Dear Colleague,

Further to the Director-General's letter of 25 April 1991 by which he provided all Resident Coordinators and Country Teams with a guidance note on development goals and strategies for the 1990s, I am sending you herewith guidelines for enhancing the programming processes of the operational activities of the United Nations system.

These draft guidelines were elaborated by CCSD (OPS) in response to paragraph 17 of General Assembly resolution 44/211, which requested the Director-General to conduct an independent study aimed at developing the concept of a document containing the integrated operational response of the UN system at the country level to the national programme framework of the recipient Government. This independent study and the Director-General's recommendations were submitted to the 45th session of the General Assembly last year (A/45/273/Add.2 and Add. 5). After an extensive discussion at that session of the General Assembly, no agreement could be reached by Member States on this and other issues and no resolution on operational activities was adopted. The debate indicated some concern by recipient countries that a common response of the UN system might lead to some form of "conditionality".

In the Director-General's annual report of this year, (an advance copy of which was sent to all Resident Coordinators by letter of 15 May), brief information on current experience with collaborative programming is provided. It also indicates that in order to facilitate further action on this important subject, current arrangements and experience at the country level in programming and joint activities in the implementation of programmes are being analyzed on the basis of country profiles. All of you were requested to provide information for these country profiles by letter of 12 April and we have received many replies for which we are very grateful.

LETTER ADDRESSED TO ALL RESIDENT COORDINATORS/
RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVES
As concerns the enclosed guidelines on programming processes, I should like to stress that they are being made available on an informal basis to all Country Teams in order to monitor their relevance and feasibility as a guidance note which can be adapted to the specific requirements of each country. In this connection, I should like to draw your attention particularly to paragraph 9 (b) ix. I would be most grateful to have your early views on action taken or contemplated which deals with the elaboration of a note on common themes and linkages reflecting the contribution that the system could make in support of national plans and priorities. It would also be very helpful to obtain the most up-to-date information on action you have taken to establish interagency advisory groups or similar arrangements to assist in facilitating a coherent and integrated approach by the system in support of national priorities (please refer to page 2, paragraph 2 of the Director-General’s letter of 25 April). We expect to discuss this matter at the next session of CCSQ(GPS) in September and your information would constitute an essential input into these discussions and the subsequent debate in the General Assembly.

I need not stress that it is important to involve the entire Country Team in a review of these guidelines and putting into effect those provisions which are applicable to your country of assignment.

In looking forward to hearing from you,

Yours sincerely,

Salif N’Diaye
Director for Operational Activities

21 June 1991