



Annex: Q&As raised during the informal briefing of the Secretary of CEB to ECOSOC on 6 May 2013

Q: Do auditors / inspectors play a role in the analysis of management issues taken up the CEB and its subsidiary machinery?

A: Yes, auditors / inspectors play an important role, both within CEB member organizations and at a UN system-wide level.

Internal and external auditors of CEB member organizations play a role in the analysis of management issues taken up by the CEB and its subsidiary machinery. As just one example, the audit of organizations' financial statements is based on the application of HLCM-agreed IPSAS compliance policies.

The Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) and the CEB collaborate closely, and continue to strengthen their interaction in response to Member States' request to the JIU to increase its consideration of system-wide issues. In this context, the CEB regularly engages in a comprehensive exercise to assist the JIU in identifying relevant topics of system-wide impact for the Unit's programme of work.

In addition, during the preparation of its reports, the JIU is invited to interact with the mechanisms of the CEB. With respect to management issues, the Unit's Inspectors are regularly invited to participate in meetings of the networks of the High-level Committee on Management to exchange views, as relevant. For example, the HLCM, through its Human Resources Network, supported the data collection and provided comments on the drafts of two relevant reports, "The Management of sick leave in the United Nations system" (JIU/REP/2012/2) and the report on "Staff recruitment in United Nations system organisations: a comparative analysis and benchmarking framework" (JIU/REP/2012/4), and the ICT Network supported the efforts of the JIU on their report on "Information and communications technology governance in United Nations system organizations" (JIU/REP/2011/9). The JIU's work programme extends beyond management issues, and it engages with the CEB's other subsidiary mechanisms as appropriate. For example, the JIU recently concluded its evaluation report of UN-Oceans, the inter-agency coordination mechanism on oceans and coastal issues, and the HLCP invited the JIU to join its twenty-fourth session for discussions on the mechanism.

Finally, the CEB Secretariat also encourages member organizations to ensure a good information flow between each organization and the JIU as well as to coordinate action on the recommendations and programme of work of the JIU.

Q: Please clarify terminology related to the HLCM's efforts to measure and communicate results: "Big Data", "open data policies", "inventory and mapping of data", and "taxonomies".

A: Short explanations of the terms are provided below.

- Big Data is a collection of data sets so large and complex that it becomes difficult to process using on-hand database management tools or traditional data processing applications. The challenges include capture, curation, storage, search, sharing, transfer, analysis, and visualization. The trend to larger data sets is due to

the additional information derivable from analysis of a single large set of related data, as compared to separate smaller sets with the same total amount of data.

- Open data is the idea that certain data should be freely available to everyone to use and republish as they wish, without restrictions from copyright, patents or other mechanisms of control. The goals of the open data movement are similar to those of other "open" movements such as open source, open hardware, open content, and open access. The philosophy behind open data has been long established, but the term "open data" itself is recent, gaining popularity with the rise of the Internet and World Wide Web and, especially, with the launch of open-data government initiatives such as Data.gov and Data.gov.uk.
- Taxonomy is the practice and science of classification of things or concepts, as well as the principles that underlie such a classification. In the case of data, taxonomies refer to the need to reach agreement among different actors and constituencies on the definition and classification of certain activities, so that they can be reported on in a consistent manner – for example, the harmonization of cost classification mandated by the QCPR.
- Inventory and mapping of data refers to a comprehensive stocktaking of the data available in the UN system.

Q: Regarding the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to be implemented to assist UN Country Teams in the second generation of "Delivering as One", is the document available? Has it been approved? What are its main elements? Will it be applicable only to those operating under Delivering as One or to the whole system?

A: Further to the QCPR request to “build on the best practices and lessons learned in implementing ‘Delivering as one’ by a number of countries and to further consolidate the process by clearly outlining the core elements of each of the ‘ones’, based on lessons learned, including by formulating standard operational procedures as guidelines for the successful work of the United Nations country teams in ‘Delivering as one’ countries, as well as for other countries that consider joining ‘Delivering as one’” (A/RES/67/226, para. 140), a set of procedures have been agreed by the UNDG for those countries wishing to adopt this approach.

The Standard Operating Procedures outline guiding principles around five pillars of Delivering as One – One Programme, One Budgetary Framework/One Fund, One Leader, Operating as One, and Communicating as One – and contain a proposed Plan of Action for Headquarters. They were endorsed by the UNDG on 21 February 2013 and are available on the UNDG website (www.undg.org).