam during 2008. Through meetings between this HR team, the respective HR Directors of the agencies and the Resident

Coordinator, it developed an approach for the **functional clustering of staff at the country level** for a “**One UN Communications Team**”. The following unique features were developed:

- application of a single performance assessment system (UNFPA’s PAD) for all team members, irrespective of their contracting agency;
- recruitment of a neutral (non-agency affiliated) manager of the team, reporting to the head of the Resident Coordinator’s Office; and
- establishment of an inter-agency Management Board at country level to carry out oversight functions for the team.

63. Some pilots have decided to collectively develop a **human resources strategy** that aims to ensure that UN organizations at the country level can deliver on the commitments made with Government in the One Programme. The strategy is a tool to reposition the UN to remain relevant for the future, as countries may gradually require less support for service delivery and more support for “upstream” policy functions. One key purpose of an HR strategy is to improve the UN system’s collective capacity to attract, develop and retain dedicated, highly competent and committed individuals.

64. The only experience with a **Joint Office within the context of Delivering as One (Cape Verde) has shown that operating costs can be reduced significantly**. The 2008 total operating costs for the joint office in question were 12 percent lower than in 2005 in spite of inflation, dollar fluctuation, rising costs related to staff salaries, and turnover of international staff with associated higher costs. General operating expenditures have tended to drop every year and in 2008 were 36 percent lower than in 2005 despite rapidly increasing costs of fuel, electricity and water.

65. One Procurement Teams are being established in three of the pilot countries. These pilots are undertaking UN-wide gap analyses to identify what new long-term agreements the UN needs and to design one procurement plan template for all UN agencies to use. Emerging inter-agency agreements for priority areas of **common procurement** are office security bollards, travel customs clearance, publishing, fuel for vehicles/generators, IT equipment, event management and mobile communications. There are greater efforts to coordinate procurement planning, use government systems more and move towards common procurement units.

66. Many of the pilots are looking into **common premises** for a number of the UN organizations in the country, in cases where this is justified by security and cost effectiveness and efficiency concerns. For the majority, the issue of a common house has been on the table for a very long time and often preceded the reform process itself. Common premises will allow for the maximum benefits to be derived from common services and functional groupings of staff.

67. **The capacity assessment exercise** in a number of pilot countries proved to be a useful change management process in some instances, providing UNCTs with aggregate data based upon which they may take decisions that will shape the way the UN works in the future. The findings on current capacities were based on analysis of staffing structures and job descriptions and on reported capacity needs as expressed by various stakeholders rather than a gap analysis based on available competencies. Although the UN is seen as a valued partner, stakeholders want to see the role of the UN more in policy, advisory and advocacy and less in programme management and direct service delivery. Therefore, UN capacity should focus on the gradual building of upstream policy advisory services to the Government, while retaining strategic programme management capacity. In addition, national capacity development



initiatives and strategic programme management should be retained on the basis of an assessment of national capacities.

68. One country reports that where the UN has **increased the volume of resources transferred for national execution**, it has been observed that this is reducing transaction costs for the Government. Both the use of the Government's exchequer system and the use of the harmonized approach to cash transfers (HACT) have increased. UNCTs have agreed to focus on strengthening national systems to enable the UN to make greater use of government systems in line with the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review and Paris Declaration principles. An increased number of specialized agencies are committing to experiment with the use of the HACT modality that allows for the use of the Government's systems.

69. Some UNCTs adopted a **harmonized rate for national consultants**. This was the result of an analysis of existing disparities among rates applied by agencies for consultants with similar level of expertise and seniority.

70. For the facilitation and consolidation of institutional changes required for a successful pilot experience, the **creation of a Transformation Fund** with the support of donors can constitute a key element of Delivering as One, given that changes require additional technical expertise, development of capacities, a solid structure, human resources, and materials to make it possible.

## COMMUNICATION

71. **Communication is an essential component of the change management process and also a core function of what the UN does as an advocate for policies and global norms.** "Communicating as One" or Joint Communication has therefore become an additional dimension of Delivering as One in some pilots. UN Communications Groups at the country level have developed joint communication strategies and work plans that have been implemented by all UN agencies at the country level. The UNCG supports the UN RC and the UNCT in their pivotal role as the UN system's lead communicators, speaking with "one voice" and strategically positioning the whole UN in the country.

72. "Speaking with one voice": UN agencies have agreed to an internal division of labour whereby **lead UN agencies speak with one voice on policy dialogue issues** on behalf of the UN system. Speaking with one—stronger—voice on policy issues according to a clear division of labour is central to the upstream move that Delivering as One is shifting towards.

73. Targeted and well-coordinated communication has played a crucial role in facilitating the change management process. By strengthening internal collaboration, UN Communications Groups have been able to **enhance awareness, commitment and support to the reform process among UN agencies and external partners**. Externally, joint communication activities have focused on key stakeholders including the Government, civil society organizations, the media, development partners and the general public. Recognizing the advocacy role of well-informed partners, The UN arranged workshops and training for journalists, civil society organizations and other partners to build their capacity and augment positive visibility and accurate media reporting.

74. Frequent information sharing and joint communication activities have **stimulated the Government's interest** in ownership and leadership of UN reform, while regular updates on the reform have kept the donors well-informed and sustained their support.

75. Delivering as One was addressed by **strengthening internal communication**. Through regular information-sharing and staff briefings, staff at all levels have embraced the opportunity to share their views and engage at an individual level and be part of the change.

76. Change Champions were appointed in each function group, i.e. drivers, personal assistants, programme and operations staff, to **promote informal face-to-face communication** between staff on Delivering as One, as well as to assist the UNCG in addressing information needs among staff. The organization of staff briefings across agencies and the appointment of Change Champions resulted in a higher level of awareness and engagement in the pilot initiative among staff at all levels.

77. The development of **UN-Country websites and Intranets has significantly increased awareness** of the reforms both externally and internally among UN staff.

## B. WHAT ARE THE MAJOR CHALLENGES?

### UN COUNTRY TEAM LEADERSHIP

78. The change process of the UN at country level is governed by a collective of equals (the UN Country Team), with consensus at the core of the decision-making process. The RC facilitates the process and makes the ultimate decisions in the allocation of resources where a consensus cannot be achieved. However, as it is not the Resident Coordinator who takes management decisions, but the UNCT, two pilot countries expressed the view that this creates a management and accountability issue and makes the **decision making process lengthy and cumbersome**. The challenge grows exponentially if it is recognized that even the UNCT members are not fully empowered to take decisions on the roadmap for change, as they depend, to varying extents, on support and agreement with their respective Headquarters.

79. An MoU/UNCT ToR for One Leader can empower a Resident Coordinator to take the ultimate decisions on the One Fund, and can certainly enhance the RC's informal leadership role within the team. However, one pilot country noted that other than this the **RC still depends primarily on moral suasion in the absence of formal empowerment**. UN reform cannot depend on moral suasion alone—it requires strategic vision and management responsibility to transform the status quo. Managing and sustaining change is hardly possible if the current management issue is not addressed. One pilot country report noted that this formal empowerment of the RC was perhaps the single most important challenge the UN faces, and the one that is least likely to be addressed with the required urgency and determination.

80. A change of Resident Coordinator during the Delivering as One process, and/or the replacement of some Heads of Agencies at the country level, may lead to a break in continuity of processes to some degree. The need for **measures to ensure continuity in quality programming and delivery in the face of regular staff turnover** is particularly important in the context of the Delivering as One pilot.

### PROGRAMME

81. The development of the various documents and the related **planning and review processes for Delivering as One are time-consuming for Government counterparts, UN staff and other stakeholders**. Ensuring that these processes are incorporated into the broader national planning and review process continues to be a challenge and will be a priority for the future.

82. The development of a common **set of tools and related methodologies to objectively assess the performance** of programmes, including undertaking an analysis of results achieved against expected results, and also documenting the lessons learned, may contribute to a broader national planning process.

83. Although it is contrary to the intentions of UN reform, UN organizations at the country level are now doing multiple annual reporting (at the agency, Programme Coordination Group, and One Plan level) and the **large variety of reporting and planning formats required by agency headquarters** do not facilitate easy transfer of information into common reporting formats. More discussion is needed on how to report on progress towards output and outcomes in the Annual Review meetings, and more strategic prioritization is needed.

84. As the standard UN Headquarters planning and reporting rules and tools still apply, reporting on development results through **Programme Coordination Group reports and the One Plan Annual Reports adds an extra layer of reporting and additional burden for staff** that already have to prepare their agency annual reports and plans. There are perceptions that the Programme Coordination Groups are overly complicated, and do not have relevance for the day-to-day work of UN organizations. This inhibits the concrete, visible changes in how the UN is working differently and better as a UN system. For some UN organizations, the Programme Coordination Groups represent a considerable challenge, as they lack sufficient human resources to 'staff' all Programme Coordination Groups adequately.

85. **Some staff have to participate in a multitude of Programme Coordination Groups**, inhibiting their effective participation and contributions. The UN co-conveners of these groups, holding the secretariat, invest considerable time and resources in managing the Programme Coordination Groups. No support is provided for this and their efforts are not yet acknowledged at global level.

86. By and large, the **capacity and accountability for gender equality within UNCTs remains weak**, including a lack of sufficient expertise at senior levels and insufficient accountability of Resident Coordinators and Heads of Agencies. Resource constraints negatively impact the UNCTs' ability to deliver as one on gender equality, in particular because it is not yet possible to track the full extent of commitments or expenditure on gender equality and women's empowerment. One UN pilot country also reports a lack of adequate mechanisms for involving women's groups and networks in One UN planning and processes.

87. It is proving very **difficult to harmonize and streamline the Monitoring & Evaluation tools and timelines** of the participating UN organizations. UN reform yielded additional work for most UN organizations as internal M&E processes and procedures have not been changed, nor have exemptions been granted. There is an urgent need for simplification and harmonization of reporting obligations. DOCO was requested to seek the UNDG's exemption of individual agency annual reporting for any pilot country that is able to produce a Delivering as One results report for 2008.

88. An **assessment of existing M&E capacities within the UN system** was carried out in some of the pilots and submitted to UNCTs. It was observed that there were many gaps in the internal capacity of agencies and the UN as a whole at the country level in terms of the requirements for joint M&E of the One Programme. UNCTs were recommended to fill in the gaps by introducing M&E structures and in some instances hiring new staff, especially for the lead agencies in the joint programmes.

89. To deepen the reform process, further changes are required in **articulating the UN's comparative advantages** in Middle Income Countries and charting the operational changes required to ensure effective delivery of support.

90. In cases of an **increased share of resources being channeled through Government systems**, it was observed that this did not necessarily translate into human resource time being released. The reason for this is that despite increasing the volume of resources channeled through national systems via the exchequer, these are still implemented according to specific **UN national implementation procedures which are heavy in terms of management and reporting requirements** and in most cases still include components of UN direct execution. National implementation according to UN rules and procedure can thus be seen as a hybrid implementation modality that mixes national and direct implementation and

does not fully rely on national systems. It still requires UN dedicated procedures, proving an impediment to significant decrease in transactions costs both for UN agencies and Government.

91. There continue to be **challenges in the implementation of joint programmes**. These challenges, which illustrate the complexity of doing business differently, include the following. The lack of synchronization with the Government budget cycle is a common problem that can cause some delays on the Government side in terms of absorption and delays in delivery rates. Results-Based Management principles must be consistently applied to ensure that the quality and logic of programme is constantly improved. Programmatic synergies and coherence must be ensured not only within joint programmes but also across programmes. Each participating agency must have sufficient human resources capacity assigned to the joint programmes. Delegation of responsibility between agencies needs to be enhanced, and agencies need to avoid spreading too thinly across programmes. Interaction between programme and operations staff should be much stronger, to mutually reinforce changes taking place at the programmatic and operational levels. Environmental sustainability, gender and the Human Rights-Based Approach are relevant to all joint programmes and need to be mainstreamed consistently. Although the Managing Agents (or lead agencies) are accountable for the programmatic results of their respective joint programmes, the achievement of the results set by the One Programme is a collective responsibility.

92. One pilot country has called for the further simplification of planning cycles by allowing the **development of a single UN Development Assistance Strategy** that integrates key components of the UNDAF and One Programme, thereby ensuring greater programme coherence and strategic focus of the UN in the country.

93. Despite the recognition by all UN agencies of the need for a more coordinated and results-oriented approach, according to new pilots, many agencies have continued to focus on small projects. An additional challenge is the **persistence of a project mentality** among some National Implementing Partners.

## NON-RESIDENT AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

94. An **increased staff workload** was noted in 2007 and continued to be a challenge in 2008. The focus of the coming period will be to further rationalize the amount of staff time, and also to encourage a broader level of participation of all relevant staff. Staff contributions to interagency processes linked to the UN reform need to be duly acknowledged in their performance appraisals to act as a motivating factor for the staff.

95. As general interest in Delivering as One increases, so do the missions from UN Headquarters and/or Regional Offices. The **transaction costs of receiving missions** that wish to learn and observe progress are significant. While such missions an essential part of building and deepening 'buy-in' for change across the United Nations system it is a considerable increase in transaction costs to the host UNCT.

96. Non-resident agencies **need to commit enough capacity, both human and financial**, to engage both in the policy dialogue process, where non-resident agencies have been requested by the Government to play an active role, and in programme planning and implementation. Unless dedicated capacity and resources are invested by non-resident agencies in-country, their lack of participation could negatively impact on the UN system's ability to meet the Government's and stakeholders' expectations. This in turn puts pressure on specialized agencies whose budgets might not cater for the rapid increase in demands for technical advisory services and support to the eight pilots.

## GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP

97. In some of the pilot countries, there has been a shift towards a **decentralization of public administration**. In such cases, the UN needs to reinforce its attention not only to the leadership at central level but also to the provincial and district authorities.

98. Ensuring **inter-sectoral and inter-ministerial/departmental coordination and linkages is still an area of concern**. Many line ministries are still not meaningfully involved in Delivering as One at the country level. The coordination mechanisms within and between joint programmes have been suggested as a priority area through which to improve such coordination.

99. **Involvement of government counterparts in the planning and monitoring processes have varied** from theme group to theme group, ranging from very active participation to only limited levels of participation. This is due to the capacity of the involved ministries but also to the functioning of the UNDAF theme groups themselves.

100. Challenges remain to match the **integrated programme planning** of the UN with current Government structures and timelines.

101. A challenge to a One UN Steering Committee in which donors are members is the **representativeness of the donor members**. Although the members of the Steering Committee represent various donors in the country, it is likely that there remains further scope for improving information-sharing between donors so as to ensure greater involvement and representation at this level.

## FUNDING

102. **Funding predictability became a major issue** in consolidating the implementation of the One Programmes. There is therefore an urgent need to improve resource mobilization strategies to ensure a better response from donors. Not securing the needed funds early in the process can jeopardize the effectiveness of the One Programmes in delivering results and in providing needed lessons learned for the development of future programmes. Sudden insufficient funding to the pilots could push the system back to business as usual, or funding via HQ (i.e. the Expanded “Delivering as One” Funding Window) could water down the process if Quality Assurance and stringent allocation criteria are not set.

103. There is a need to draft a **handbook for the One Funds** detailing operational guidelines around preparation of the funding frameworks (calculation of the funding gap), reallocation and re-phasing of funds, harmonization of reporting formats to the Administrative Agent, and harmonization of the submission forms for resource requests based on annual work plans.

104. **A few donors are still financing UN organizations and specific projects which are not within the One Programme directly at the country level**. This may be due to outstanding commitments but in some cases is also a reflection of a lack of interest by some donors in participating in a One Fund. The latter situation makes enhancing UN coherence and implementing UN reform somewhat difficult, as the High-Level Panel on System-wide Coherence highlighted the potentially distortive effects of such earmarked funding patterns. However, there are instances of direct agency funding that occurs outside the scope of the One Programme (i.e. unique agency specific technical activities) that are therefore not funded through the One Fund and can continue without an impact on the UN’s coherence at the country level.

105. HQs need to rapidly implement the project for the harmonization of business practices with priority on finance issues (harmonization of instruments and procedures, **allowing all agencies to use government-managed basket funds**).

106. One of the **main problems regarding funding at the country level remains within the headquarters of the different bilateral donors**. Several bilateral donors have expressed their interest in supporting the One Programme financially, but found it difficult to overcome their headquarters regulations that did not allow for a flexible allocation of resources to the UN at country level.

107. Until now, **resource mobilization** has been conducted by the Office of the Resident Coordinator. In the future this should be a joint UN-government effort (via for example the One UN Steering Committee) showing the leadership and ownership of the government.

108. In some cases, due to the limited resources pledged to the Coherence Fund by donors and/or donor rules and regulations, the UNCT together with the Government have agreed to **allow earmarked contributions to joint programmes** and thematic areas through the One Fund.

## CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS PRACTICES

109. The change processes are connected to a relatively **short implementation phase** which is until the end of 2010 (as per the current understanding that the Delivering as One pilots will be evaluated at the end of that year). The process of change continues to add **increased workload for staff** across all levels who are contributing to inter-agency working groups in addition to fulfilling their full-time engagements with an individual agency. This is exacerbated by the need for a relatively high level of **functional expertise** to successfully work in areas such as harmonization of business practices or the design of a common ICT infrastructure, which is sometimes limited at the country level.

110. Recently-conducted staff surveys in the pilots clearly show that the **additional workload related to UN reform** is unsustainable, particularly for those who have been actively involved in Delivering as One. Staff highlighted the fact that reform has created additional work for them, reducing the scope for innovation. In addition to their work related to UN reform, UN staff still have to adhere to all standard UN rules and procedures which guide the work of UN offices anywhere in the world.

111. There is a need for the establishment of an operational-level agreement for agencies at the country level which outlines possible **cost-sharing mechanisms for UN common services**.

112. A number of actions have been taken and guidance issued on **harmonization of business practices and common services**. However, further harmonization of business practices at the country level remains heavily reliant upon **action at the global level** of different organizations, particularly in the areas relating to procurement, ICT, finance and human resources. More effort is required in this regard at the global level in the coming year, to further streamline business processes and reach agreement on key operational areas that are of relevance to country teams. The reform effort could plateau in 2009 at country level without similar changes at global and regional level. There is a need for UN agencies at global level to agree jointly on a number of issues and provide clear guidance to country teams on more synchronized and harmonized rules and regulations in procurement, human resources, finance and IT standards.

113. **Co-locating a functional team comprising members** from different UN organizations highlighted the diverse and fragmented nature of human resources policies and procedures among UN organizations. There are significant differences in contract and grading levels, performance assessment systems, and entitlements and career perspectives for staff with similar academic and professional backgrounds. This inevitably undermines team spirit based on equity, and hampers UN reform in spirit and deed. Significant differences exist in: grading (people performing similar functions are ranked at different levels across UN organizations), promotion guidelines and mechanisms, retrenchment policies, contract types, entitlements (learning entitlements, payment of shipment of personal effects on appointment and repatriation, reimbursement of hospital expenses), recruitment processes amongst agencies, reporting lines and supervisors, addressing grievances, approaches to working hours/flexi-time, part-time working and other parts of a work-life balance policy being applied such as telecommuting offered by some agencies and the existence of a representative (elected) of Staff Associations. Harmonizing these fragmented policies is likely to have a significant impact on the cohesiveness of the team.

114. There has been a **shift towards using national systems where possible**, e.g. national procurement, accounting, M&E, audit; however, this is still insufficient. National capacity development needs to be aligned with, and utilize, national budgetary frameworks for issues such as resource reporting and procurement. In principle, implementation of programmes through national structures and using national systems and procedures (national execution) should be the default approach; however, this is not yet used in a systematic manner.

115. Despite the positive experiences with HACT implementation, only four funds and programmes practice it systematically. Specialized agencies are not systematically implementing HACT, although several are currently experimenting with it in the context of the pilot countries. This is a matter of concern for the partners who expect that our processes should be harmonized. There is also a need to improve on the implementation of the assurance activities and capacity development plans for Implementing Partners.

116. **The following issues continue to require clarification:**

- unified procurement procedures for common services;
- signatory and authority levels for common Long-Term Agreements;
- mandatory use of Long-Term Agreements of one agency by other agencies for the local procurement of goods covered by the Long-Term Agreement, as opposed to each agency issuing its own Long-Term Agreements for similar goods;
- vendor management;
- reduction of duplicate contract review across the agencies, and;
- general guidance on models for the establishment of one UN procurement.

117. In some pilots the **decision of the UNCTs not to conduct a capacity assessment and organizational mapping** of staff positions and job descriptions originated either as a political decision so as not to affect the process of building trust among staff or due to concerns regarding the suitability of the methodology. The decisions were taken despite the fact that Delivering as One was leading to an increasingly uneven distribution of the additional work required by the pilot experience. However it is agreed that a capacity assessment and organizational mapping tool should be used to plan future recruitments and the structure of new personnel and their tasks in order to acquire the relevant knowledge, experience and skills needed for the shift towards upstream policy support.



## COMMUNICATION

118. In 2008, the **implementation of communication strategies** helped to overcome many of the communications challenges. However, **much remains to be done to ensure that all stakeholders are properly informed. More concrete information** focusing on behavioral change is required. Increased communication between agencies and their HQs was pursued, but needs to be strengthened. Regular RC and RCO consultations in New York have also helped to inform both UN headquarters as well as external stakeholders.

119. Country Teams in the Delivering as One pilot countries faced a major challenge in the form of **inconsistent or ambiguous messages from their Headquarters as they sought to move forward with some country-level Delivering as One initiatives**. The involvement of the UNDG Advisory Group at the Assistant Secretary-General/Assistant Director-General level in the Delivering as One process has helped ensure that UNCT members at the country level have received increasingly consistent messages.

120. Internally, the main challenge is to consistently communicate the progress of the reform and translate it into implications for staff, including in terms of the way we work together to Deliver as One. The issue of **job security needs to be further addressed** in future communications.

121. UN Communications Groups at the country level continue to face challenges as they struggle to clarify their roles and responsibilities and the expectations that the UNCTs have of them. Capacity assessments have revealed that there is a **significant gap in the capacities of agencies in terms of communications** and that significant steps would be required to adequately balance capacity so that effective communications can be carried out jointly.

## C. WHAT ARE THE MAJOR LESSONS LEARNED?

### UN COUNTRY TEAM LEADERSHIP

122. **Teamwork and team-building are critical to the process** (keeping in mind that the use of the word “team” in the context of the UNCT covers a different reality than a traditional team, as the UNCT is composed of different agencies with different mandates): the first step is to change mindsets. Be bold: set an ambitious roadmap, be aware and realistic about risks and challenges.

123. It is important for the UN Country Team to not get too caught up in the “process” of Delivering as One but to **move as quickly as possible to planning and implementation of the One Programme**. It is through joint planning and implementation that the real spirit of UN reform and teamwork takes place.

### PROGRAMME

124. It is important to look at the **advantages for the government in participating in the One Programme** of Delivering as One. The most important are:

- Alignment: the One Programme is fully aligned with national priorities;
- Transparency: through the One Programme the government has a transparent view of the planned activities of the UN in the country;
- Predictability: a clear overview of the expected budget that will be spent by the UN in the country;
- Accountability: within the United Nations there is a clearer division of labour;
- Efficiency: efficiency and effectiveness have improved through a reduction in the number of meetings (thereby reducing transaction costs for the government), and more joint missions and joint analytical work;
- Results: The UN system’s work under One Programme is more visible thanks to greater convergence and synergies of agency contributions. Increased focus on capacity development has helped to accelerate progress towards national ownership;
- Increase of budget via the UN: in the short term there is an increase of the budget coming into the country to support the national priorities.

125. **Using the Gender Score Card to mainstream Gender Equality:** The implementation of the Gender Scorecard with the active guidance of UNIFEM and support of the UNCT has been a positive step towards the mainstreaming of gender in the UN system’s operations at the country level. The Scorecard is intended to provide an assessment of what the UNCT as a whole contributes to gender mainstreaming and consequently to the promotion of gender equality in the country. The main focus was on strategies and processes—that is, gender mainstreaming, rather than development results. Through the Scorecard, UNCTs are more aware of their own performance on gender and thus better positioned to take action in order to enhance their performance. The timing of the Scorecard is critical as the results can inform the review of the UNDAF and/or One Programme.

126. Capacity to deliver is enhanced through a clear **division of labour with lead agencies** coordinating the implementation of different activities.

127. In practice, it has also become clear that **UNDAF Theme Groups (Programme Coordination Groups) working under those areas where a Government Sector Working Group exists and is operational have better coordination between them**. The development of a Sector-Wide Approach

(SWAp) has further helped the coordination not only between the different Development Partners but also between different UN agencies. The UNDAF Theme Groups (Programme Coordination Groups) appear to be more effective in sectors where there is a Sector-Wide Approach compared to those for which there is no SWAp yet.

128. **The creation of the Management Committees for each joint programme was a key element for greater coordination at the programmatic level.** These Committees have generated frequent contacts between UN agency programming officers and allowed the sharing of administrative and programming practices information between the Agencies and the Government. In addition, the figure of “coordinator” of the joint projects worked as a channel for doubts or difficulties faced by the national associates during implementation. Governments have stated that the Management Committees constituted real tools for inter-institutional coordination because they allowed line ministries to communicate and share information that resulted in greater opportunities for joint planning. They have become privileged spaces to share lessons learned and best practices that should be implemented.

## NON-RESIDENT AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

129. **Establish Task Oriented Groups.** The existence of specific task-oriented groups is instrumental for effectively Delivering as One. A Programme Management Team, an Operations Management Team, Communications Group, and a Monitoring and Evaluation Group play critical roles in the success of Delivering as One. Their effectiveness is linked to the clarity of their terms of reference and accountability, to their internal organization in sub-groups for the accomplishment of specific tasks, to the motivation and dedication of the members, and the leadership of each group. It has also become clear that these groups are more functional and effective if the membership is based on functional expertise rather than on mere representation of an agency, if the members have the authority to make recommendations, and if there is proper guidance from the UNCT and RC. The membership of some non-resident agencies in the UNCT through authorized and duly empowered officers gave impetus to the non-resident agencies’ contributions and improved the overall response of the UN to country development needs.

**130. Engagement of Staff Associations:** Their participation in UNCT meetings and other UN fora represents a concrete step for staff inclusion in Delivering as One. Joint activities like “town hall” meetings have contributed to exchanging information about the overall Delivering as One process and facilitating staff involvement. “Town halls” have provided a venue to discuss topical issues, such as the capacity assessment and its staff implication, or HIV prevention.

131. Coordination and harmonization requires dedicated effort by all participating agencies. All agencies participating in Delivering as One should be ready to significantly increase efforts to meaningfully participate and benefit from Delivering as One. **One pilot stated that limited capacities in non-resident agencies’ regional offices need to be addressed** to ensure the timely delivery of programmes as well participation in key meetings for Delivering as One. In the experience of some pilots, non-resident agencies have benefited from additional support provided through the newly recruited Non-Resident Agency Coordination Analysts within the Resident Coordinator’s Office, which for them is a best practice that should be replicated in countries that need greater non-resident agency involvement.

## GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP

132. **Governments need to be enabled to take the lead and civil society and donors need to be enabled to participate** in the process. Stage the process right: inclusiveness and strategic focus can

only be achieved through a participatory programming process. Inclusiveness, nevertheless, should not come at the expense of strategic focus and change.

133. The UN Country Team must keep in mind that **national priorities must guide the UN's work** and that ultimately it is about having a **UN system which is able to remain relevant** and strategic in the country and not about the sustainability of the UN system in the country.

## FUNDING

134. It is critical to have a **reasonable amount of funds in the Coherence Fund early on in the One Programme process** to allow for predictability and strategic quality in the UN system's assistance in the country. Not having sufficient funds during the first year of implementation can be a risk and dampen spirits amongst participating UN agencies. Lack of predictable funding can also impact the quality and timely delivery of the programme. The Spanish MDG-Funds have been a tremendous support for funding joint programmes. The funding support has increased joint planning and implementation and acted as a catalyst for change.

## CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS PRACTICES

135. **The development and implementation of a change management plan:** The added value of a comprehensive change management plan lies in the integration of all aspects of Delivering as One into one project document, which takes into account the interdependencies of the change process and establishes a concrete work plan for the UNCT that is carried and supported by all agencies. With a thorough review process and final endorsement of the change management plan and its activities, the efficiency of managing the change process can be increased.

136. Some countries have made a local business case that **the establishment of a UN House can enable the UN to save costs** and to establish a common, integrated back-office structure. Immediate cost savings from moving to a One UN House have been estimated in some cases at 500,000 USD per year, arising from operational cost savings related to cleaning, building maintenance, garbage collection, and energy, water and gas use.

137. **Inter-agency technical task teams from headquarters make a significant difference to operations reform.** For example in Tanzania, the ICT task team took the country-based feasibility analysis and within 10 days turned it into an implementation plan approved by the Country Team.

## COMMUNICATION

138. **Simplify and streamline communication, both internally and externally:** understanding the process is a key driver in change management. Internal communication is crucial to managing organizational change at all levels. Not until the reform is embraced and accepted internally will it have any effect externally.

139. **Targeted communication** has deepened the understanding of Delivering as One among Government officials and stimulated their interest in ownership and leadership of UN reform.

## D. OTHER ISSUES

### EFFICIENCY GAINS IN TERMS OF TRANSACTION COSTS

140. The Delivering as One pilots have experienced an increase in internal coordination costs, but many have also reported that as in 2007 they are continuing to see a **decrease in transaction costs** in terms of working with Government counterparts and UN donors, who are equally benefiting from this decrease. The use of a single governance structure, a single resource mobilization process and a single reporting mechanism is enabling the reduction of the consultative burden. In an **audience survey** conducted in the second half of 2008 in Rwanda, one of the more remarkable figures was that 91 percent of the stakeholders (government and donors) mentioned it was **now easier to deal with the UN than before** (in terms of number of meetings, efficiency, work methods, etc.); nine percent said dealings were the same as usual and zero percent found that there was an increase. This clearly shows a reduction of transaction costs for stakeholders.

141. The reduction of transaction costs has become a concern to many stakeholders. However, defining and **measuring transaction costs (both quantitatively and qualitatively) is a complex process**, and guidance at the global level from agencies' headquarters is needed in order to have a unified system to measure transaction costs. In one country a newly adopted **Monitoring and Evaluation Process Framework for Delivering as One identifies a number of means of verification to track shifts in transaction costs** (qualitative only). These include indicators used for reporting against the Paris Declaration, the operation of new processes and perceptions of those involved.

142. **Changes in transaction costs associated with programme/project planning and implementation remain a challenge.** Discussions during the evaluation of the Paris Declaration also confirm that few examples of analysis of transaction costs have been commissioned and that the first phase of the Paris Declaration Evaluation has not attempted to identify, or quantify, changes in transaction costs. There are no tested and robust methodologies that could be used for tracking changes in programmatic transaction costs.

143. **A One UN Annual Report would reduce transaction costs to both national and international partners.** Rather than having to read multiple reports, national and international partners would have one annual report providing an overview of progress in the implementation of the One Programme in the country.

144. A further **reduction in transaction costs for the Government would imply a simplification in approving UN agency programmes for subsequent programming cycles.** A single One UN Programme Framework and Operational Document for all agencies, to be signed by the Government, would reduce the approval process with the Government from many to one.

### PREPARATIONS FOR AN EVALUATION

145. The UN Evaluation Group-led **Evaluability Assessment Missions identified challenges and gaps** that need to be addressed before the next evaluation in 2009-2010. The recommendations derived from the assessment reports indicated the need to strengthen issues such as national ownership and leadership, expand the UNCT to include non-resident agencies, document the harmonization of business practices, improve internal communication and keep donors informed and involved in Delivering as

One, as well as improve the monitoring and evaluation framework. These recommendations have been vigorously followed up.

146. There is a need for additional time for the results to become visible, to weigh the work that has been done, and to document the lessons learned through the Delivering as One pilot experience. Otherwise, there is a risk of inadvertently misrepresenting and/or missing completely, important processes that have yet to come to fruition. Concretely, **defining the most appropriate time to evaluate Delivering as One is a process that should be conducted jointly with the pilot countries** (National Governments as well as UNCTs) as they can better assess the right time and the requirements for this activity.

## IMPROVED FUNCTIONING WITH BRETTON WOODS INSTITUTIONS

147. There have been **limited examples from the pilots of the Bretton Woods Institutions (the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund) participating in Delivering as One, or of increased functioning of the UN with the World Bank and IMF as a result of Delivering as One**. In one pilot there are examples of joint programmes developed and implemented by the UN and the World Bank in the areas of: participation of user groups in important decisions concerning utilities' decentralization and privatization, tariff changes in the energy and water sectors, as well as measures to strengthen market surveillance and consumer protection; quality assurance for the data produced from national surveys; the education sector, as well as in avian influenza and a human pandemic preparedness and control joint programme.

## IMPACT ON THE APPLICATION OF INTER-RELATED PRINCIPLES AND THEMATIC ISSUES

148. The 2008 Stocktaking **reports highlight intensified coordination, collaboration and policy coherence on inter-related principles**, with some concrete examples of how Delivering as One has led to a stronger and more cohesive UN. Capacity development, gender equality, human rights, environmental sustainability, HIV/AIDS, refugees, civil society participation and responses to financial and food crises were among the inter-related principles and thematic issues addressed by the pilots.

149. The focus and approach in integrating the inter-related principles and thematic issues differed from one pilot to another, according to country context and consistent with national priorities and development plans. However, in general the **mainstreaming of inter-related principles and thematic issues was supported and facilitated by relevant theme groups or similar coordination mechanisms**. In some pilots, the work of these groups was strengthened by the availability of dedicated advisers (e.g. on gender and human rights) or agency specialists (e.g. on the environment or gender). On gender, one of the pilots worked jointly with the UNDG Task Team on Gender Equality and took the initiative of convening a joint retreat involving gender focal points and specialist, which identified several lessons and challenges and developed a forward-looking agenda for action to further strengthen the accountability for gender mainstreaming in the Delivering as One pilots and beyond.

150. **Joint programming offered opportunities to deepen the integration of inter-related principles and thematic issues. For instance in a number of pilots joint programmes on gender equality** involving several agencies were approved. One of the pilots reported on how Delivering as One facilitated a focused system-wide priority on the critical and emergent issue of refugees. Capacity development was an overarching emphasis in most of the joint programmes developed in support of national priorities. Pilots also sought to integrate gender equality and a human rights-based approach in their programme design, analysis, implementation and M&E frameworks. Some pilots made use of tools such as a gender

audit and gender scorecard to ensure accountability for mainstreaming gender. Pilots also benefitted from training on gender mainstreaming and/or HRBA. The involvement of national partners in such training sessions was seen as key in promoting better appreciation of the UN system's intrinsic value and comparative advantages in these areas.

151. **Some pilots adopted a unified approach by addressing two or more inter-related principles together.** Viet Nam promoted coordinated efforts to promote gender, human rights and culture together, while Uruguay incorporated the environment, gender and human rights in one of the joint programmes. Pakistan approached human rights, gender equality, civil society engagement, and refugees in an integrated manner through a cross-cutting issues working group. Such a holistic approach helped these pilots not only to further increase coherence among joint programmes under the One Programmes/One Plans but also further gain the confidence of concerned governments, which led to new programming opportunities in supporting national priorities and needs.

152. **In response to the food and financial crises, several pilots prepared joint assessments and analyses, with particular focus on the impacts on the most vulnerable,** and offered them as inputs to the formulation of government strategies. Delivering as One greatly facilitated such processes and helped to raise the profile of the UN as an impartial provider of policy advice.

153. Reports also indicate the need for continued sensitization and capacity-building support for the UN and the government to further build capacity on specific **inter-related** principles and to ensure that mainstreaming them becomes a day-to-day function. For those **inter-related** principles that currently lack specific system-wide guidance, such as environmental sustainability, efforts are under way in UNDG to produce the needed tools.

## COORDINATION WITH DONORS

154. At least one pilot country reports that **donor groups continued to operate as a cohesive community**, speaking and working in support of UN reform at country level and providing financial and political support. In some cases, donor principles of engagement have been developed and adopted by the donor groups—an example of the excellent cooperation offered by the donor community.

## UN REFORM MONITORING & EVALUATION

155. In one pilot a **Tripartite Results Framework** was developed in mid-2008 in close consultation with three parties involved in the Delivering as One (UN, Government and donors) as a successor arrangement to the "success criteria" which were agreed upon by the tripartite stakeholders in June 2007 to monitor progress in the implementation of the One Programme. The Tripartite Results Framework identifies five key outcomes:

- demonstrates progress with UN reform;
- the One Programme reflects increased prioritization and UN comparative advantage including a shift to policy;
- reduced programmatic and project transaction costs;
- robust resource allocation process;
- significant efficiencies as a result of common services, co-location and joint programming.

156. In a similar experience in Uruguay, the UN and the Government are moving forward in fine-tuning instruments for **monitoring and evaluating the pilot experience as a whole**. The creation or fine-tuning of evaluation instruments is framed within the general evaluation of the pilot process with the objective

of measuring the progress made, which includes the evolution of delivery since 2006 (the baseline year prior to the beginning of the pilot) and improvements in terms of financial efficiency and programmatic impact.

157. Key questions remain to be answered with regards to the **monitoring and evaluation of Delivering as One**: 1) How to link Delivering as One with development? What is the link between progress in the process and the long term impact? 2) What is the longer term vision of Delivering as One? What are the objectives to be achieved in 2010 and 2011? Reform is not an end in itself, and this is particularly important to remember during the establishment of an M&E results framework.

158. **The M&E Framework is an excellent tool, enabling the UNCT to follow the progress of reforms as well as the implementation of the One Programme.** The M&E Framework is a tool which can be adapted easily to other country contexts. Key milestones can be monitored and checked off as “complete” or flagged in red as areas needing more attention.



## E. FOCUS OF DELIVERING AS ONE PILOT COUNTRIES IN 2009

159. Continued support to the **formulation and implementation of national development plans** and poverty reduction strategies;

160. Further **improvement in the quality of UNDAF results** through more structured joint programming efforts and full implementation of ongoing joint programmes;

161. Strengthened **One Programme M&E capacity** and regular monitoring of results;

162. Support to the **incorporation of cross-cutting issues into national planning** and review processes;

163. **Expanded participation of non-resident agencies** in key initiatives and processes, recognizing and appreciating the technical and operational expertise and experience of all contributing partners;

164. Further improvement of **internal business practices and streamlining** of business processes for increased cost effectiveness and efficiency gains;

165. Improvement of **internal and external coordination and communication with staff and partners**, and continued support to strengthened inter-sectoral coordination mechanisms.

166. **Ensuring there is no “selective” weakening of Delivering as One components**, especially the innovative elements emerging from the Delivering as One process, i.e. the empowered RC and UNCTs and the One Fund, both critical pillars of the Delivering as One architecture.

167. Translate changes taking place in business practices in the pilots into **structural reform of HQ business procedures**.

168. **Maintain the political momentum**: changes from the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review to a Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review should not reduce or dilute the level of pressure on pilots and HQ to continue to reform, i.e. the deadlines for the evaluations should not be changed. It would be ideal to keep the General Assembly’s mechanism of having System-wide Coherence co-chairs facilitating political dialogue.

169. **Joint missions, analytical work, and joint definition of strategies** are some of the areas where the first steps have been taken and where more progress is expected in the near future.

170. A special focus in 2009 will also be **common services** and how to ensure the **link between operations and programme**. This is especially necessary in the field of procurement and IT progress in order to reduce administrative costs for the UN as a whole.

171. **Simplify the planning of the programming cycle and reduce the number of documents**. Integrate the One Programme with the UNDAF exercise. The One Programme can contain the strategic framework that usually is undertaken while modifying the UNDAF, but there is no need for a separate Country Programme Document, Country Programme Action Plans, or similar documents. It is believed that having one document approved by all boards at HQ level (where this is a requirement), and the

heads of agency and the Government at country level, would lead to significant efficiencies and greater coherence.

172. **Simplify reporting on the programming cycle and reduce the number of documents.** One single End of the Year Report for all UN activities in a country is sufficient and increases transparency especially with reference to the Government and development partners. Avoid having parallel, duplicative reporting requirements.

173. One country report recommended that a study be carried out on **building the capacity or strengthening the Resident Coordinator's Office** to give it a highly professional, technical and programmatic profile that would include providing services to the UNCT, non-resident agencies and the RC and supporting the RC in communication with partners, with a role and mission that should be specific to the country context.