

Panel: Dialogues with Heads of UN Funds and Programmes

The QCPR and its concrete guidance have brought about substantial improvements in the operations of the UN Development System. The funds and programmes have been the forerunners in this. And we welcome that the consensus reached in the High Level Committee on Management and the United Nations Development Group contributes to bridging the structural divide between entities that report to the General Assembly and those that don't, i.e. the specialized agencies.

*An overarching goal is to ensure the continued relevance of the UN Development System in partner countries. Clearly, member states have a responsibility to bring the reform agenda forward during the second phase of the ECOSOC Dialogue and through the next QCPR negotiations. However, I wonder whether also the UN funds and programmes, as major UN actors, themselves could do more, in particular within their own organizations. To me, a successful *Delivering as One* consists of three key interrelated dimensions, and I have the following questions to the panelists in this regard:*

1. **Coherent priority setting within the Country Team:** Our goal should be to establish Common Country Team priorities, based on the value added of the UN in a particular country context. However, this risks being watered out in practice because individual organizations are guided more by their own interests for branding and resource mobilization than by the need to ensure the relevance of the country team as a whole. The priorities (outcomes) of the UNDAF are often very broad and the strategic approach to planning still seems to be weak, allowing individual organizations to include their own “shopping list” of activities. Neither is “mission creep” an unknown phenomenon. *Are you doing enough to ensure that your country representatives are walking the talk?* For example, is the internal messaging from headquarters and regional offices consistent? And would you be willing to back country representatives that are ready to focus on selected parts of the priorities in your strategic plan, even if this would mean that the volume of the country programme is reduced or that past activities are not continued?

2. **Funding:** Funding may destroy the best intentions. The shortage of qualitatively good funding (core resources, softly earmarked thematic funding and multi-partner trust funds) is a huge challenge. Clearly, it is a responsibility of member states and other donors to move in this direction. *My question is whether also the funds and programmes themselves could do more to facilitate such a change.* One way could be to take more leadership in the structured dialogues on funding going on in the Executive Board. What do you think could be learnt from the proactive approach of WHO? An example of a much harder medicine is the fundraising moratorium introduced by the World Bank this year. This implies a total ban of fundraising for objectives other than IDA and five high priority areas. Would a similar initiative work for the funds and programmes, and what could it look like?

3. **The Resident Coordinator:** A coherent UN at country level requires a RC that is much more empowered than today, even more so with the integrated approach called for in Agenda 2030. Even if member states in the 5th Committee agree to cover the Secretariat's part of the UNDG cost-sharing arrangement, available funds would not be sufficient to ensure the necessary capacity of the RC Offices. Moreover, it is a question of how the Resident Coordinator could act more as an "executive leader" than a "coordinator". *What is your suggestions to member states, and what could you do yourselves do to empower the Resident Coordinator?*