



United Nations Development Group meeting

Virtual meeting, 24 January 2011, 9:00 AM - 12:00 Noon (EST)

Final Report

Item 1 – Opening remarks by the UNDG Chair

1. The UNDG Chair, Helen Clark, opened the first UNDG meeting of 2011 by video link from Sana'a, Yemen. Putting the meeting into context, she mentioned a number of important events taking place in the previous year, noting that the three successful summits - the MDG summit, the biodiversity Summit in Nagoya, and the Cancun climate conference - had all exceeded expectations. Another key achievement was the endorsement of the UNDG's strategic priorities. She noted that the focus of this UNDG meeting would be on the implementation of the UNDG strategic priorities and how the UNDG at the global, regional and country level can translate the aspirations of the summits into action and by doing so accelerate progress towards the MDGs and other internationally agreed development goals.

2. Noting that the UNDG work programme at the global level now covers all the key elements of the UNDG strategic priorities, the UNDG Chair briefly summarized the main focus areas of each UNDG working mechanism. The MDG Task Force is driving the implementation of the nine-point action plan in follow up to last year's MDG summit, supporting implementation of the MDG Acceleration Framework, and providing increased support to the Millennium Campaign. The UNDAF Programming Network is focusing on supporting the 2011 UNDAF rollout countries and other critical programming issues, including normative issues. The RC System Issues Working Group will continue to implement the RC Talent Management Initiative; manage the RC/HC/DO and UNCT performance appraisal instrument; deploy knowledge and know-how in the area of RC leadership and UNCT working relations and other important functions. The Joint Funding and Business Operations Network and its associated task teams are among other things driving the joint HLCEM-UNDG Implementation Plan on Harmonization of Business Practices. The UNDG-ECHA Working Group on Transition continues to provide support to Resident Coordinators and UN country teams in transition countries and strengthen partnerships with other parts of the UN system and external partners for more coherent support.

3. In order to provide the conveners of the working mechanisms an opportunity to discuss areas where they can support each other's work, the UNDG Chair informed the UNDG that a follow-up meeting to last year's UNDG working mechanism conveners retreat will be organized in May 2011. She further informed the UNDG that DOCO's new structure is now in place, and urged UNDG members to bear with DOCO in the coming months, as the office has a very significant vacancy rate and therefore capacity constraints during its transition period.

4. Speaking about important areas of work for the UNDG in the coming months, the UNDG Chair informed the UNDG that the implementation of the M&A system review had begun and that the UNDG members would be among the stakeholders to be interviewed by the consulting firm very early on in this process. She further noted that 2011 will be a critical milestone for the Delivering as One initiative. The independent evaluation of Delivering as One, the findings of which will be presented to the 66th session of the

General Assembly, is about to begin. She noted that while the results of the independent evaluation will reinforce the message that “no one-size fits all”, the positive experiences reported by the Delivering as One countries are likely to be confirmed by the evaluation and feed into discussions on the way in which the UN development system will operate in the future.

5. She further informed the UNDG that the Permanent Missions of Norway and Uruguay to the United Nations have decided to start an initiative to support Delivering as One, and that she had been invited to speak at the launch. The Delivering as One initiative will also be tabled for discussion at the joint session of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP in early February. Last, she noted that another critical event will be the fourth intergovernmental conference on Delivering as One, which will take place in Uruguay in October. As was the case for the Hanoi meeting, a Conference Organizing Group is being set up, consisting of DESA, the Deputy Secretary-General’s office, participation from Uruguay’s Permanent Mission, the Uruguay RC office, UNDG members, and DOCO.

Item 2 – Feedback from UNDG Advisory Group meeting

6. Hans d’Orville, Chair of the UNDG Advisory Group, provided an update on the outcome and key recommendations made at the UNDG Advisory Group meeting at ASG/ADG level on 17 January. He noted that two items had been addressed which required a decision by the full UNDG. First, a recommendation had been made by the UNDG Advisory Group that a global meeting of all the Regional UNDG Teams be organized in 2011. He noted that the last time this type of meeting was organized was in 2008. The meeting would provide an opportunity for the Regional UNDG Teams to advise on how they are driving the UNDG strategic priorities. The Advisory Group Chair noted that if there is support for the idea in the full UNDG, he would bring it back to the UNDG Advisory Group for further discussion to develop a more detailed proposal. Given the calendar of events in the first half of the year, he suggested that the aim should be to hold such a meeting in the last quarter of the year.

7. The second item requiring a decision by the full UNDG concerned the preparations for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD), also known as “Rio +20” in 2012 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The Advisory Group Chair noted that two options had been presented to the group and that a recommendation had been made that a time-bound task team is established to lead the UNDG’s preparation for this very important meeting. He emphasized that the work of the group must be undertaken through an integrated UNDG-HLCP approach to avoid overlap and provide for policy/strategy-operational linkages. Recognizing that this time-bound task team could conceivably duplicate work UN entities might be doing within DESA and the HLCP mechanism on climate change, he noted that another option presented by Advisory Group members was that one of the UNDG members involved in the work of these existing mechanisms, reports back to the UNDG on the policy options and approaches identified within HLCP with a view of including country level perspectives.

8. The Advisory Group Chair continued his presentation by summarizing a number of items tabled at the Advisory Group meeting. The Advisory Group had discussed the follow-up actions to their meeting in November last year with the Resident Coordinators from the Delivering as One pilot countries. Advisory Group members had acknowledged their responsibility to raise the level of engagement for the DaO initiative in their own organizations, and to ensure that Delivering as One remains high on the political agenda. With regard to the organizing committee being established for the upcoming intergovernmental meeting on Delivering as One, to be held in Uruguay in October, he informed the UNDG that ten members of the Advisory Group had already volunteered to be part of this group, namely UNFPA, WFP, ILO, UNESCO,

UNIDO, UNDP, FAO, the Regional Commissions (ECLAC/RCNYO), UN Women and UNICEF. The Advisory Group also discussed the Resident Coordinators' induction course. The Advisory Group Chair informed the UNDG that consultations have begun with European agencies on what they want to see in phase two of this year's programme, which will take place in February. With regard to the next generation of the RC induction, there will be full consultation with all UNDG members through the RC System Issues Working Group. A discussion also took place on Aid Effectiveness, the Paris Declaration Survey and preparations for the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness to be held in Busan, Republic of Korea at the end of 2011. The floor was opened for comments.

Discussion

9. The UNDG Chair noted that there seemed to be wide buy-in for a global meeting of the Regional UNDG Teams, and no objections or comments were raised by UNDG members on the issue. Regarding the proposed mechanism for co-ordinated UNDG preparations for Rio +20, it was noted that a second option had been discussed in the Advisory Group, namely to continue the former UNDG Task Team on Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change and expand the mandate to include coordination for Rio +20. It was suggested that this Task Team, which operates under the leadership of UNEP and UNDP, take on the task of coordinating UNDG's preparations for Rio +20. The Advisory Group Chair summarized the position UNDG members had expressed, and noted that while several members had expressed flexibility on which mechanism to choose, only one had expressed preference for this second option, while six members had expressed preference for establishing a time-bound task team. It was noted that apart from the procedural question, there was a substantive issue, since the mechanism must give equal importance to the three pillars: environmental, economic and social agendas for sustainable development. It was agreed that the UNDG would build on the former UNDG Task Team on Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change, and add representatives from the UNDG who could bring to it the social and economic dimensions of sustainable development. This task team would be tasked with co-ordinating UNDG's preparations for Rio +20.

10. On the other items presented by the UNDG Advisory Group Chair, a question was raised about the status and timeframe of the independent evaluation of Delivering as One. DESA, which has been leading the process to establish an Evaluation Management Group, provided an update, noting that the Evaluation Management Group will be composed of nine members: a) one expert from each of the five regions; b) one expert each from two pilot countries; and c) the Chairs of the Joint Inspection Unit and the United Nations Evaluation Group. All members but one have been identified, and it is expected that the Evaluation Management Group will be in place by the end of January. The Group will then meet for the first time in February or beginning of March. On resource mobilization, it was noted that some Member States had been contacted to make financial contributions to support the independent evaluation. While the initial response had been quite positive, there is still a shortfall as compared to the resource mobilization target. Due to the delays with the establishment of the Evaluation Management Group and the resource mobilization, the evaluation is not expected to start before March 2011.

11. The importance of organizing an UNDAF quality assurance retreat was emphasized, and it was noted that the UNDAF Programming Network has been assigned the task of organizing this retreat, which will address the issue of how the quality assurance function is to be performed in the future. Regarding the review of the implementation of the M&A system, it was requested that as much information as possible was shared with the UNDG Advisory Group at ASG/ADG level, to enable them to support the Principals' Oversight Group with advice. The UNDG Chair noted that a message outlining the next steps of the process

was being sent to the Principals Oversight Group, and that efforts will continue to be made to keep those involved in the loop.

12. Speaking about the upcoming meeting of the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, Sigrid Kaag, Convener of the UNDG Aid Effectiveness Task Team, advised that the Task Team had identified three overarching themes for UNDG's engagement in Busan: i) capacity development - focusing on the mandate of the Accra Agenda for Action that called upon the UN development system to scale up its capacity development support to partner countries; ii) convergence of development and humanitarian assistance in post-conflict and fragile states; and, iii) linkages between aid and development effectiveness in the new development cooperation architecture and the role of the UN system. Human rights, gender equality, equity are transversal issues to these. Leads for each of these pillars are needed and the involvement of the different agencies is vital. Emphasizing the importance of avoiding fragmentation, she noted that the UN system should go to Busan with one message, operate as one team, and jointly organize one side-event. To prepare for this, substantive feedback was needed from UNDG members on the role of the UN development system in the overall development cooperation environment. She further noted the need to create linkages with the upcoming QCPR negotiations, and that the joint message from the UN development system needs to be reflected in the QCPR. Regarding the Paris Declaration Survey, she noted that much relevant information would be gathered, and that DOCO had been helpful in this regard. She further noted that some donors had requested individual agency reports, but that the Aid Effectiveness Team suggests one joint report to be featured in the OECD DAC review of PD progress. DOCO will consolidate UNCT reporting into one report. Agencies may wish to prepare their own reports as per the request by some donors. In response, UNDG members suggested that the Task Team gather information about the position of the Regional Banks and other stakeholders to keep abreast with the preparations of other partners.

13. **Decision:** *It was agreed that the UNDG would build on the former UNDG Task Team on Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change, and add representatives from the UNDG with knowledge of the social and economic dimensions of sustainable development. This time-bound task team would be tasked with co-ordinating UNDG's preparations for Rio +20.*

14. **Action Point:** *The UNDG Advisory Group Chair to bring the proposal for a global meeting of the Regional UNDG Teams back to the Advisory Group for further discussions to develop a more detailed proposal.*

Item 3 – Progress and challenges emerging from implementation of the UNDG strategic priorities and work plan for 2010-2011

a) Feedback from UNDG members on implementation of the UNDG strategic priorities

15. UN Women reiterated it stands ready to play its part in the implementation of the UNDG strategic priorities and work plan, and looks forward to exploring how UN Women can best support the UN system at the global, regional and country level. In this regard, a capacity assessment has just taken place. UN Women proposed to have a strategy on how to co-ordinate gender issues under UNDG guidance, building on UNDG's best practices of tracking the performance of the UN system. In addition, they noted that UN Women is delighted to chair the UNDG Task Team on Gender Equality.

b) Issues and challenges for the UNDAF rollout in the regions

16. Amat Alsoswa, Chair of the Regional UNDG Team for Arab States/MENA, provided an update on the UNDAF rollout in the region. She noted that the participation of the former Chair of the UNDG Advisory Group, Mari Simonen, in their last Regional UNDG Team meeting had been very valuable. Providing an update on the status of the UNDAF rollouts in the Arab State region, she noted that the rollout countries were at different stages. Two UNDAFs had been completed in 2009, while nine UNDAFs and strategic frameworks had been rolled out in 2010. Three countries will start their UNDAF processes this year. On the support provided to these rollout countries (two-thirds of the Arab States), she noted that the Regional UNDG Team had established a Peer Support Group at Deputy Directors level. In addition, a roster of experts had been established to ensure appropriate technical support throughout the process. The Regional UNDG Team, as part of its strategic leadership, has focused on early engagement with the UNDAF rollout countries. In order to ensure strategic thrust of the rollout countries, the Regional UNDG Team agreed on a number of region-specific strategic priorities: i) strategic positioning in MICs; ii) addressing the youth “bulge;” iii) the nexus of food security and climate change; iv) employment/decent work; and v) gender.

17. The Regional UNDG Team Chair provided an update on what has worked well so far in the UNDAF rollout process and on challenges faced. Areas that have worked well included: i) the establishment of the PSG at Deputy Regional Director level has ensured senior-level guidance to the UNCTs; ii) the quality of the agency comments has improved and they are increasingly at the strategic and issues level; iii) having the PSG chaired by one agency with the support of agreed agency-specific responsibility for a special focus country on behalf of the PSG, has resulted in consistency of focus and guidance. The adopted focus country approach has helped distribute the workload and the ownership among the agencies; iv) the pooled agency expertise on various thematic areas has increased the focus on substance, helped address analytic gaps in the country analyses, and stimulated a sense of common purpose and coherence; v) early engagement has ensured a “head start” on the new guidance and the anticipated challenges, including anchoring the process in the regional context and synchronizing different sources of support to optimize the respective expertise and available resources; vi) a well-functioning PSG has contributed to strengthening coordination, while also identifying opportunities for synergies among agency-specific priorities.

18. On challenges to be overcome, she noted the following: i) an absence of deeper level analyses would result in weak evidence-based prioritization; ii) UNDAF preparations at country level could be driven by deadlines rather than substance and strategic outlook; iii) there is a high demand for RBM and M&E expertise which exceeds the “supply” of PSG-pooled RBM and M&E resources, and external consultants are not always available; iv) the high number of UNDAF countries with the same deadlines has resulted in a tight and demanding schedule for PSG reviews and of SPRs; v) the financial resources required for sustained support to UNCTs are inadequate. PSG agencies have frequently absorbed the costs of their engagement directly; vi) efforts have been made to synchronize PSG, DOCO, and UNSSC support and progress has been made during the year, but more work still needs to be done to ensure more coherent support to the UNCTs in the region. On the way forward, she noted that the UNDAF Programming Network should organize a workshop for the PSG chairs and DOCO/UNSSC colleagues to capitalize on experiences of the PSGs, including as input into shaping future effective support to both UNDAF preparations in the forthcoming cycle.

19. Tegegnetwork Gettu, Chair of the two Regional UNDG Teams in Africa, provided an update on the UNDAF rollout in the regions. He started by thanking DOCO for excellent support and noted that the Regional UNDG Teams for West and Central Africa and East and Southern Africa had held a joint meeting in Johannesburg the previous week with assistance from DOCO. On the progress of the UNDAF rollout in the regions, he informed the UNDG that fifteen countries had rolled out new UNDAFs in 2010 - ten in West and Central Africa and five in East and Southern Africa. He noted that support to the UNDAF rollout countries is effectively operationalized through the Peer Support Group, which is composed of 24 members. Noting that

the funds received for UNDAF support are not enough to cover all UNDAF rollouts, he informed the UNDG member agencies that the two regional teams have contributed financial resources themselves. In 2010, the regional support to UNDAF rollouts was focused on strategic policy guidance, technical support in UNDAF programming, training in cross-cutting programming principles, and review of country-level analytical documents and draft UNDAFs.

20. Speaking about development trends and requests for support in 2010, the Regional UNDG Team Chair indicated that climate change adaptation; MDG achievement acceleration; capacity building of UN country teams to improve the quality of UNDAFs; support to new voluntary DaO countries; and contingency planning are priority areas in the region in which UN country teams will require assistance from Regional UNDG Teams in 2011. He further noted that developing a support strategy for programme and strategic planning support to country teams in middle-income countries is a critical priority. On challenges faced, he noted the importance of developing a regional resource pool of experts to provide support to UN country teams will be important in strengthening the capacity of Regional UNDG Teams in providing assistance to countries. The priorities for the Regional UNDG Team in the year ahead will be on providing strategic and technical assistance to UNDAF rollout countries, performance management, and support to countries in particular situations to ensure the quality of the UNDAF will not suffer from complicated circumstances. He noted that the Regional Directors had been designated to act as country focal points, and that the two Regional UNDG Teams are working effectively. He ended his remarks by requesting that funding support for UNDAF development should be more balanced, and be allocated based on the number of countries covered, the country size, complexity of the programme to be developed and donor support available.

21. The Regional UNDG Teams were commended for their leadership and for making sure that UNDAFs are more strategic and of a higher quality. UNDG members expressed appreciation for the way in which the Regional UNDG Teams had taken onboard the UNDG's strategic priorities and aligned their work plans accordingly. A recommendation was made that the Regional UNDG Teams use the UNDAF development process to encourage countries to at the same time develop a multi-year business operations plan since more consistent support is needed in this area. The Regional UNDG Teams were also encouraged to work through existing regional organization and local governments.

c) Issues and challenges on the implementation of the UNDG work plan

Implementation of the nine point action agenda and other MDG acceleration efforts

22. Annika Soder and Olav Kjørven, conveners of the UNDG MDG Task Force, provided an update on the work of the Task Force. Speaking about the key outcomes from the first meeting of the Task Force, they noted that the ToRs and work plan were now close to being finalized. A discussion had taken place to clearly establish the different roles of the Task Force and the UNDAF Programming Network. In this regard, they noted that the MDG Task Force will focus on guiding and supporting UNCTs in assisting national governments to accelerate the achievement and closing the gap of MDGs in the remaining five years before 2015, and gather best practices for dissemination, while the complementary role of the UNDAF Programming Network is to support UN country teams to formulate good quality UNDAFs and assess how UNDAF guidelines are applied along agreed standards. On the work ahead, it was noted that the Task Force will focus on providing support and guidance on the rolling out of the MDG Acceleration Framework, which will be used as a living document, for a selected number of countries in addition to the first ten pilot countries. They noted that the equity approach is an important aspect which will be integrated into the MDG Acceleration Framework and into the work of the Task Force.

23. The Task Force will also act as an advisory body to the Millennium Campaign in support of enhanced advocacy and communication of the MDGs' agenda at the country level and to ensure coherent messages from the UN system on the MDGs. In this regard, they informed the undg about the letter of 14 January on the MDG Task Force and the Millennium Campaign from the undg Chair to the undg Principals about the Campaign visiting several agencies HQs during the month of February to discuss synergies and collaboration, and noted that further discussions would take place on how the Task Force will support the Millennium Campaign. In summing up, they noted that further to the MDG Summit, there is a large window of opportunity to show how the UN system can provide effective support to countries. The UN system now needs to pursue the nine agreed action points approved by the undg last year in follow up to the MDG summit to accelerate MDG achievement. In response, undg members noted that the equity approach would be incorporated into the MDG Acceleration Framework. It was noted that the HLCP has been tasked by the CEB to look into an integrated acceleration framework for MDG achievement in follow-up to the MDG summit, and that linkages to that should be made with the work of the MDG Task Force.

UNDAF rollout and other critical programming issues

24. Richard Morgan, one of the two conveners of the UNDAF Programming Network, provided an update on the work and first meeting of the Network. He noted that the overall focus of the UNDAF Programming Network will be to provide value-added support for high quality UNDAFs, reflecting the undg Strategic Priorities and Programming Principles. The Network envisages providing support to the UNDAF rollout countries in conjunction with the Regional undg Teams, including tracking progress on effective engagement in policy dialogue with partners and the development of high quality UNDAFs. Mr. Morgan noted that the Network will ensure close collaboration with the other working mechanisms and the Regional undg Teams. The Network will focus on knowledge generation and on sharing of UNDAF development and implementation, learning and good practice from the field. Desk reviews will be undertaken of UNDAFs based on the five undg programming principles and other key criteria. It will also serve as a "knowledge hub" for best practices.

25. On the working modalities, he noted that the group will not meet on a regular basis, but rather will make good use of available technology. Speaking about the work plan, he mentioned three main activities: i) the Network will seek to engage with and through the Regional undg Teams to support UN country teams that are developing UNDAFs for approval in 2012 for implementation in 2013. This work will also be undertaken in close collaboration with the UN System Staff College; ii) the Network will undertake a desk review of 2007-2009 UNDAFs and compare them with 2009-2010 UNDAFs to identify whether the undg programming principles have had an effect on the quality of UNDAFs, and to see what constitutes a good quality UNDAF; iii) the Network will establish a small resource group/good practice "think tank" to be available to country teams and Regional undg Teams, and to act as a point of reference for good practices.

Leadership

26. George Assaf, one of the two conveners of the Resident Coordinator System Issues Working Group, made a presentation on what has been done so far to implement their responsibilities in the undg work plan. He noted that the first meeting of the group under the new working modalities had focused on gaining a deeper understanding of the undg's strategic priorities and work plan. He noted that draft ToRs had been prepared which clarifies that the primary purpose of the Working Group is to support delivery of the undg strategic priorities 2010 – 2011. As called for in the undg strategic priorities, the Working Group will endeavour to ensure its recommendations are consistent and coordinated with the management and

operational policies developed by all parts of the UNDG. He further noted that co-ordination with the work undertaken within the CEB in connection to the other two pillars would also be ensured. On the participation of Regional UNDG Teams, he noted that they will be formally invited to participate in the Working Group meetings, either in person or virtually. On working modalities, he noted that the Working Group will hold two face-to-face meetings each year in addition to at least two virtual meetings. On the main areas of work for the Working Group, he noted that they would drive outputs 2.2, 3.1 and 3.2 in the UNDG work plan.

27. On the challenges the Working Group face, he noted four actions emerging from the M&A System Implementation Plan, which the Working Group considered most important to the system architecture: i) revision of job descriptions; ii) reporting obligations to the RC; iii) RC inclusion in agency performance appraisal systems; and, iv) inclusion of UNCT results in agency performance appraisal systems. He noted that to date, only three agencies have fully implemented all four action items; four agencies have reported implementation of two of these action items; and 11 agencies have no reported progress. Mr. Assaf emphasized that this has significant bearing on how the UNDG works together at the country level, and urged agencies to meet these important commitments. The UNDG Chair noted that the figures presented are of great concern and that action needs to be taken by all UNDG members concerned.

Business practice reform and joint funding

28. Mari Simonen, one of the two conveners of the Joint Funding and Business Operations Network, provided an update on the first meeting of the Network and the key areas of their work. On the working modalities, she noted that the Regional UNDG Teams had been invited to the first meeting and that the Network would work through smaller groups and do most of its work virtually. The Network had reviewed their responsibilities in the UNDG's strategic priorities and work plan, as well as the joint UNDG-HLCM work plan, and used it as a basis for what the Network will focus on. A special effort will be made to coordinate all the work of the Network with HLCM to avoid duplication and ensure the focus is placed where the most value can be added. She noted that the Network will focus on pursuing an integrated approach to programme and operations by focusing on UNDAF rollout countries of 2010 and 2011, and through UNDAF regional workshops. The Network will also focus on supporting implementation of existing guidance. On business operations, she noted that small time-bound reference groups will be established in the following areas: ICT, Procurement, Common Services and Legal Issues. On funding, she reminded the UNDG members that the membership of the FMOG needs to be updated to ensure all agencies are participating. On challenges, she urged UNDG members to release staff to the rosters of experts, and that staff contribution to these rosters be recognized in their performance appraisal.

Countries in transition

29. Paul Larsen, WFP, made a presentation on behalf of the two co-chairs of the UNDG-ECHA Working Group on transition. He highlighted that a retreat was held on 17th December, to take stock of ongoing work and plan for the year ahead. He noted that the Working Group provides a unique forum for the development community and the humanitarian community to consult and engage coherently on a broad set of issues, which has been particularly useful in the context to transition and fragile situations. On areas of achievement, he noted the following areas: i) the implementation of the capacity gap initiative has contributed to strengthening RC offices' capacity for co-ordination, analysis, and planning; ii) the inclusive consultation process on the implementation of Secretary General's report on peacebuilding; iii) the launch of the PCNA toolkit, as well as the PCNA training; iv) progress in implementing the UN/WB partnership; v) effective coordination of inputs to the OECD/DAC INCAF process on transition financing. In this regard, he noted that

preparatory discussions will take place on how to link this work with the High-Level forum on aid effectiveness in Busan; and vi) engagement on developing guidance for UNCTs on natural resource management. On priority areas for 2011, he noted the following areas: i) financing for transition; ii) information management in transitions iii) natural resource management in transitions; iv) transition architecture; v) input into the preparations for the High Level Forum on aid effectiveness to be held in Busan vi) input into the international dialogue on peacebuilding; vii) on demand, technical support to RC/HCs and UN country teams; and, viii) strengthened partnerships and more coherent support provided by different bodies to UN country teams.

30. On the involvement of Regional UNDG Teams in the work of the Working Group, he noted that although the modality for involvement remains unclear, the Working Group had stressed the importance of connecting with the Regional UNDG Teams. Synergies with other UNDG working mechanisms, including the Aid Effectiveness Task Force and the Resident Co-ordinator System Issues Working Group, are also of critical importance. Finally, he noted that the Working Group had looked at how to adapt its work plan to the new DOCO reality, with less capacity to provide direct support. In response, UNDG members noted that Resident Coordinators and UN country teams need to be supported, not only humanitarian situations, but in peacebuilding and recovery, and that the Working Group should review how support can be strengthened in this regard.

UNDG Human Rights Mainstreaming Mechanism

31. Kyung-wha Kang, one of the two conveners of the UNDG Human Rights Mainstreaming Mechanism (HRM), provided an update on the work of the HRM. She noted that the establishment of the HRM coincided with the development of the overall UNDG strategic priorities and work plan. The HRM therefore closely followed this process to ensure that its priorities and work plan are in full alignment and contributing towards the overall UNDG framework. She noted that the outcome of the MDG Summit had given unprecedented recognition of human rights as an essential element of the MDG achievement. Regarding the HRM's priorities, she noted that focus is placed on strengthening policy and operational coherence for mainstreaming efforts; supporting the role of Resident Coordinators and UN country team leaders in driving the mainstreaming on the ground; enhancing the sharing of knowledge and practices across the system; and promoting system-wide advocacy on human rights in development.

32. Speaking about the way ahead, she noted that the HRM will be shortly undertaking an assessment of UNCTs' support needs on human rights mainstreaming in order to sharpen the focus and modality of their support to better respond to the actual needs on the ground. The HRM is also initiating contacts and discussions with Regional UNDG Teams with a view to jointly identifying opportunities and scope for strengthening their roles to support UN country teams. She further noted that the two conveners had a useful discussion with the Resident Coordinators from the Delivering as One pilot countries, which had been encouraging in terms of the progress they have made in advancing human rights jointly under a strong national ownership. Regarding challenges ahead for the HRM, she noted three areas of concern: i) further to the recommendations coming out of the Universal Periodic Review of human rights performance, there is potentially a large demand for support from Member States for national capacity building on human rights. This poses a challenge to the HRM's limited capacity and resources for support. The HRM has established a Multi-Donor Trust Fund to mobilize additional support; ii) there are continuing sensitivities on UN's normative agenda at political level, including on human rights. This requires us to pay continued attention to ensure that we are sending consistent messages externally to our partners, as well as internally to our colleagues, that the UN's normative work is what makes us unique and sharpens our comparative advantage; iii) the need for building in-country capacity has been highlighted by many Resident Coordinators and UN country teams. The need for support to country teams is not always technical or financial, but sometimes political. Resident

Coordinators and UN country teams facing difficult situations must receive the highest level of support from the UN system.

Item 4 – Items for decision: Results-based Management Handbook

33. Farah Usmani, UNFPA, provided an overview of the background to the development of the Results-Based Management (RBM) Handbook. She noted that the first recommendation to agree on a common RBM definition and terminology for UN organizations was made by the Joint Inspection Unit. In response, the UNDG undertook a diagnostic review on the status of RBM implementation in the UN system and the different RBM definitions and terminology used among UN organizations, which is available on the UNDG website. This review showed a need for further harmonization. The purpose of the handbook is to facilitate consistency and harmonization through commonly agreed results-based management concepts and approaches in the UN system. She noted that the process in developing the RBM Handbook has been participatory and focused on field needs. The Handbook is organized in seven parts corresponding to the various dimensions of the programming cycle. An additional section, part eight, was included based on field needs and reviews. This section highlights a critical RBM issues in crisis and post-crisis settings and need for adoption of common RBM approaches and terminology in these settings. On the next steps, she noted that a training package will be finalized that will be used to help support UN country teams, in particular those in UNDAF rollout countries, when applying the RBM principles in developing and implementing their UNDAFs.

Discussion

34. UNDG members noted that some more work on the Handbook was needed before it could be finalized. Issues raised in this regard included the need to ensure consistency in the use of terminology in the Handbook and lack of details on risks and assumptions.

35. ***Decision: Comments on the Results-Based Management Handbook to be submitted in writing, coordinated by the Task Team on RBM. Revised version of the Handbook to be circulated for electronic endorsement by the full UNDG.***

Item 5 – Items for information

a) Interim Guidance Note on the Common CPD (Robert Jenkins)

36. Robert Jenkins, UNICEF, presented the interim guidance note on the Common Country Programme Document. He noted that it had been developed in response to a demand for light guidance from those countries that are considering developing common CPDs, following the initiative by Tanzania to develop a Common CPD. The working group developing the guidance note had begun their work following the General Assembly resolution 64/289 which supported other countries to submit common CPDs on a voluntary basis. Emphasizing that the guidance note is work in progress, he noted that it was intended to be further developed after Tanzania's presentation of their common CPD to the respective boards in January-February 2011, as well as other experience and lessons learned from the process of developing and reviewing common CPDs in 2011. Summarizing the main elements of the guidance note, he noted that the note provides background and clarifies what a common CPD is. It further gives guidance on the format, which is similar to a normal CPD, with four organization-specific annexes that, as of now, follow the organization-specific standards. The note also provides guidance on the quality assurance review, clearance and deadlines and on editing and

translation. In this regard, he noted that to ensure consistency, the secretariats of the Executive Boards will agree on a coordinated editing and translation of the common country programme document.

Discussion

37. In the discussion that followed, it was noted that although the common CPD was considered a positive step for the four ExCom organizations to be working closer together, a concern was raised that the common CPD should not hamper specialized agencies efforts to make contributions to the UN country team. A request was made that this issue be further discussed in the UNDG Advisory Group. The UNDG Chair noted that the UNDAF, which includes all funds, programmes and specialized agencies, should prevent any risk that this would lead to exclusion of the specialized agencies in the work of the UN country team. It was emphasized that the interim guidance note was prepared to support country teams who decide to voluntarily adopt a common CPD, and that the note is still work in progress.

b) Update on the review of the M&A system

38. The UNDG Chair provided an update on the status of the review of the M&A system implementation. She noted that the firm Associates for International Management Services had just been contracted to undertake the review as recommended by the UNDG evaluation panel led by Namita Pradhan. She informed the UNDG that the Oversight Group at the Principals level had agreed that the firm should undertake field visits as an integral part of their work and that the Director of DOCO should manage all the arrangements for the firm to interact with key stakeholders. Emphasizing the need to move speedily on this review, she noted that it is expected that results of the review will be ready by April.

Item 6 – AOB and closing remarks

39. With regard to the briefing on ECOSOC preparation by DESA, which had been postponed from the UNDG Advisory Group meeting, it was agreed that in the interests of time, the presentation would be circulated electronically. UNDG members also mentioned a number of key meetings and event to be included in the UNDG calendar. It was agreed that these would be sent to DOCO for inclusion in the calendar. The UNDG was informed about the annual meeting DOCO holds with the donors contributing to the UN Country Coordination Fund, taking place on 3 February 2011. A number of UNDG members from the global, regional and country level traditionally participate in this session to provide an update on the work of the UNDG.

40. In her concluding remarks, the UNDG Chair spoke about her participation as UNDG Chair in the Secretary-General's Policy Committee. In order to represent the UNDG as well as possible in these meetings, she urged UNDG members to comment on the Policy Committee papers when DOCO is consulting UNDG members(although the deadlines are always very tight), so that she could bring the view of all organizations involved to the meeting. She further noted that UN country teams are always consulted as well, through the DSRSGs or the RCs, since she is keen to get field perspectives. The UNDG Chair asked UNDG members to send to DOCO any suggestions they might have for the Policy Committee's forward agenda. She thanked all the participants for their active participation in the meeting and noted that DOCO would soon advice on the date and time for the next meeting.

41. ***Action Point: Briefing on ECOSOC preparation by DESA to be circulated electronically. Dates of key meetings and events to be sent to DOCO for inclusion in the UNDG calendar.***