



UNDG meeting

19 September 2013, 9:30 AM - 12:00 PM (EST)

DC1 – 21st Floor, Hank Shannon Conference Room

Meeting Report

Opening by the UNDG Chair

1. The UNDG Chair, Helen Clark, opened the third UNDG meeting of 2013 by sharing her reflections on the work of the UNDG, including in support of the post-2015 development agenda, follow-up to ECOSOC, and devising system-wide cost-sharing of the Resident Co-ordinator system.
2. With regard to the post-2015 development agenda, the UNDG Chair highlighted that the inclusive global consultation process, which the UNDG had jointly facilitated around the world, had been an impressive and important achievement. The concluding UNDG report, “A Million Voices: the World We Want”, which had recently been launched by the Secretary-General and the UNDG Chair, captured the views and hopes of over one million people through both online and conventional surveys and consultations in all 193 UN Member States.
3. The UNDG Chair highlighted that there had been a consistent call for a future agenda which tackled the underlying causes of deprivation, inequalities, and good governance, and addressed emerging issues and challenges in an integrated way, which has important implications for the work of the UNDG working together as a team. She noted that this feedback was broadly consistent with the report of the Secretary-General’s High Level Panel on Post-2015, and was contributing to the ongoing deliberations of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals. The UNDG Chair expressed her concern that “health” had received insufficient attention in the text of the High-Level Panel report, and encouraged the UNDG to reinforce the importance of health through consistent messaging.
4. With regard to the ECOSOC Operational Activities Segment in July, the UNDG Chair noted that ECOSOC had reaffirmed the vision and mandates of the QCPR, and that Member States had left no doubt that they expected the timely and full implementation of the QCPR by the UN funds, programmes, and specialized agencies. Member States had noted with great appreciation the significant efforts which the UN development system had already made, particularly with regard to the first ever common QCPR Action Plan, timely development of the Standard Operating Procedures for Delivering as One, and agreement on system-wide funding of the Resident Co-ordinator system - beginning in 2014. The UNDG Chair noted that these positive messages – but also clear expectations for continued reform – had been echoed at two recent consultations held with Member States on the new global “Delivering Results Together” Fund being established to support UN programmes in Delivering as One countries.
5. The UNDG Chair noted that Member States at ECOSOC had highlighted that they expected the UN development system to take swift and decisive action particularly with regard to: full implementation of Delivering as One where countries requested it by all funds, programmes, and specialized agencies; simplification of agency-specific programming instruments; accelerated harmonization and simplification of business practices; improved

results frameworks and joint reporting of system-wide results at the country level; improved reporting on financial expenditures at the country level; coherent support for institutional capacity development; and further strengthening of the role of Resident Co-ordinators and empowering of UN Country Teams, including through adequate resourcing of RC offices.

6. With regard to system-wide cost-sharing of the Resident Co-ordinator system, the UNDG Chair highlighted that ECOSOC had noted the outcome of the UNDG review and had requested the governing bodies of UNDG member entities to consider and implement the recommendations for system-wide cost-sharing starting in 2014.

7. The UNDG Chair noted that she had written to each UNDG Principal on 21/22 May 2013, informing them of the expected amounts from each organization and asking them to confirm their contributions for 2014. Out of the 19 UNDG entities expected to contribute, six agencies had confirmed that they would be in a position to provide the full amount foreseen in the UNDG cost-sharing formula in 2014; four agencies were expected to be in a position to contribute the full amounts, but had yet to confirm this in writing; five agencies had confirmed that they intended to contribute in 2014 with a reduced amount; and three entities had indicated that they would not be in a position to contribute to the first cycle of the cost-sharing in 2014/15. The World Bank, which holds observer status in the UNDG, had been the only organization indicating that it would not contribute.

8. In order to ensure timely implementation of the cost-sharing modality in January 2014, the UNDG Chair requested all agencies which had not yet done so to confirm their contributions at the earliest opportunity. The UNDG Chair reminded the UNDG in this context that the salary scales would need to be adjusted for 2014, which would probably affect the final amounts expected from each organization.

9. As not all UNDG members would be in a position to contribute as of next January, the UNDG estimated that there could be a funding gap of around USD 10 million for 2014. The UNDG Chair emphasized that she used every opportunity to seek continued support from donors for the transition phase in 2014/2015, and that the Director of DOCO had also been following up with key donors.

10. The UNDG Chair noted that DOCO was in the process of revising the RC Annual Reporting system, which would allow for more accurate reporting on the use of resources for the 10 agreed co-ordination functions at the country level, and a financial management system was being put in place to ensure transparency and accountability. Once this was ready, the UNDG Chair would inform the UNDG, the Regional UNDG Teams and RCs/UNCTs on the roll-out of the cost-sharing modality in order to ensure coherent messaging on the implications of the central funding system.

11. The UNDG Chair highlighted that while it had been originally anticipated that the central funding modality could replace fundraising at the country level, the UNDG had only been able to reach consensus on the cost-sharing of USD 33 million at the global level - of which only around USD 23 million had been committed for 2014 - rather than the USD 44 million, which the UNDG Task Team had deemed necessary. The UNDG Chair emphasized therefore that her strong recommendation was to leave it up to UN Country Teams to decide whether to continue to cost-share certain activities locally and whether to approach local donors for additional funding. The UNDG Chair called upon all UNDG member entities to be as supportive as they could be in this regard, particularly during the transition phase, and requested UNDG member entities to refrain from issuing guidance to their country representatives which would categorically prohibit their participation in local cost-sharing arrangements without being appraised of the specific

country co-ordination context. She emphasised that she feared that co-ordination activities in a number of UNCTs would not be sustainable if local cost-sharing and donor funding ceased now.

12. UNICEF noted the UNDG Chair's advice but maintained that this issue would require further discussion within the UNDG. UNICEF conveyed its position that the global cost-sharing arrangement was intended to replace current ad hoc arrangements and requests for funds, as outlined in the 22 May 2013 UNDG cost-sharing agreement for the RC system, and therefore, maintained that if there was any change in this agreement, it should be further discussed among the UNDG Principals. UNICEF reiterated the importance of sending clear and consistent guidance to all UNCTs and RCs on the implications of the global cost-sharing agreement. WFP added that UNCTs could have the discretion to agree on additional funding but that it should be recorded and reported transparently. UNHCR indicated that it intended to instruct its representatives not to engage in any cost-sharing arrangements at the country level. WHO has since indicated that it would instruct its representatives to adhere to the UNDG cost-sharing agreement (as reflected in the Summary Note of 22 May 2013) and that it would not be able to provide ad-hoc funds at the country level.

Item 1: Follow-up to ECOSOC Operational Activities Segment, including way forward for developing a comprehensive QCPR monitoring and reporting framework

13. Thomas Gass, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Co-ordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, DESA, briefed the UNDG on the follow-up to the ECOSOC Operational Activities Segment (OAS).

14. The OAS took place on 10-12 July 2013 and focused on reviewing progress of the implementation of the QCPR as well as the role of the UN development system in a changing development cooperation landscape. The OAS concluded with a resolution, which takes note of the on-going efforts of the UN development system to monitor the implementation of the QCPR, including through the development of the UNDG QCPR Action Plan and the overarching monitoring framework prepared by DESA and requests the Secretary-General, in close consultation with all relevant entities, to prepare and implement a comprehensive, coherent and effective QCPR monitoring and reporting framework.

15. At the informal consultations of the GA on the Strengthening of ECOSOC, consensus was reached to hold the ECOSOC Operational Activities Segment in New York immediately after the first regular session of the Executive Boards of the Funds and Programmes. Mr. Gass noted that Member States had been informed of the implications of this decision, particularly with regard to reporting on progress in the implementation of the QCPR. However, the decision had been taken to improve the work of ECOSOC at large. The results of these informal consultations are expected to be formalized upon the adoption of resolution A/RES/68/1 "Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 61/16 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council" by the GA on 20 September.

16. Given the short time frame until the next OAS in February 2014, there will not be a full-fledged report of the Secretary-General but a shorter report with focus on the envisioned monitoring and reporting framework for the QCPR. Mr. Gass noted that while the exact implications of the decision to move the OAS had still to be determined, adjustments would certainly need to be made regarding the cycle for data collection and reporting. He affirmed that DESA stood ready to support UNDG members in this regard to ease the situation as best it can.

17. The UNDG and DESA are working together in an open and inclusive process through a dedicated task team to develop a coherent QCPR monitoring framework, which is robust while minimizing the reporting burden on UNCTs. The final draft is expected to be ready by the end of October and will be shared with the UNDG for comments. Member States will be kept closely informed and a consultation with Member States will be held before the framework is finalized.

18. UNDG members expressed their concern that moving the OAS to February might risk undermining recent progress made in reducing duplication and costs by streamlining reporting on progress in the implementation of the QCPR. UNDG members would need to send consistent messages in this regard to Member States.

19. UNDG members also suggested that, in terms of content for the next S-G report, one alternative could be to complement the common monitoring framework with a focus on achievements made to date (i.e. SOPs, cost recovery, etc.), and also emphasize the point of streamlining the QCPR in Strategic Plans.

20. Given the short timeframe for the preparation of the Secretary-General's next report to the ECOSOC OAS in February 2014, the UNDG welcomed the proposal to focus on a robust and coherent monitoring and reporting framework for the QCPR as the centrepiece in the Secretary-General's report. The UNDG Work Plan for 2013-2014 should be revisited and re-prioritized as appropriate to ensure that important deliverables called for in the QCPR are completed in time to be reported by the Secretary-General to ECOSOC.

Item 2: Standard Operating Procedures for Delivering as One: (i) status update; (ii) dissemination plan; and (iii) taking forward the Plan of Action for HQ

21. The UNDG Chair introduced the agenda item by noting that she had re-issued the final version of the Standing Operating Procedures (SOPs), which addressed the concerns and suggested amendments put forward by several organizations. She thanked Yoka Brandt, Anne-Birgitte Albrechtsen, and Debbie Landey who had led the consultations with concerned organizations, so that the UNDG was now in a position to move forward and operationalize the SOPs in countries wishing to adopt them.

22. Anne-Birgitte Albrechtsen, the former Chair of the UNDG High Level Group for the SOPs, noted that all UNDG working mechanisms were currently working on developing various elements of the integrated guidance for UN Country Teams (see Progress Overview Table), which was expected to be released before the end of the year in support of the 2013/2014 UNDAF roll-out process.

23. Ms Albrechtsen noted that the Draft Plan of Action for Headquarters had yet to be finalized and adopted by the UNDG. While a lot of work had, in fact, already been started in close cooperation with HLCM, others required urgent attention by the UNDG. Overall, 24 of the actions identified in the Draft Plan of Action were on track, 14 were being addressed with some delays, mainly due to resource constraints, and 19 actions had not been started yet and required urgent reflection. The 19 actions could be grouped into four categories: (1) harmonizing and replacing agency-specific instruments with common instruments; (2) establishing agency-specific incentive instruments for the use of and contributions to common instruments and results; (3) resolving bottlenecks regarding

harmonized business practices under Operating as One, particularly in the area of audit and assurances; and (4) supporting the joint communications function at the country level.

24. The UNDG Chair emphasised that the QCPR had also created a rare window of opportunity to address reforms at headquarters as outlined in the UNDG Draft Plan of Action for Headquarters. The UNDG Chair stressed that expectations from Member States for ambitious reform at headquarters were high and that falling short would constitute a major setback. The UNDG Chair underlined that there were many highly motivated and supportive Member States at the Executive Boards and governing bodies and that the UNDG would need to agree on a set of concrete proposals for their consideration and approval.

25. All UNDG members are encouraged to follow-up on the dissemination of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) with supportive messages within their organizations and to their representatives at the country level in order to ensure timely and coherent implementation of the SOPs by the entire UN development system in all countries wishing to adopt them, as called for by Member States in the QCPR and at ECOSOC.

26. In order to stay true to the purpose of the SOPs, which is to make work simpler and better for UNCTs, a Validation Group composed of colleagues from the country level will be requested to review the complementary draft guidance for UNCTs. The HLCM Secretariat suggested that the composition of the Validation Group be extended to include representatives with in-depth technical knowledge of and experience in the various functional areas covered in the operations-related section of the SOPs. The ASG Advisory Group will subsequently hold a retreat towards the end of November to review the final draft before submitting it to the UNDG for formal endorsement. The HLCM Secretariat recommended that “technical” representatives also be invited to the retreat.

27. The UNDG Draft Plan of Action for Headquarters will be finalized in a consultative process, including HLCM and technical experts from its networks, in time to be reviewed at the ASG Advisory Group retreat at the end of November. The milestones of the process will shortly be communicated by the ASG Advisory Group Chair.

Item 3: Update on Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation Item 4 – UNDG engagement on the post-2015 agenda

28. Sigrid Kaag, member of the Steering Committee of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation, briefed the UNDG on the preparations for the first ministerial-level meeting in 2014 and the implementation of the global monitoring framework.

29. The Global Partnership emerged from the Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan, Republic of Korea in 2011, and brings together over 160 countries and 45 organizations around a set of shared principles and common goals that form the foundation for effective development co-operation through a global, regional and country partnership approach. The global Partnership is co-chaired by ministers from Indonesia, Nigeria, and the UK.

30. Mexico announced that it would host the first ministerial-level meeting of the Global Partnership in 2014, tentatively on 15/16 April. The agenda will focus on tax and domestic resource mobilisation, the role of the private sector, and knowledge-sharing. In addition, Mexico intends to put greater emphasis on middle-income countries, their development challenges and role in development partnerships, South-South and triangular co-operation, strengthening civil society participation, and making the link with the post-2015 framework and the sustainable development agenda. The meeting is expected to focus on tangible deliverables to improve the quality of development cooperation on the ground and support achievement of the MDGs and the post-2015 development agenda.

31. As part of the Global Partnership, a global framework to monitor progress towards more effective development co-operation, including a set of 10 indicators and targets, was negotiated and the monitoring process is currently underway in over 40 countries. Ms Kaag noted that the intention was to keep the monitoring framework as light as possible and emphasized that Resident Co-ordinators and UN Country Teams had to play an instrumental role in supporting countries in managing the monitoring process and in jointly participating in the exercise. At the global level, DESA and UN Women have been playing a leadership role regarding the indicators for mutual accountability and gender equality and women's empowerment respectively.

32. UNDG focal points will convene again after the next meeting of the Global Partnership Steering Committee in October. The possibility of holding a face-to-face retreat will be explored. Key objectives will be to review the country-level inputs from the monitoring process and to ensure appropriate linkages to the political processes in New York. A communication will subsequently be sent to all RCs and UNCTs to facilitate strategic engagement of UN Country Teams in the lead-up to the ministerial meeting in Mexico.

33. While Member States have high expectations for the UNDG to support the Global Partnership and particularly the monitoring process at the country level, only the EU, the US and the Republic of Korea have committed funding so far. All UNDG members are therefore encouraged to highlight in their interactions with development partners that the provision of funding is critical to enable the UN development system to deliver on this demanding task.

Item 4: Update on UNDG engagement on post-2015 agenda

34. John Hendra, Co-convenor of the UNDG MDG Task Force, briefed the UNDG on the preparations of the post-2015 development agenda.

35. The UNDG has closely collaborated on the preparation of its second report on priorities for the Post-2015 development agenda "[A Million Voices: the World We Want](#)," which captures the outcome of an unprecedented global consultation that has engaged more than 1.3 million in all 193 UN Member States. The report is available as an e-book alongside other resources at www.worldwewant2015.org.

36. The consultations and surveys revealed that people expect governments and the international community to create conditions for inclusive social and economic development, in peace and security, and within planetary boundaries. They want world leaders to focus on addressing inequalities based on a rights-based agenda and completing the unfinished business of the MDGs.

37. The Secretary-General and Helen Clark presented the findings of the report during a press conference and will also chair a high-level event for heads of state entitled 'What People Want' on 23 September. The outcome of the UNDG consultations has informed the Secretary General's own report "A Life of Dignity for All" which was released in preparation for the special General Assembly event on the MDGs and contains updates on the Goals and the Secretary-General's vision for the road ahead.

38. The UNDG Chair emphasized that it would be important for the UNDG to keep up the strong momentum in the months ahead and to continue to inform the deliberations of the Open Working Group with the messages emanating from the global consultation processes before the formal negotiations of the Post-2015 development framework are expected to start in September 2014.

39. **UNDG members and RCs and UNCTs are encouraged to advocate for the messages of the UNDG report "A Million Voices: the World We Want" and the Secretary General's report "A Life of Dignity for All" in their interactions with Member States and to use the wealth of data generated by the "My World" survey.**

40. **The UNDG will be strongly represented in a series of events and engage in extensive outreach activity during the high-level segment of the General Assembly in the week of 23 September. The UNDG MDG Task Force will subsequently hold a half-day retreat to take stock and determine how it can best support the process going forward. The retreat will also be a timely opportunity for the UNDG to start reflecting on how it can become fit for purpose to deliver on the emerging substantive agenda and deliver more integrated normative and policy support.**

41. **The UNDG MDG Task Force is committed to strengthening its outreach and communications to the country level in response to strong demand from RCs and UNCTs. As a first step, Olav Kjørven, Co-convenor of the UNDG MDG Task Force, will host a webinar for Resident Co-ordinators on the newest developments on the Post-2015 Development Agenda on 20 September.**

Item 5: Update on UNDG Human Rights Mainstreaming Mechanism (HRM) key activities

Update on the implementation of the UNDG strategy for the deployment of human rights advisers to Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams

42. Flavia Pansieri, Chair of the UNDG Human Rights Mainstreaming Mechanism (HRM), briefed the UNDG on progress in the implementation of the UNDG Strategy on Deployment of Human Rights Advisers to Resident Co-ordinators and UN Country Teams, which was endorsed by the UNDG in February 2012.

43. The Strategy seeks to ensure consistency and quality of human rights mainstreaming and capacity development efforts in the UN development system, particularly at country and regional levels. There is strong demand among RCs and UNCTs for dedicated support from Human Rights Advisers to strengthen the mainstreaming of human rights in UNDAFs.

44. The implementation of the first round of Human Rights Advisor deployments under the Strategy is now entering its final stages, which has been made possible thanks to contributions from Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland and Ireland to the global HRM Trust Fund. The first two Human Rights Advisers have already been

deployed to the Maldives and Timor Leste. Additional Human Rights Advisers are expected to be deployed by the end of the year to Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi, Bangladesh, India, Jamaica and the Dominican Republic. Two proposals for Human Rights Advisers to the Regional UNDG Teams in Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia and the Pacific have also been endorsed and are expected to be deployed early next year.

45. A Human Rights Adviser roster has been established, for which almost 600 candidates applied and some 40 were interviewed, so that there is now a strong pool of highly-qualified screened candidates. For 2014, the UNDG-HRM intends to invite RCs and UNCTs to submit proposals for the deployment of an additional ten advisors. Funds have also been set aside for two positions in a “surge” capacity, thereby making the UNDG-HRM capable of responding to urgent needs from the field. The HRM is also committed to supporting RCs and UNCTs who are funding their own Human Rights Advisors with technical advice. Continued resource mobilization for the HRM Trust Fund will be important as there is growing demand for HRM support at the country and regional level.

UNDG Publication: Mainstreaming Human Rights in Development: “Stories from the Field”

46. Debbie Landey, DOCO Director, presented the new UNDG publication “Mainstreaming Human Rights in Development: Stories from the Field.”

47. The case study publication illustrates various ways in which human rights has been mainstreamed in practice and the value that mainstreaming human rights brings to UN operational activities for development. Among other things, this initiative has highlighted the critical role that UN Country Teams play in supporting efforts by national actors to integrate human rights into national development programmes and policies, drawing on the UN’s convening power, normative role and impartiality.

48. The publication is the first product of the UNDG-HRM, which has been developed in response to demand from UNCTs and is a first step in documenting experiences, focusing on impact, and sharing knowledge on human rights mainstreaming. It is expected to serve as a learning and advocacy tool for the UNDG’s efforts on human rights mainstreaming and provides visibility to the value of the normative agenda, particularly in Delivering as One settings, as well as the leadership role of Resident Co-ordinators in driving progress in this area.

49. The case studies from Moldova, Tanzania, Uruguay and Vietnam demonstrate the value of UNCTs’ engagement with the UN international human rights mechanisms and how the recommendations of these mechanisms can provide valuable and authoritative guidance to integrate human rights into UN advocacy, policy and programming initiatives. UNCTs were able to support national partners to follow-up on recommendations from Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council. The cases of Kenya and Philippines illustrate efforts to link international human rights norms and principles explicitly with development programmes and policies both at sectoral and national level.

50. The publication is the collaborative product of the UNDG-HRM, developed under the leadership of DOCO with invaluable contributions from the UNDG-HRM Peer Review Group (UNICEF, OHCHR, UNDP, ILO and UNFPA), Resident Co-ordinators and colleagues in the field.

51. UNDG members are encouraged to share the publication widely within their agencies and networks. The publication will be made available on the UNDG and OHCHR websites.

Item 6: UNDG Gender Equality Marker Guidance Note

52. Moez Doraid, Chair of the UNDG Task Team on Gender Equality, presented the draft UNDG Gender Equality Marker Guidance Note for endorsement by the UNDG.

53. The Guidance Note aims to guide the development of an effective and coherent UN system approach for tracking resources that support gender equality results based on common principles and standards for gender equality marker systems. The Guidance Note does not oblige UN entities to use gender markers but is intended to provide direction for individual entities instituting or improving their gender equality marker systems to produce comparable data across UN entities. Mr. Doraid noted that since UN agency enterprise resource management (ERP) systems did not allow for unified gender markers to be applied across the UN system, at this stage, generating comparable data across the system had become the primary objective. To this effect, the standards and principles of the UNDG Gender Equality Marker have been aligned with those of the IASC and other systems for gender markers with the aim to ensure that future gender markers stay within the stated parameters.

54. The Guidance Note was developed under the auspices of the UNDG Task Team on Gender Equality by the subgroup on Accounting for Resources for Gender Equality co-chaired by UNDP and UNICEF. It responds to a request of the Secretary-General's Policy Committee (Decision No. 2011/25). Recent ECOSOC and General Assembly resolutions, including the QCPR, have called on the UN system to track gender-related resource allocation and expenditure, including through the use of gender markers (ECOSOC 2012/24; A/Res/67/226). The UN System-wide Action Plan (UN SWAP), endorsed by the CEB in April 2012, also includes two indicators requiring the use of gender markers. The Guidance Note has been endorsed by both the Task Team on Gender Equality and the UNDAF Programming Network. Additional consultations were subsequently held to address remaining comments put forward by several entities. In these discussions, the UN Secretariat explained the constraints it faces in applying the gender marker.

55. **Decision:** The UNDG endorsed the Gender Equality Marker Guidance Note. The UN Secretariat abstained from endorsing the Guidance Note for its own use without objecting against its adoption by the UNDG. It also expressed interest in remaining engaged on the issue. As per Policy Committee Decision No. 2011/25, the Guidance Note will be taken to the CEB through HLCP and HLCM. The members of the UNDG Task Team on Gender Equality will provide guidance and technical support for the effective implementation of the guidance.

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Retirement of Debbie Landey, DOCO Director

56. The UNDG Chair recognized Debbie Landey, DOCO Director for her outstanding leadership, dedication and support to the work of the United Nations and particularly the UNDG Chair and the work of the UNDG. Ms Landey will be retiring at the end of September after 35 years of service to the United Nations, including having served as Deputy Assistant Administrator of UNDP's Bureau of Management, Director of UNDP's Office of Human Resources, Resident Co-ordinator in Botswana and the Philippines, Deputy Executive Director of UNAIDS, and Director of DOCO. The UNDG thanked Debbie Landey for her support and contributions, wishing her all the best for her upcoming retirement.