

2012 QCPR Outcome

The General Assembly adopted on 21 December by consensus **a landmark resolution (67/226) on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) of UN operational activities for development**. The far-reaching changes endorsed in GA resolution 67/226 signal the importance attached by Member States to enhanced system-wide coherence as a strategy for improving the relevance and effectiveness of the UN development system. The resolution also recognizes the value of improving linkages between operational activities and norms and standards such as freedom, peace, security and human rights and the importance of mainstreaming sustainable development into the mandates, programmes, strategies and decision-making processes of UN entities. There is also for the first time intergovernmental recognition of the 'delivering-as-one' model though it remains a voluntary option.

GA resolution 67/226 represents a significant step in the reform of the UN development system. The resolution is the culmination of two months of intensive intergovernmental negotiations underpinned by comprehensive analytical preparations supported by DESA and UN system entities. It was stated by one Member State at the time of the adoption of the resolution that *"this legislation is a major confidence-builder in the UN development system"*.

Some key measures included in GA resolution 67/226 are highlighted here below:

Funding

The resolution has identified a number of steps to address the growing imbalance between core and non-core contributions. Funds and Programmes (Fs/Ps) are requested to present proposals for the concept of *"critical mass"* of core funding with a view to a decision in 2014; all core and non-core resources at the country level to be consolidated within a common budgetary framework; Fs/Ps to adopt by 2013, with a view to full implementation in 2014, cost recovery frameworks based on the principle of full cost recovery of all non-programme costs proportionally from core and non-core funding sources. This decision will require an increase in the present programme support cost rate of the Fs/Ps.

Functioning (programming, business practices, resident coordinator system, DaO)

The UN development system to improve the UNDAF as a strategic framework, simplify the UNDAF process and strengthen joint programming; simplify and harmonize the UNDAF and agency-specific programming instruments and processes; develop a common approach for measuring progress in capacity development; mainstream South-South and triangular cooperation into country-level programming and strengthen the use of the gender scorecard.

The UN development system to consolidate support services at the country level either by adopting a lead agency model, establishing a common service centre, or through outsourcing, and report on concrete achievements by end of 2014; UN entities to invest in intra-agency rationalization of business operations and present plans in this regard by the end of 2013; rules, policies and procedures in the functional areas of finance, human resources management, procurement, ICT and other administrative services to

be unified across the UN system by 2016; use of national systems to be stepped-up and the number of parallel implementation units reduced; the Secretary-General to present a proposal in early 2014 for decision-making by the Executive Boards of Fs/Ps on the common definition of operating costs and a common and standardized system of cost control. This is important for enhanced transparency in financial reporting and the calculation of cost savings from harmonization of business practices across UN entities. The resolution also calls for achieving full interoperability of enterprise resources planning systems of Fs/Ps in 2016 and the UN development system to develop a strategy for common premises in programme countries by the end of 2013.

The resolution calls for enhancing the planning and coordination function of UN resident coordinators including their ability to propose amendments to projects and programmes to bring them in line with the UNDAF, as well as the UNDAF itself, or its action plan, if activities are determined to be no longer in alignment with the broader UN strategy; strengthening of the capacity of resident coordinators' offices; improved reporting by resident coordinators on the results of the UN development system as a whole at the country level; further decentralization of authority to field representatives of UN entities for decisions on programmatic and financial matters; and improved coordination between Secretariat entities and agencies of the UN development system in countries in transition from relief to development, e.g. through simplification and harmonization of programming instruments and processes and business practices. The Secretary-General is also requested to submit concrete proposals on the funding of the resident coordinator system in 2013.

The UN system is requested to consolidate the DaO process by clearly outlining the core elements of each of the "ones" and to provide the respective programme countries with an integrated package of support, comprising standard operating procedures as well as guidance on DaO-specific programming, monitoring and evaluation and reporting, pooled funding mechanisms and support to the resident coordinator system; the Secretary-General is requested to present options for the review and approval of common country programme documents of the DaO countries for consideration of ECOSOC and GA in 2013 and to come up with proposals for the establishment of common monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanisms on DAO implementation.

Results-based management and system-wide evaluation

In the area of results-based management, the Secretary-General is requested to present a report to ECOSOC in 2013 on an approach to streamline the planning, monitoring, measurement and reporting on system-wide results. Governing bodies of UN entities are also invited to engage in a focused dialogue on how to balance reporting on system-wide results with the current agency-specific reporting requirements. The UN development system is also requested to develop clear and robust results frameworks that demonstrate complete results chains with the Fs/Ps reporting annually on implementation from 2014.

In addition, GA resolution 67/226 requests the Secretary-General to establish an interim coordination mechanism for system-wide evaluation of operational activities for development, with a draft policy and a proposal for pilot system-wide evaluations to be submitted for discussion at the operational activities segment of ECOSOC in 2013.