

UNDG meeting

WFP Auditorium, Rome, Italy

30 November 2009, 3:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Final Report

Item 1 – Opening remarks from the host, Mr. Staffan DeMistura, WFP

1. Mr. Staffan DeMistura, Deputy Executive Director WFP, opened the meeting and welcomed the participants to Rome on behalf of Ms. Josette Sheeran, Executive Director WFP. Referring to what the UN system has learned from Accra to the recent World Food Summit, Mr. DeMistura underscored the need to show progress of joint interventions as called for by donors. Pivotal in doing so will be to show the effectiveness of the Resident Coordinator System by ensuring that the selection of future Resident Coordinators is made on a basis of finding the most qualified candidates from all parts of the UN system. Another essential factor will be to continue creating synergies between the three pillars under the CEB framework, for example in the area of simplification and harmonization of business practices. Mr. DeMistura reiterated the centrality of UNDG's work to WFP's mission, which combines both emergency and development, conflict and early recovery. He concluded his opening remarks by thanking Ms. Annika Söder for serving as Vice-Chair of the UNDG over the past year in an exemplary and energetic manner.

Item 2 – Remarks from the UNDG Chair, Ms. Helen Clark

2. Joining by video link from Nairobi, the UNDG Chair informed about her meeting with the Kenyan country team and shared her thoughts for the year ahead. The five UNDG working groups are currently formulating their work priorities for 2010. A consolidated UNDG work plan and a UNDG strategy will be discussed at the first UNDG meeting of 2010. In this regard, Ms. Clark noted that urgent action on the MDGs and tackling climate change must be at the centre of the UNDG work and strategy. The Chair highlighted the importance of the two agenda items relating to country reporting on the MDGs and the Greening as One initiative, and noted that one of her key priorities as UNDG Chair is to place climate change and broader environmental considerations at the centre of development thinking and planning.

3. Speaking about the circa 46 country teams beginning new programme cycles next year, and the importance of ensuring that these new UNDAFs are strategic and of high quality, Ms. Clark was pleased to note that key components of the package of UNDAF guidance and support would be presented for approval at the meeting. The Chair reiterated the need to have the right people and skills in place at country level to translate the UNDAFs into results and support developing countries in addressing the challenges they face. The issue of capacity is of vital importance and is an issue that the UNDG will have to look further into.

4. Referring to her recent meeting with the Resident Coordinators from the Delivering as One pilot countries and the intergovernmental meeting on Delivering as One in Kigali in October, the Chair commended the many efforts made to improve the UN's ability to be a highly effective and relevant development partner. She noted that the pilot and self-starter countries that met in Kigali all indicated that there is no going back to doing business in the manner prior to the Delivering as One initiative. With respect to business process reform and to assess where the remaining bottlenecks are and what can be done to overcome them, the UNDG Chair informed that she had agreed with the HLCM Chair, Ms. Josette Sheeran, that a joint senior mission should be fielded early next year to a number of the Delivering as One pilot countries to look at further reforms which would make a difference for countries.

5. To further improve the role and relevance of the UN development system, the Chair noted the importance of fielding Resident Coordinators who are well qualified for the job in the specific country they are appointed. In this regard,

she was pleased that two products in this area were being presented for endorsement at the meeting; the new guidelines on Resident Coordinator Selection and Appointment, and the Standard Operating Procedures for the Inter-Agency Advisory Panel, which provides advice to the UNDG Chair on Resident Coordinator Selection.

6. The Chair provided an update on the advancement of the new gender architecture which is part of the system-wide coherence agenda. She informed the meeting that UNDG agencies have been working with the Deputy Secretary-General to prepare the report on the composite entity on gender as requested by the General Assembly. The report will describe how the new body could have greater impact than the sum of its parts, and provide much stronger UN leadership on gender issues. She stressed that this new entity will not relieve other parts of the UN System of their responsibilities for promoting gender equality. Instead, it will be an asset for the system by increasing the focus on, and impact of, the gender activities of the whole UN System.

7. The UNDG Chair concluded her remarks by thanking, Ms. Annika Söder, for having served as the first UNDG Vice-Chair for the past year and a half and expressed appreciation for her efforts and support. She announced that Ms. Namita Pradhan, Assistant Director General of WHO's cluster for Partnerships and UN reform will replace Ms. Söder and serve as Vice-Chair in 2010. She further informed the meeting that the Advisory Group at the ASG/ADG level had appointed Ms. Mari Simonen, Deputy Executive-Director of UNFPA, as its new Chair and thanked Ms. Hilde F. Johnson for her work as Chair of this group over the past year. Before handing over to Ms. Söder to chair the rest of the meeting, Ms. Clark emphasized the need to jointly and strategically communicate the new guidance and tools for effective implementation in the field.

Item 3 – UNDG Working Group items for decision

Establishment of a dedicated mechanism on human rights mainstreaming

8. Ms. Navi Pillay, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, introduced the establishment of a mechanism on human rights mainstreaming. Ms. Pillay noted that important progress had been made over the past decade in integrating human rights in the common country programming process. Action 2, which supported more than 60 UNCTs, played an instrumental role in this. However, important challenges still remain at country level which will foremost require national capacity building. Highlighting the close interlinkage between development and human rights, Ms. Pillay referenced the Policy Committee decision 2008/18 on human rights and development which requested OHCHR and UNDG to initiate an interagency process to explore modalities to further strengthen system-wide coherence, collaboration and support for Resident Coordinators and UN country teams in mainstreaming human rights, taking into account lessons from Action 2. Emerging from this exercise was a need for a dedicated senior level mechanism to support Resident Coordinators and UN country teams. This would be a separate platform working in collaboration with other UNDG mechanisms. The first task of the mechanism will be to develop a phased work plan to further strengthen support to UNDAF rollouts to include human rights. Ms. Pillay concluded by confirming OHCHR's commitment to this mechanism and to the close collaboration with other UNDG mechanisms. OHCHR will second a senior-level person to DOCO to support this new mechanism.

9. Several UNDG agencies expressed strong support for establishing a new mechanism on human rights mainstreaming and commended the High Commissioner and her Deputy for their leadership. It was noted that although there are sensitivities around using a human rights based approach, mistrust falls away when it is discussed in a transparent manner.

10. **Decision: *The UNDG agreed to establish a dedicated mechanism on human rights mainstreaming (UNDG-HRM).***

WG on Programming Issues (WGPI)

Package of UNDAF guidance and support

11. Moez Doraid, Convenor Working Group on Programming Issues, introduced the package of UNDAF guidance and support. The package of UNDAF guidance has been endorsed by the WGPI. The products are an outcome of extensive consultations and significant work by the members of the WGPI. The package of UNDAF guidance consists of three components: i) UNDAF Guidelines and Technical Guidance, ii) UNDAF Action Plan, iii) UNDAF Progress Reporting. The Package is supported by a 2010 UNDAF roll-out implementation plan also endorsed by the WGPI. Mr. Doraid clarified that since the UNDAF Action Plan and UNDAF Reporting were developed before the simplified UNDAF guidelines, the WGPI recognizes that, once approved by the undg, the UNDAF Action Plan and the UNDAF Progress Reporting will need to be further aligned with the UNDAF Guidelines.

i) "How to Prepare an UNDAF: Part (I) Guidelines for UN Country Teams" and "How to Prepare an UNDAF: Part (II) Technical Guidance for UN Country Teams"

12. In accordance with the advice of the undg Advisory Group, a package of two documents on how to prepare an UNDAF, consisting of overall guidelines and technical guidance, had been developed by the WGPI. The package was endorsed by the WGPI at its meeting of 12 November and the Advisory Group at its meeting of 25 November for submission to the undg. Mr. Doraid explained that the Guidelines were developed through a highly consultative process and highlighted the milestones in the consultations. Once approved, the package on how to prepare an UNDAF will be sent to all UN country teams with a cover letter. The cover letter will highlight some key messages to the country teams, including the mandatory and flexible aspects, importance of joint programming, linkages with other components of the UNDAF guidance package, among other messages.

ii) UNDAF Action Plan Guidance [for information only]

13. The UNDAF Action Plan was introduced as part of the package for information only since it was approved by the undg at its meeting of 2 June. Almost all agencies have now provided legal clearance. Once approved by the undg, the UNDAF Action Plan will need to be aligned with the UNDAF Guidance.

iii) Standard Operational Format and Guidelines for Reporting Progress on UNDAF

14. Mr. Abdul Hannan, on behalf of the RBM task team of the WGPI, presented the Standard Operational Format and Guidelines for Reporting Progress on UNDAF. The reporting format was developed in response to the request from the General Assembly in GA resolution A/RES/62/208, that the Resident Coordinator, supported by the United Nations country team, report to national authorities on progress made against results agreed in the UNDAF. This request was reiterated in the 2009 ECOSOC resolution, which specifically requested that the Secretary General, through the United Nations Development Group and its member agencies, develop a standard operational format on reporting for this purpose, bearing in mind the need to reduce the administrative burden and transaction costs. The reporting format is the product of an extensive consultative process with UN staff at both headquarters and country level. The purpose of the report will be to show progress that the UN country teams are making towards national development priorities. Agency-specific and UNDAF reporting requirements will be further reviewed to identify opportunities to harmonize data and results reporting, in an attempt to minimize duplication and further reduce transaction costs.

iv) Implementation Plan for 2010 UNDAF Roll-out: Strengthening UNCT Capacity for Quality UNDAFs

15. Mr. Hans Page, Chair of the task team on strengthening support for UNDAF roll-out, presented the implementation plan for the 2010 UNDAF roll-outs. A proposed implementation plan was developed and presented to the undg on 2 June 2009. In its review of the proposal, the undg endorsed the cost-neutral interventions, and requested WGPI to develop the proposal towards the lower-cost scenario. The draft implementation plan presented at

this meeting was endorsed by the WGPI at its 12 November meeting. The draft implementation plan prioritizes support to UN country teams and Regional Directors Teams for 2010 UNDAF roll out and aims at responding to critical needs of the country and regional teams. More support will be provided for analyses and synthesis of good practices and lessons learned from designing and implementing high-quality UNDAFs, and ensuring a better feedback loop for field experiences to inform policy and programming guidance and tools. RDTs will be enabled to better coordinate technical expertise and link country teams to available networks of expertise to bridge gaps in critical areas of RBM, M&E and capacity development. The budget of the implementation plan for 2010 is \$3.5 million. The headquarter level costs will be covered as a part of DOCO's regular annual fund raising efforts. WGPI recommends that a strong and clear message is sent to field offices on the key components of the strategy.

Discussion

16. Noting the historic moment of endorsing the package of UNDAF guidance and support which will lay the foundation for less process oriented work and quality improvement, the UNDG Vice-Chair congratulated the WGPI for the outcome of all their hard work and asked Ms. Debbie Landey, Director of DOCO, to brief the meeting on the next steps. Ms. Landey recalled that in September 2008 the UNDG had agreed a strategy to focus on the next generation of UNDAFs and continued support to the pilot countries. This package was critical in ensuring achievement of the first part of the strategy and included simplified guidance on how to prepare an UNDAF without in any way amending the normative guidance available; the UNDAF Action Plan; the One Results Report and the UNDAF support package. Ms. Landey further highlighted that the guidance on the One Budget and One Fund are likely to be presented for endorsement at the January UNDG meeting. DOCO and the Advisory Group focal points are also working on paragraph 7 of the recent GA resolution on system-wide coherence resolution to propose modalities for the submission and approval of common country programmes on a voluntary basis. With 46 countries starting new UNDAFs in 2010, Ms. Landey noted the importance of leveraging the networks at the regional level, and those trained by the UN System Staff College to prepare the high-quality UNDAFs. All agencies must commit to release their trained staff members to develop the new UNDAFs. Referring to the two recent letters sent by the UNDG Chair on the Joint Crisis Initiative and on UNDAFs, Ms. Landey noted the request to country teams to tweak their existing UNDAFs and ensure a step change in the quality of the next generation of UNDAFs. She also emphasized the call of the UNDG Chair for country teams to assess their capacity to deliver and highlighted the importance of RDTs in the new UNDAF roll-out support structure. The floor was opened for discussions.

17. It was acknowledged that the new UNDAF guidelines will be critical for the system to move forward and the WGPI was thanked for its extraordinary work. The process of developing the guidelines demonstrated the value added by the UN coming together. An appeal was made to UNDG agencies to take ownership of the guidelines to ensure they are communicated to the field and to their respective country offices in addition to the central communication that will go out from the UNDG Chair. It was noted that the gap between headquarters and the field must be narrowed, and the large amount of documents that are sent out must be sequenced and communicated in a more strategic way. There is a need for the UNDG to think strategically about a communications platform to ensure there is full understanding and capacity to implement the new guidance in the field. Regarding governments' involvement in the development of new UNDAFs, it was suggested that best practices of consultation processes with governments should be collected and shared with the field.

18. It was noted the guidelines should always allow for as much flexibility as possible. The guidelines should be followed up closely and be continuously kept under review. UNESCO highlighted the importance of the cover letter that will go out with the new UNDAF guidelines conveying key messages, including encouraging more engagement of UNCTs in joint programming. It was noted that the UNDG should be more conservative in developing guidance and instead make sure existing guidance is effectively applied by country teams. The next step in working together must be to take on the responsibility of ensuring country teams understand the existing guidance and have the right capacity in place to implement it.

19. **Decision:** *The UNDG endorsed the package of UNDAF guidance and support. This includes the package of two documents on how to prepare an UNDAF, Part I (guidelines) and Part II (technical guidance), the*

Standard Operational Format and Guidelines for reporting progress on UNDAF and the Implementation Plan for 2010 UNDAF Roll-out: Strengthening UNCT Capacity for Quality UNDAFs.

20. ***Action point: The UNDAF Action Plan and the Standard Operational Format will be aligned with the UNDAF guidelines and the full package will be sent to all UN country teams.***

21. ***Action Point: Central communication from the undg Chair to Resident Coordinators and UN country teams on the new guidelines will be followed by agency specific communication.***

Addendum to 2nd Guidance Note on Country Reporting on the MDGs

22. Mr. Garry Conille, Vice-Chair MDG Task Force, introduced the Addendum to 2nd Guidance Note on Country Reporting on the MDGs. He noted that the High-Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on MDGs in 2010 represents a defining moment to galvanize new political commitment, spur collective action and the effort needed over the final five years to accelerate and sustain progress towards the MDGs. A special edition of the MDG Country Reports in 2010 would provide national stakeholders with a common, nationally owned framework for renewed action to accelerate progress towards the MDGs. Preparing for this report, the addendum to the existing guidelines was developed. The rationale for the addendum is that new realities have emerged since the 2nd Guidance Note was last updated in 2003. The addendum has been circulated to the MDG task force on a non objection basis. Some last minute comments on reproductive health will be incorporated. The floor was opened for comments.

23. It was noted that country based analysis will be crucial in the context of the MDG summit 2010 and that the relating section in the UNDAF guidelines that has just been adopted provides useful guidance to UNCTs in this regard and for future MDGs country reporting. It was suggested this would be emphasized when the revised 2nd Guidance Note is sent out. The Department of Public Information informed that interagency planning on a communications strategy and messaging leading up to the MDG summit was being discussed by the UN Communications Group Task Force on MDGs, with the aim of building momentum early in 2010. Key dates and events had been identified around which communications activities will be carried out. DPI will circulate all information in this regard to Resident Coordinators. It was stressed that the progress reporting on the MDGs must be well planned to avoid overlapping with the other MDG reports both at headquarters and regional level. It was recognized that this reporting is the only tool for engaging the country level in the analysis. Efforts must also be made to ensure the collaboration with all partners, including civil society, is shown in the report to ensure ownership of the report at both regional and country level. It was further emphasized that a communications strategy with a set of policies on how to prepare for both the reporting and the MDG summit is needed. Recognizing the risk of duplication between the undg and DESA efforts, it was suggested that the MDG Task Force look into this and that the issue is brought to the attention of the undg Chair so that preparatory work becomes system-wide. It was also suggested that DOCO updates the HLCP secretariat on the work of the MDG Task Force to avoid any further duplication in the UN system preparation for the Summit.

24. ***Decision: The undg endorsed the Addendum to 2nd Guidance Note on Country Reporting on the MDGs***

25. ***Action point: undg Chair to send a letter to RCs/UNCTs to encourage them to engage with governments in preparation of MDG Reports in the run-up to the High-Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on MDGs in 2010. It should also be drawn to their attention that the newly adopted UNDAF guidelines provide valuable guidance in conducting their country based analysis.***

26. ***Action point: MDG Task Force to examine the risk of duplication with other MDG reports and DOCO to update the HLCP secretariat on the work of the Task Force.***

WG on Country Office Business Operations and Funding Issues (COBO)

Project proposals on Green UN Houses in the Delivering as One pilot countries

27. Ms. Zehra Aydin, Co-convener of WG-COBO, presented the project proposal "Green UN Houses: Greening as One". The proposal has been developed by UNEP on behalf of UNDG, in consultation with the COBO Task Team on Common Premises and the RC Offices of the Delivering as One UN pilot countries. The project proposal spans a five year period and will be implemented in two phases. The initial phase will support three pilot countries with the establishment of their Green UN Houses. In the subsequent phase, the project will support the preparatory activities for establishing a Green UN House for up to ten other programme countries that already have a UN House that can be renovated into a Green UN House. The floor was opened for comments.

28. There was strong support for the proposal among UNDG agencies, although some noted their need for internal financial and legal clearance. UNEP role to manage the project was welcomed. It was proposed that senior UN officials should "champion" the project and in that context the opportunity that the Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen provides was noted.

29. **Decision: *The project proposals on Green UN Houses: Greening as One* was endorsed (pending clearance from ILO).**

Working Group on Resident Coordinator System Issues (RCSI)

RC talent management initiative: Standard Operating Procedures for the IAAP and Guidelines on RC selection and appointment

30. Ms. Cecilia Lotse, Convener WGRCSI, briefly introduced the Standard Operating Procedure for the IAAP and the Guidelines for Resident Coordinator Selection and Appointment and thanked the members of the task team who had worked on the proposal. The new guidelines on Resident Coordinator selection and appointment provide increased information and awareness of the Resident Coordinator position, eligibility requirements, and the process for Resident Coordinator selection and appointment, while the standard operating procedures for the Inter-Agency Advisory Panel was prepared to strengthen management of the IAAP mechanism which provides advice to the UNDG Chair on Resident Coordinator selection. Ms. Lotse noted that the Standard Operating Procedure for the IAAP will be an internal document while the guidelines on Resident Coordinator selection and appointment will have a wider distribution both internally and externally. The two documents presented for approval are expected to strengthen the Resident Coordinator System and improve the quality of Resident Coordinators.

31. **Decision: *The UNDG endorsed the Standard Operating Procedures for the IAAP and the Guidelines on RC selection and appointment.***

Operational guidance note - post-conflict employment creation, income generation and reintegration

32. Ms. Jane Stewart, ILO, introduced the operational guidance note on post-conflict employment creation, income generation and reintegration, which was developed by a working group led by ILO and UNDP. The UN system-wide policy, complemented by the Operational Guidance Note, seeks to ensure a harmonized and coherent UN approach to employment in post conflict situations and, in the process, promote greater collaboration with the World Bank and IMF on this issue. Translating the guidance note into concrete programmes and projects will require dedicated support to countries to implement the policy, and a support team will be available to provide this support for a two-year period. The floor was opened for comments.

33. It was noted that comments submitted by UNEP on including environmental sustainability in countries emerging from conflict will be incorporated. It was also mentioned that rural development and agriculture must be reflected as important areas in the guidance note.

34. **Decision: *The UNDG endorsed the Operational guidance note - post-conflict employment creation, income generation and reintegration, which will be distributed to countries.***

Item 4 – Items for information

DOCO functional review

35. Ms. Debbie Landey, Director DOCO, provided an update on the functional review of DOCO. The company hired to undertake the functional review has now completed the extensive stakeholder consultations and is currently finalizing the report. The same company is simultaneously conducting the RDT capacity assessment. Both products will be finalized by the end of the year. On the process going forward, the company will follow the process outlined in the ToRs for the functional review. After the new structure has been signed off, the implementation phase, which is expected to take place over a 4-6 month period, will begin. The functional review will also include options for the future funding of DOCO. It was pointed out that DOCO's functional review is crucial to the effective functioning of UNDG and that therefore adequate time needs to be allowed for thorough discussion.

Intergovernmental meeting on Delivering as One in Kigali, Rwanda

36. Ms. Debbie Landey provided an update on the second intergovernmental meeting on Delivering as One held in Kigali, Rwanda 19-21 October. Participants included government representatives from the pilot countries and self starter countries. The three largest donors to the One Funds at country level – Norway, Spain and UK – were invited as observers. The meeting arrived at a significant 'Statement of Outcomes and Way Forward', which was sent to the full UNDG from Kigali. One key message in the Statement of Outcomes that emerged from the meeting is that "there is no going back to doing business in the manner prior to the 'Delivering as One' initiative". The participants of the meeting agreed on the methodology provided by UNEG for the country-led evaluations. While the pilot countries and self-starters have different experiences, some key commonalities emerged from the governments in Kigali. For example, the reforms undertaken had given renewed government leadership to UN programmes, brought about greater coherence in to UN's support to addressing national priorities. The Statement of Outcomes emphasize that while commendable progress has been made at the country level, reform must now be pursued with equal rigor at the global level.

37. The participants of the Kigali meeting agreed the Terms of Reference for the country-led evaluations. Since Pakistan signed its One Programme earlier this year, it is too early for them to conduct an evaluation at this stage. The other seven country-led evaluations will be completed in time for the third intergovernmental meeting on Delivering as One to be held in Hanoi from 14-16 June 2010. The final evaluation reports, once they have been validated with stakeholders and quality assured, will be released to the public together with the written comments of the quality assurance panel and the management response prepared by the government and the UN. The Ambassadors of the pilot countries are arranging to make presentations to their regional groups in New York. When the pilot Resident Coordinators recently visited New York, they briefed the member states on progress made. They also met with the Secretary-General who expressed strong commitment to the pilot process. It was noted that the country-led evaluations will be an important input to the QCPR. UNEG has been tasked with preparing an approach paper for the independent evaluation.

Item 5 – Update and closing remarks from the UNDG Vice-Chair

UNDG Advisory Group Principals meeting 29 October and UNDG Advisory Group ASG meeting on 25 November

38. Ms. Annika Söder informed the meeting about the UNDG Advisory Group Principals meeting on 29 October. The Principals proposed that the UNDG analyze the inter-linkages of the global trends to inform the work of the UN development system and discussed how RCs can be made more aware of these trends. They also discussed the structure of the new composite gender entity and how to accelerate progress on the MDGs over the coming five years. Further to that meeting, the Chair of the UNDG wrote to the Deputy Secretary-General summarizing the views of the Principals on the new composite gender entity.

39. The UNDG Advisory Group at ASG/ADG level met on 25 November to discuss follow-up to the system-wide coherence resolution. They also discussed elaborating a strategic work plan for 2010. The Advisory Group noted the importance of including the full UNDG in these discussions.

Process for 2010 work plan and year-end report

40. The UNDG Vice-Chair asked DOCO to draft the 2009 UNDG year-end report - a consolidation of the work done and decisions made by the group this year.

41. Ms. Söder concluded her closing remarks by thanking Hilde F. Johnson for her engaged Chairmanship of the Advisory Group over the past year and wished the new Advisory Group Chair, Mari Simonen, every success in the year ahead. She also thanked Hans Page who is retiring for all his work, leadership and support. WHO commended Ms. Söder for her engagement as Vice-Chair, in particular her focus on results and capacity to balance between what is being done and what needs to be done in UNDG.