

Report of the Secretary-General

**Quadrennial comprehensive policy review of
operational activities for development of the
United Nations system: *recommendations***

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15 August 2012

LIST OF ACRONYMS	2
SUMMARY	4
BACKGROUND	5
INTRODUCTION	6
PART I: THE CHANGING DEVELOPMENT LANDSCAPE: <i>WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM?</i>	9
PART II: FUNDING OF OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT	11
PART III: ENHANCING THE FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM	14
(a) United Nations Resident Coordinator system	14
(b) United Nations development assistance framework (UNDAF)	18
(c) Simplification and harmonization of business operations	19
(d) Transition countries: <i>the challenge of coordination and coherence</i>	21
(e) Delivering-as-one	23
PART IV: PROGRESS IN ENHANCING DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS	25
(a) Capacity-building and development	25
(b) Gender equality and women’s empowerment	27
(c) South-South cooperation	28
(d) Regional coordination	29
(e) Results-based management and planning	30
(f) Evaluation	32
PART V: QCPR FOLLOW-UP AND MONITORING	35

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CBF	Common budgetary framework
CCA	Common country assessment
CCPDs	Common country programme documents
CEB	Chief Executives Board for Coordination
CLEs	Country-led evaluations
CSOs	Civil society organizations
DaO	“Delivering-as-one”
DOCO	Development Operations Coordination Office
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
ERP	Enterprise resources planning
GA	General Assembly
HACT	Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers
HLCM	High-level Committee on Management/CEB
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ISWE	Independent system-wide evaluation
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit
LDCs	Least-developed countries
LTAs	Long-term agreements
M&A	Management & Accountability system
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MDTF	Multi-donor trust fund
NRAs	Non-resident agencies (neither present at country nor regional level)
OAD	Operational activities for development
ODA	Official development assistance
OECD/DAC	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee
OIOS	Office of Internal Oversight Services
QCPR	Quadrennial comprehensive policy review
QSA	Quality assurance and advice
RBM	Results-based management
RCMs	Regional Coordination Mechanisms
RCO	Resident Coordinator office
SSC	South-South cooperation
SWAP	System-wide action plan
TCPR	Triennial comprehensive policy review
UNCT	United Nations country team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UN-IMCs	Integrated Mission Countries/Areas

SUMMARY

The present report provides recommendations for consideration of Member States to facilitate the 2012 quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) of the General Assembly of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. It responds to General Assembly resolutions 62/208 on the triennial comprehensive policy review and 64/289 on system-wide coherence and Economic and Social Council resolution 2011/7.

The report is a companion report to A/67/93-E/2012/93, which provided in-depth analysis of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 62/208. This report takes also into account the views and comments of Member States as expressed during the operational activities segment of the 2012 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council.

The global development cooperation landscape has changed dramatically since the last comprehensive policy review of the General Assembly in 2007. These changes in the broader environment of global development cooperation have multiple implications for the United Nations development system. The upcoming QCPR provides an important opportunity for Member States and United Nations entities to discuss and respond to these challenges and opportunities, with a view to enhancing the relevance, coherence, effectiveness and efficiency of the United Nations development system.

The recommendations contained in the present report aim to contribute to that process, both in the short- and the medium-term, but also by proposing a forward-looking reflection on the longer-term vision and direction for the United Nations operational activities for development.

BACKGROUND

In response to General Assembly resolution 62/208 on the triennial comprehensive policy review, the Secretary-General submitted a report (A/67/93-E/2012/79) for the consideration of Member States at the 2012 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council.

The report contained in-depth analysis of the implementation of the above General Assembly resolution based on extensive substantive preparations by the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations development system with the active engagement of Member States through a series of formal and informal consultations.

The present report, which is a companion report to A/67/93-E/2012/79, provides recommendations for consideration of the General Assembly as requested in resolution 62/208. These recommendations are aimed at further enhancing the relevance, coherence, effectiveness and efficiency of the United Nations development system.

The report takes into account the views and comments of Member States as expressed during the Operational Activities Segment of ECOSOC (13-17 July 2012). It follows the structure of A/67/93-E/2012/79, with recommendations focusing, in particular, on the areas of *funding*, *functioning* and *development effectiveness* of the United Nations development system¹. Considering the extensive evidence base that underpinned the analysis and findings of A/67/93-E/2012/93, this companion report, aims to provide the General Assembly with recommendations, which, if adopted, could significantly enhance system-wide coherence, effectiveness and efficiency of the United Nations development system, particularly at the country level.

Strengthening the coherence of the United Nations development system is an underlying theme of the recommendations contained in this report. System-wide coherence is about responding to country needs and priorities – and the internationally agreed development goals - in a more coordinated, effective, efficient and responsive manner. It is about ensuring that the United Nations system as a whole contributes more effectively to development in programme countries than the sum of its individual parts. It entails drawing on the capacities of all organizations and exploring and capitalizing on opportunities for synergies and complementarities in the work of United Nations entities, with a view to achieving greater development impact. In the past 60 years, Member States have consistently pointed to this challenge and attempted to address it.

Other related reports

The Secretary-General submitted a report on funding of operational activities for development of the United Nations system for consideration of ECOSOC at its 2012 substantive session (A/67/94-E/2012/80). A second report on funding will be submitted for the consideration of the General Assembly in September.

In response to General Assembly resolution 64/289 on system-wide coherence, the Secretary-General will submit during the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly a report (A/66/852) on a comprehensive review of the existing institutional framework for system-wide evaluation of operational activities for development of the United Nations system.

The reports on funding and system-wide evaluation should be read in conjunction with the present report.

INTRODUCTION

The global development cooperation landscape has changed dramatically since the last comprehensive policy review of the General Assembly in 2007 as discussed in the first report of the Secretary-General for the QCPR. These changes in the broader environment of global development cooperation have multiple implications for the United Nations development system.

The diversity of development needs of programme countries is growing

Since 2000, when the Millennium Declaration was adopted, there has been strong economic growth in many parts of the world, lifting millions of people out of poverty. However, progress in human development has been uneven, leaving many behind and widening inequalities. The global food, fuel, financial and economic crises of the 2007-2010 years have also highlighted the fragility of global food supply systems and commodity markets, volatility of financial markets and major weaknesses in the institutions of global governance.

With few exceptions, income and wealth inequalities within and among countries have been increasing. Inequalities in access to land and other productive assets, as well as in social outcomes and service access, remain widespread. Nearly a billion people are undernourished and more than 200 million people are unemployed. While many developing countries did see poverty decline in the 1990 to 2008 period, in absolute terms the reduction was overwhelmingly concentrated in few big developing countries. In spite of decreasing rates in Sub-Saharan Africa, the absolute number of poor people increased in the region during this period.

In 1990, 90 per cent of the poorest people lived in low-income countries, but, today, it is estimated that some 75 per cent of this group lives in middle-income countries. However, by 2025, it is predicted that the locus of poverty will be overwhelmingly in low-income African states. By that time, it is estimated that five-sixth of the world's poor will live in Africa compared to some half today. These shifts demonstrate the transitory phenomenon of global poverty.

The past decade has also witnessed a major increase in the number of countries in crisis and transition situations, requiring a combination of humanitarian assistance, peacebuilding and development-related support. The world's poor are increasingly concentrated in countries in such situations.

Despite many development challenges, the past decade has also seen significant deepening and strengthening of economic cooperation among developing countries including through intensified regional cooperation and integration efforts. Some developing countries, for example, have shifted from being recipients to being also providers of development cooperation.

All the above changes underscore the need that the engagement strategy of the United Nations development system in programme countries should be flexible, responsive and adapted to each country's context.

The sustainable development paradigm requires an integrated approach

The pursuit of sustainable development has become a high priority for all countries. Responding effectively to the challenge of integrating the economic, social and environmental dimensions of

sustainable development will require a unified strategic approach to UN operational activities for development and greater clarity on the roles of different entities. Strategic choices will have to be made. Institutional fragmentation will also have to be addressed. A tighter fit between the normative and operational arms of the United Nations system will be required in the implementation of the sustainable development agenda. Stronger focus on gender equality and women's empowerment must also be at the heart of the approach to promote sustainable development.

The manner in which Member States approach the implementation of the outcome of the Rio+20 Conference and the design of the post-2015 development agenda will set the future direction of operational activities for development. The sustainable development framework, if adopted strategically, could therefore go a long way in fostering greater integration of the work of the United Nations development system.

The United Nations development system needs to respond to the new demands

The global context therefore poses a variety of challenges and opportunities for development cooperation. The United Nations development system is challenged to meet the growing demands of programme countries for more varied assistance and is faced with higher expectations by all Member States for results, often without adequate resources.

Throughout its 60+-year history, the United Nations development system has regularly demonstrated capacity to reinvent itself in response to the emerging challenges and opportunities in the broader development cooperation environment. The organization needs to maintain and build on this ability to adapt to change.

The findings of the substantive preparations for the QCPR as well as the lessons learned from the independent evaluation of the delivering-as-one initiative suggest that further progress in enhancing the coherence, coordination and efficiency of the United Nations development system at the country level may not be realistic without significant change at the headquarters' level.

This report argues that such changes should particularly aim at enabling the United Nations to make a strategic shift towards achieving programmatic and operational interoperability across entities. The organization should be able to work seamlessly across the vertical and horizontal dimensions of programming and business operations, including with regard to results reporting and accountability. This report therefore recommends simplification and harmonization of programming instruments and processes such as programme documents, workplans, results-based management and reporting and evaluation. It also recommends harmonization of rules, regulations, policies and procedures in the functional areas of finance, human resources management, procurement, information and communications technology and other appropriate core services, as well as attaining interoperability or harmonization of enterprise resources planning systems of the funds and programmes.

Building on the unique strengths of the organization

The breadth and depth of technical capacity that exists within the United Nations development system (UNDS) and the mandates that emanate from the international agreements and normative frameworks constitute the major advantage of the UNDS in global development cooperation arena. A strategy based

on exploiting synergy is about reinforcing these advantages so that the United Nations system as a whole contributes more effectively to development in programme countries than the sum of its individual parts. This includes the contributions of the funds and programmes, specialized agencies and Secretariat and other non-resident agencies.

Through its universal presence in developing countries, the organization is also well-placed to turn South-South and triangular cooperation into a regular programming modality in programme countries.

In the area of business operations, the sheer size and breadth of the work of the United Nations around the world offer tremendous potential for achieving economies of scale. However, progress in this area depends heavily on the ability of the United Nations development system to achieve efficiency improvements as well as the interoperability of business systems, policies and procedures across entities. The report makes a number of recommendations in this regard, including proposing greater emphasis on delivering business services at the global and regional level through intra-agency rationalization, increased use of national systems in the implementation of programmes and projects based on thorough capacity assessment processes, and the development of a standardized system of cost control in order to arrive at a shared solution for measuring, monitoring and reporting on all cost categories.

The upcoming QCPR provides an important opportunity for Member States and United Nations entities to revitalize the work of the United Nations for development in programme countries. The recommendations contained in this report aim to contribute to that process, both in the short- and the medium-term, but also by initiating a forward-looking reflection on the longer-term vision and direction for the United Nations operational activities for development.

PART I: THE CHANGING DEVELOPMENT LANDSCAPE: WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM?

The currents of change are transforming our human and physical geography. Demographic transformation; the emergence of new centers of economic dynamism; accelerating inequality within and across nations; challenges to the existing social contract by a disillusioned, mobilized citizenry; technological and organizational transformation linking people directly as never before; and climate change - are all placing the foundations of our world and our global system under unprecedented stress. They are driving not just incremental but exponential change. They are deeply interconnected and increasingly complex.

The Secretary-General's Five-Year Action Agenda, 25 January 2012

The development landscape is changing, and so must development cooperation. As discussed in some detail in the first report of the Secretary-General, four features particularly characterize these changes in the broader environment of development cooperation: (i) the emergence of new centres of economic dynamism; (ii) the changing nature of global development challenges; (iii) the transforming relationship among states, markets and individuals; and (iv) the growth of new institutional actors engaged in development cooperation including civil society, the private sector, research and academic communities, and foundations.

The first report of the Secretary-General argued that the changing development landscape presents an important opportunity for enhancing the functioning of the United Nations development system and the effectiveness and impact of its operational activities for development. This companion report makes a number of short- and medium-term recommendations towards that objective. In addition, the report recommends that the upcoming QCPR cycle could serve as an opportunity for Member States and other stakeholders, including civil society and non-governmental organizations, to engage in a transparent and inclusive dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations development system in the global development cooperation environment.

This strategic reflection exercise could focus on the implications of the above changes in the broader development cooperation environment for the United Nations development system, particularly with regard to issues such as the functions; funding practices; capacity; partnership approaches; organizational arrangements; and governance. An important objective of such a reflection exercise would be to further define the value proposition of operational activities for development of the United Nations in the emerging global development cooperation environment, particularly in the context of the post-2015 development agenda and the outcome of the Rio+20 Conference.

The General Assembly may wish to:

1. *Recognize* the significant changes taking place in the broader environment for global development cooperation and their important implications for the United Nations development system;

2. *Recognize* the vital role and comparative advantage of the United Nations development system in accelerating progress on the MDGs and other internationally-agreed development goals, addressing inequality and supporting the most vulnerable, and advancing integration of the three pillars of sustainable development;
3. *Recognize* the unique role and comparative advantage of the United Nations system in promoting the values, principles, norms and standards of the United Nations Charter with all Member States, and in supporting Member States, at their request, to integrate these international norms in national policies;
4. *Encourage* the United Nations development system to scale up its capacity to engage in innovative partnerships with new and emerging stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector and foundations, and to intensify collaboration with the Bretton Woods Institutions, particularly the World Bank and the regional development banks;
5. *Take note* and welcome the proposal of the Secretary-General and consider engaging in a transparent and inclusive dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations development system in the rapidly changing development cooperation environment.

PART II: FUNDING OF OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT²

In the period from 1995 to 2010, overall trends have been positive for both development- and humanitarian assistance-related activities. In this 15-year period, funding for development-related activities grew by 131 per cent; humanitarian assistance-related activities by 108 per cent; and non-core development-related contributions by 350 per cent, all in real terms.

Overall, contributions for United Nations operational activities for development grew at a faster rate during this 15-year period than total ODA as reported by OECD/DAC. However, almost all of this growth was in the form of non-core resources, resulting in the core ratio for operational activities for development declining from 53 per cent in 1995 to 26 per cent in 2010.

More recently, or in the 2008 to 2011 period, total contributions for UN operational activities for development have experienced an annual average real decline of one per cent. In 2011, for example, total, core and non-core contributions for development-related activities are estimated to have declined by seven, three and nine per cent respectively.³

Several policy objectives as reflected in GA resolutions 62/208 on the TCPR and 64/289 on system-wide coherence have not yet been achieved since 2007. These objectives include: increasing the share of core funding of total resources flows to the United Nations development system; minimizing or eliminating the use of core resources for subsidizing the programme support and management costs of non-core funding; launching discussions at the level of the Executive Boards of the funds and programmes on the issue of “critical mass” of core resources; promoting balanced burden-sharing of core funding among OECD/DAC donors; and improving the predictability of overall resources flows.

The General Assembly may wish to:

1. *Stress* that core resources, because of their untied nature, continue to be the bedrock of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. In this regard, the General Assembly may wish to *reaffirm* the importance of adequate, stable and predictable core resources for enhancing the coherence, effectiveness and efficiency of United Nations operational activities for development;
2. *Note with concern* the declining trend in total contributions to the United Nations development system in the 2008 to 2011 period, as well the ever growing imbalance between unrestricted core and highly fragmented restricted non-core funding for operational activities for development and the manner in which such imbalance may distort overall programme priorities that flow from the established mandates and priorities of the respective United Nations entities;
3. *Request* the President of the Assembly to organize in the first half of 2014 a high-level policy dialogue on funding of operational activities for development of the United Nations system within the broader context of the upcoming intergovernmental discussions on the post-2015 development agenda. In this connection, the General Assembly may wish to:

- a. *Request* the Executive Boards of the funds and programmes and the governing bodies of the specialized agencies, as appropriate, to undertake a structured dialogue on how to finance the development results to be achieved in the new strategic planning cycle of the respective entities with a view to addressing core/non-core imbalances, making non-core resources more predictable and less restricted, broadening the donor base, and improving the adequacy and predictability of resources flows;
 - b. *Encourage* OECD/DAC member governments and other Member States in a position to do so, to undertake consultations on how to enhance burden-sharing of core funding for development-related activities of the United Nations system and how in particular a more equal burden-sharing can be achieved by donors shifting single-donor, programme- and project-specific non-core contributions to pooled funding mechanisms or core resources. In this regard, the General Assembly may wish to *encourage* OECD/DAC member governments and other Member States in a position to do so, to consider the possibility of adopting an alternative funding model for providing core resources to the funds and programmes such as a “voluntary indicative scale of contributions”;
 - c. *Request* the funds and programmes to propose a definition of the concept of “critical mass” of core resources to achieve priority development results and maintain core organizational capacities in the strategic plans of the entities and present a specific proposal in this regard to the respective Executive Boards at the fall session in 2013;
 - d. *Encourage* the implementation of joint programming among members of the United Nations development system through the use of core funds.
4. *Encourage* OECD/DAC member governments and other Member States in a position to do so, to increase contributions to multi-partner trust funds and One UN Funds at the global and country level with a view to enhancing the coherence, effectiveness and efficiency of the support of the United Nations development system to programme countries. In this connection, the General Assembly may wish to *request* the United Nations development system to develop an option paper highlighting existing pooled and joint funding mechanisms applied at the global, regional and country level, including a full review of the role played by One UN Funds at the country level and the future role they might be expected to play in the funding of the One Programmes, particularly in the countries adopting the delivering-as-one approach;
 5. *Request* that as a standard practice, all available and projected financial contributions for operational activities for development of the United Nations system at the country level be consolidated within a common budgetary framework which would not constitute a legal constraint on the spending authority of funds, programmes and specialized agencies, and to use the frameworks to strengthen the quality of system-wide resources planning in support of the UNDAFs. In this regard, the General Assembly may also wish to *request* resident coordinators, in support of their leadership role of resources mobilization efforts at the country level, to maintain a record of all contributions received from all funding sources for operational activities for development of the United Nations system in the respective programme country, including

those provided in non-financial terms, and provide this information in the resident coordinators' annual reports. In this regard, the General Assembly may also wish to *request* the funds and programmes and *encourage* the specialized agencies and other relevant entities of the United Nations development system to provide the necessary information on contributions to the resident coordinator;

6. *Request the* Executive Boards of the funds and programmes and the governing bodies of specialized agencies, as appropriate, to implement by the end of 2013 cost recovery rates that ensure that non-core resources pay their proportionate share of fixed-indirect costs (base structure costs) of the respective entities. In this regard, the General Assembly may wish to *request* the Executive Boards of funds and programmes to consider adopting harmonized differentiated cost recovery rates that provide incentives to donors to increase core funding and/or more flexible, and less earmarked, use of non-core contributions at the programme or sector level;
7. *Request* the Secretary-General to continue to strengthen the analytical quality of system-wide reporting on funding for United Nations operational activities for development including the coverage, timeliness, reliability, quality and comparability of system-wide data, definitions and classifications;
8. *Request* UNDG to develop a common standard for reporting on financial data based on the UNDG Results Reporting Principles adopted in 2011. Upon completion of the new standard, the relevant governing bodies of all United Nations entities could consider adopting this standard for all their agency-specific reports and a United Nations system-wide financial data warehouse should be established.

PART III: ENHANCING THE FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

As underscored by GA resolution 62/208 on the triennial comprehensive policy review, the primary responsibility for coordinating all types of external assistance, including United Nations support, lies with national authorities. The United Nations system has the duty to make its support to programme countries as coherent, effective and efficient as possible. The promotion and realization of system-wide coherence depends primarily on the functioning of three key coordination processes: the resident coordinator system (including its regional and headquarters dimensions), the UNDAF and common administrative services at the country level.

The efficacy of these three coordination processes in turn depends on the consistent and committed leadership at the headquarters level and concomitant approaches at the regional and country levels and also on the willingness of all concerned to embrace change. This section of the report provides recommendations for consideration of Member States in these three areas as well as for the work of the United Nations system in transition countries and for the delivering-as-one initiative.

(a) United Nations Resident Coordinator system

The resident coordinator system has increasingly become recognized as a key driver of system-wide coherence of operational activities for development⁴. The resident coordinator, as an impartial and neutral leader, is expected to spearhead efforts at the country level in exploring and capitalizing on opportunities for programmatic and operational synergy in the work of the United Nations system.

The ability of the resident coordinator to lead at the country level is based on General Assembly mandates translated into guidelines by the UNDG on the functioning of the resident coordinator system and the UNCT, including the Management and Accountability System. It lacks the strength of a formal administrative decision that can turn the General Assembly mandate into an authoritative instruction. A resident coordinator must therefore cope with the challenge of achieving overall coherence in programming of operational activities in an environment where entity participation is in large part voluntary, funding is not flexible and decision-making is consensus-driven. This increases the need for the resident coordinator to be a highly qualified leader with strong competencies as a consensus-builder to mobilize UNCT members around collective results, and for mutual accountability within the UNCT to be effective.

The General Assembly may wish to:

Reaffirm the importance of the full implementation of several of its previous decisions:

1. That the resident coordinator system, while managed by the United Nations Development Programme, is owned by the United Nations development system as a whole and that its functioning should be participatory, collegial and accountable (A/62/208);

2. The central role of the resident coordinator in making possible the coordination of United Nations operational activities for development at the country level to improve the effectiveness of their response to the national development priorities of programme countries, including through appropriate resources and accountability (A/62/208);
3. The need to enhance the responsibility and authority of the resident coordinators for the planning and coordination of programmes, as well as to allow them to propose, in full consultation with Governments, to the heads of the funds, programmes and specialized agencies, the amendment of country programmes and major project and programmes, where required, in order to bring them into line with the UNDAFs and new and emerging national priorities (first called for in A/50/120, paragraph 42);
4. That the country-level presence of the United Nations system should be tailored to meet the specific development needs of programme countries, as required to implement national plans, strategies and programmes to be supported the United Nations development system (A/59/250, paragraph 62);
5. That the United Nations system at the country level should be structured and composed in such a way that it corresponds to ongoing and projected cooperation programmes, in line with the priorities agreed with the national authorities, rather than to the institutional structure of the United Nations system (first called for in A/44/211, paragraph 15);
6. That the UNCT should review substantive activities including draft country programmes, sectoral programmes and projects prior to their approval by individual organizations, and should exchange experience acquired, on the understanding that the result of the work of the review committee should be submitted to national Governments for final approval through national focal points (first called for in A/50/120, paragraph 41);
7. Urges the United Nations development system to provide further financial, technical and organizational support for the resident coordinator system, and requests the Secretary-General, in consultation with the members of the United Nations Development Group/CEB, to ensure that resident coordinators have the necessary resources to fulfil their role effectively (A/62/208);
8. That coordination activities, while beneficial, represent transaction costs that are borne by both programme countries and the organizations of the United Nations system, including those of NRAs and requests the Secretary-General to report on a biennial basis to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session on the functioning of the resident coordinator system, including costs and benefits (A/62/208);

Call upon all members of the United Nations Development Group to:

1. Fully implement and monitor the implementation of the Management and Accountability System for the Resident Coordinator system, including strengthening the firewall and mutual accountability for results;

2. Use the UNCT Code of Conduct and other tools developed in conjunction with the Management and Accountability System, including the UNDG Implementation Plan and related NRA support mechanisms and plans;
3. Advise their country representatives on the importance of their contributions to the functioning of UNCTs as a collective team and to incorporate that element of their mandate into both their job descriptions and their regular performance reviews;
4. Implement the previous request of the General Assembly that the resident coordinator contributes to the regular performance appraisals of all entity representatives members of the UNCT on their contributions to its effective and efficient functioning (as per A/50/120, paragraph 37c);
5. Decentralize authority from headquarters to their country-level representatives as required to make decisions on programmatic and financial matters related to common programming activities at the country level;
6. Provide adequate, cost-effective, and predictable funding for coordination with due regard for the principle of fairness, which should reflect each agency's direct involvement based on the proportion of services used;
7. Strengthen the capacity of the resident coordinator offices with a view to enhancing country-level coherence and effectiveness, and stronger normative and operational linkages, including through improved access to expertise available in the United Nations system in response to national priorities;
8. Strengthen coordination with all development partners at the country level under the leadership of the national government in support of national development plans and priorities;
9. Enhance investment in staff development so that the United Nations development system has the right mix of capacities and skills including for high-quality policy and programme advice and the highest standards of leadership skills, management training and continuous learning to provide effective capacity development and other support in response to national needs and priorities. This would include enhanced emphasis on joint training across agencies;
10. Find more effective ways of identifying, mobilizing and deploying capacity, including knowledge and expertise, necessary to achieve tangible results in programme countries including through pooling of capacities of different entities in the same sectors and at global, regional and national levels, bearing in mind the differentiated needs of developing, least-developed, middle-income and transition countries;

Call upon the UNDP Administrator, in the exercise of responsibilities for the management of the resident coordinator system and as Chair of the United Nations Development Group to:

1. Equip the resident coordinator system with the necessary capacity and resources to provide cost-effective coordination, taking into account the differentiated needs for coordination and results delivery in different country contexts;
2. Ensure that funding the resident coordinator system will not adversely impact on the resources available for development programmes in programme countries and establish an approach to determine the threshold support necessary for effective country-level coordination;
3. Ensure where possible, that cost savings as a result of joint efforts and coordination will accrue to development programmes;
4. Continue, where cost effective, to appoint UNDP country directors to run UNDP core activities, including fund-raising, so as to ensure that resident coordinators are fully available for their system-wide tasks;
5. Continue to strengthen the resident coordinator selection, training and appraisal processes to bring and develop high calibre leaders, working on behalf of and reflecting the full spectrum of the United Nations system, including the NRAs;
6. Consider enhancing the role of the resident coordinator by adjusting the resident coordinator functions and other relevant guidelines to include the following:
 - a. To recommend to the Government, after consultation with the UNCT and relevant NRAs, as appropriate, amendments to the UNDAF or UNDAF Action Plan when it is determined that some activities are no longer aligned with the United Nations broader strategy in response to the national priorities for the country;
 - b. To recommend to the Government, after consultation with the UNCT and relevant NRAs, as appropriate, which United Nations entities should participate in the UNDAF or other common programming processes in order to ensure a coordinated and more fully responsive support to the specific development needs and priorities of the country and its expectations for the United Nations system; and
7. Commission an independent review of the Joint Office model experience to assess its overall cost effectiveness and efficiency in achieving results and examine possibilities of its broader application and report on this review to the Executive Boards of the funds and programmes during 2014;
8. *Ensure* that resident coordinator annual reports are accessible and made available in a timely manner to members of the United Nations development system, including to the extent possible measurable benefits and results of coordination;
9. *Make* available the UNDG synthesis of the resident coordinators' annual reports at the operational activities segment of the substantive session of ECOSOC;

10. *Request* UNDG to develop a set of indicators to regularly assess and report on progress in furthering programme and operational coordination at the country level to inform annual reporting to ECOSOC on the functioning of the resident coordinator system;

(b) United Nations development assistance framework (UNDAF)

In introducing the 1997 package of reforms to strengthen the effectiveness of the United Nations in the twenty-first century, the Secretary-General stressed the inter-linkages among peace and security, poverty reduction and sustainable development, and the promotion and respect for human rights. In response to his call for a coherent vision and strategy for a unified approach towards common development goals at the country level, the common country assessment (CCA) and the UNDAF were adopted as strategic planning instruments of the United Nations system.

The experience with the UNDAF as a strategic planning instrument has been mixed, as has its effectiveness in reducing duplication of activities and competition among entities for funding. Governments, according to the survey of programme countries, however, value the UNDAF as a mechanism to foster coherence within the United Nations development system. Governments also point out that the coherence promoted by the UNDAF should be carried through to the implementation stage. There is also strong demand from programme country governments for simplification and harmonization of programming instruments and processes, with a view to reducing transaction costs on national governments and other country-level partners.

The General Assembly may wish to:

1. *Affirm* full national ownership of all country-level strategic planning and programming documents for UN operational activities for development and the importance of ensuring their alignment with national plans and strategies and government planning cycles;
2. *Request* resident coordinators and UNCTs to strengthen consultations with national governments and relevant stakeholders including civil society and non-governmental organizations with a view to ensuring that the development and implementation of all United Nations planning and programming documents is fully aligned with national development needs and priorities;
3. *Reaffirm* the value of full participation of the specialized agencies and Secretariat and other non-resident agencies in the UNDAF and other planning and programming processes in accordance with their comparative advantage and technical, standard-setting, normative and other competencies and request the resident coordinators to proactively seek their participation;
4. *Request* UN development system to take measures to simplify the UNDAF and agency-specific programming instruments, processes and reporting requirements, including in the areas of work planning, progress reporting, results-based management and evaluation, with a view to reducing workload on national governments and other

- partners, decreasing the time necessary for the preparation of relevant documents, ensuring alignment with government planning cycles, improving focus on results, and promoting better division of labour within the United Nations system at the country level;
5. *Request* the funds and programmes and *encourage* the specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations development system to apply a shared programming process that is driven by the principles of national ownership and the comparative advantage of individual entities of the United Nations system at the country level, while also serving to effectively develop national capacities through results-based joint programming, ensuring a strategic focus and alignment of the programming documents to national priorities, and implementing shared quality assurance, reporting systems and monitoring and evaluation;
 6. *Request* the UNDG to develop guidelines for simplifying and harmonizing programming instruments and processes at the country level resulting in increased flexibility of the United Nations system to adapt to different country-specific situations and a considerable reduction of transaction costs for national governments and other partners. Such guidelines to be completed for the review of the Executive Boards of the funds and programmes by the end of 2013 with a view to implementation by the end of 2014;
 7. *Request* the Secretary-General to examine options for the review and approval of common country programme documents and make appropriate recommendations for consideration of the Executive Boards of the funds and programmes and ECOSOC by mid-2013 with a view to implementation by the end of 2014.

(c) Simplification and harmonization of business operations

Progress has been made in the harmonization and simplification of business practices across the United Nations system since 2007. Considerable initiatives have been carried out in this area by the HLCM and the UNDG working mechanisms and in a number of delivering-as-one and other programme countries. Results include developing solutions for joint operational modalities, an increasing number of common premises and the implementation of basic common services at the country level, which serve as best practices with the potential for system-wide replication. Nonetheless, considerable challenges remain in order to achieve greater coherence within the United Nations development system, ensuring programme implementation with the support of high quality, effective and cost efficient business operations. The existence of agency-specific regulations and rules, different enterprise resource planning systems and the predominance of vertical accountability over horizontal accountability at the country level have slowed progress towards full harmonization of business practices and reduction of transaction costs. There is an immediate requirement to address the institutional barriers to greater coherence in business operations enabling the United Nations development system to establish high quality and cost efficient business support services in the medium- and long-term.

The General Assembly may wish to:

1. *Request* the UNDG, funds and programmes and encourage the specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations to further pursue higher quality, more effective and cost efficient support services in all programme countries by reducing duplication of functions and transaction costs through consolidating support services at the country level by either delegating common functions to a lead agency, establishing a common United Nations service centre or, where feasible, outsourcing support services.
2. *Request* the funds and programmes and encourage the specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations to further invest in intra-agency rationalization of business operations. The funds and programmes shall present plans in this regard to their Executive Boards by the end of 2014;
3. *Request* the HLCM and the UNDG to plan and implement common support services based on a unified set of regulations and rules, policies and procedures, at the country, regional and headquarter levels in the functional areas of finance, human resources management, procurement, information technology management and other appropriate core services. Such a plan to be completed for review by the Executive Boards of the funds and programmes and governing bodies of specialized agencies, where appropriate, by the end of 2014 with a view to implementation by 2016;
4. *Request* the funds and programmes and *encourage* the specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations development system to ensure system-wide interoperability of enterprise resources planning systems (ERP) with the objective to provide an integrated platform for processing internal and external management information and supporting harmonized business processes and practices across the entire United Nations development system by 2016. In this regard, the General Assembly may wish to *request* the CEB, including HLCM and the UNDG, to undertake a study to examine the feasibility of establishing interoperability among the existing ERP systems of the funds and programmes and report to the Executive Boards by the end of 2014;
5. *Request* CEB, including HLCM and UNDG, to develop a common definition of operating costs, including direct and indirect costs, and a common and standardized system of cost control and report to the Executive Boards of the funds and programmes by the end of 2014. In this regard, the General Assembly may wish to *request* the funds and programmes and encourage the specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations system to establish such a harmonized cost classification system by 2016;
6. *Request* the UNDG, funds and programmes and *encourage* the specialized agencies and other United Nations entities to develop and conclude inter-agency framework agreements regulating the mutual validity of agreements between United Nations entities and third parties at the country level and delegating the authority to country teams to establish and manage common services and long-term agreements with third

parties through standardized inter-agency agreements without further approval requirements by the end of 2013;

7. *Request* UNDG to develop and begin implementing a strategy, by the end of 2013, with concrete goals and targets, to support the establishment of common premises in programme countries, with due consideration of security conditions and cost effectiveness;
8. *Request* the United Nations development system to prioritise the availability of financial and human resources to further support the effective harmonization and rationalization of business operations, including the option to develop funding mechanisms in support of innovative and sustainable business solutions supporting the further development and implementation of high quality, effective and cost efficient support services;
9. *Invite* the governing bodies of specialized agencies and other relevant United Nations entities to review and discuss above recommendations with a view to promoting their implementation by the respective entities;
10. *Call upon* the UNDG to undertake a study on the feasibility of consolidating existing learning resources into a common United Nations development system learning platform, in a cost-effective manner and submit a report to the General Assembly at its 69th session.

(d) Transition countries: *the challenge of coordination and coherence*

Promoting internal coordination within and across agencies working in transition countries was an important priority of GA resolution 62/208 on the triennial comprehensive policy review, requesting the United Nations development system to take measures, in line with the guidance provided by Member States, “that further strengthen the coherence, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and timeliness of operational activities of the United Nations development system in countries in transition from relief to development”.

The concept of transition has evolved in the past few years with greater recognition that the political and security agendas need to be integrated into planning and policy-making when it comes to the delivery of humanitarian assistance and development-related activities. Planning processes also need to be flexible and more tailored to different country/area context. The transition country/area context also requires more emphasis on continuous joint strategic planning and risk analysis among United Nations entities and their partners.

A review of various studies and evaluation reports in the preparation for the first report of the Secretary-General for the QCPR, as well as interviews with UNCT members and government officials, suggest that the strengthening of coherence in crisis and transition countries remains work-in-progress. This assessment is also supported by the findings of the survey of Resident coordinators and UNCT members conducted as part of the preparations for the first report of the Secretary-General for the QCPR⁵. The views of governments in integrated mission

countries/areas on whether United Nations support is fully supportive of national ownership are also generally mixed according to the survey of programme countries.

In addition, operations in transition environments often require recognizing the role of other partners who may be in a position to work hand-in-hand with United Nations entities and bring on board much required resources and expertise.

The General Assembly may wish to:

1. *Reaffirm* the interlinkages among development, peace and human rights and their mutually reinforcing nature in the overarching framework of the work of the United Nations;
2. *Call for* significant strengthening of strategic, programmatic and operational cooperation and coordination between the development, humanitarian assistance and peace-building pillars of the United Nations system in support of national efforts in transition countries;
3. *Recognize* that an integrated resident coordinator and humanitarian coordinator function has important benefits, facilitating linkages between the United Nations humanitarian assistance and recovery and development work, providing smoother transition for United Nations development operations and helping to build resilience;
4. *Call for* accelerated progress in deepening integration and interoperability between Secretariat entities and members of the United Nations development system, inter alia, through simplification and harmonization of programming instruments and processes and business practices, with a view to providing effective, efficient and responsive support to national efforts in transition countries;
5. *Call for* further strengthening of the coordination role of the resident coordinator in countries undergoing transition. In this regard, the General Assembly may wish to *request* the members of the United Nations development system to take immediate steps to fully implement the Management and Accountability System to enable the resident coordinator to effectively and efficiently coordinate operational activities for development of the United Nations system in transition countries;
6. *Request* the UN development system to assign priority to providing adequate and sustained financial and technical support to ensure effective strategic and operational planning and coordination capacity in resident coordinator offices in countries undergoing transition;
7. *Request* the United Nations development system to review and strengthen the peace and development advisory system to support resident coordinators and UNCTs in transition countries;
8. *Request* members of the United Nations development system to further delegate authority in the areas of programming and allocation of resources to field representatives of United Nations entities in order to enable the respective entities to

- respond effectively and efficiently to national needs and priorities in transition countries;
9. *Encourage* OECD/DAC member governments to commit to the principle of shared risk in crisis and transition countries using existing mechanisms creatively to cover the higher operational and security risks and costs associated with such contexts;
 10. *Encourage* the United Nations development system to strengthen operational partnerships with other multilateral organizations and other partners working in transition countries, particularly the World Bank.

(e) Delivering-as-one

The independent evaluation of lessons learned from the delivering-as-one (DaO) was conducted in 2011 – 2012 in accordance with the mandate provided by GA resolution 62/208 on the triennial comprehensive policy review, and based on modalities endorsed by GA resolution 64/289 on system-wide coherence.

The main conclusions and lessons learned from the independent evaluation are the following:

The voluntary adoption of the DaO approach by national governments of pilot countries has greatly enhanced their ownership and leadership of the reform process and United Nations programmes. DaO also allows the United Nations system to better address cross-cutting issues (for example, human rights and gender equality) with the added benefit of enhancing its ability to support the governments on other multidisciplinary development issues (e.g. poverty, child mortality or local governance).

While other United Nations reform initiatives have focused on specific aspects of programming, funding, management and accountability, the uniqueness of DaO is that it considers all these aspects in an interlinked package. The package also comprises a variety of other innovations that are potentially useful for the United Nations development system as a whole, for example, new ways of dealing with joint programmes and joint programming, shared monitoring systems, local joint procurement, common communication strategies and the UNCT codes of conduct.

The One Programme, One Leader, One Voice and One Budget approaches have not led to one line of accountability, and this has implications for the measurement of performance. Given the fact that each United Nations organization has its own governance structure, mandate and culture, individual agencies remain the primary unit of account for performance and management. Vertical accountability prevails over horizontal accountability.

Resident coordinators and UNCT members in pilot countries, with the support of resident coordinator offices, are approaching the limits of what can be achieved in terms of reducing transaction costs and increased efficiency through country level innovations covered by the One Office dimension. Since many high-level systemic elements have not been changed, the marginal cost of enhanced coordination at country level is increasing. On more than one occasion, local solutions have presented management challenges at corporate levels. In many areas, only organizational change can make country level coordination easier and less costly.

The One Fund is a valuable addition to traditional funding modalities and offers the potential to address a broader range of the needs and priorities of programme countries than do traditional core and non-core funding, which are limited to those addressed by the agencies mobilizing the resources. There are, however, concerns about the sustainability of these funding instruments.

Recommendations and lessons learned from the independent evaluation of “delivering-as-one” have been taken into consideration in other sections of this report. Concerning the “delivering-as-one” approach, the General Assembly may wish to:

1. *Take note* of the outcome of the independent evaluation of lessons learned from “delivering-as-one” presented in the Note of the Secretary-General A/66/859;
2. *Acknowledge* the experience of the voluntary adoption of the “delivering-as-one” pilot approach by a number of programme countries as an important initiative for enhancing the coherence, effectiveness and efficiency of the United Nations development system, and as a real-world testing ground to strengthen national ownership and leadership in the operational activities for development of the United Nations system and achieve strategic results, especially on cross-cutting issues such as human rights, gender equality and HIV/AIDS as well as in broad sectoral and thematic areas, such as, economic development and the environment;
3. *Emphasize* that the principle of voluntary adoption of “delivering-as-one” and “no-one-size-fits-all” approach should be maintained, so that individual programme countries can tailor their approach to partnership with the United Nations system in a way that most suits their national needs, priorities and planning modalities as well as the achievement of the MDGs, other internationally-agreed development goals and the post-2015 development agenda;
4. *Encourage* the United Nations system to support programme countries that wish to adopt the “delivering-as-one” approach with an integrated package of support comprising: guidance on programming, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting; innovative funding mechanisms, drawing on the lessons from the Expanded Funding Window and the One Fund mechanisms; support to the resident coordinator system in line with the Management and Accountability System; and simplification and harmonization of business practices.

PART IV: PROGRESS IN ENHANCING DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS

The central purpose of development cooperation of the United Nations system is to contribute to the development of national capacities in programme countries. This means that development operations of the United Nations system must be responsive to national development plans, policies and priorities, the only viable frame of reference for programming operational activities for development.

This section of the report provides recommendations for consideration of Member States in the areas of capacity building and development, gender equality and women's empowerment, South-South cooperation, the regional dimension of development, results-based management and planning, and evaluation.

(a) Capacity-building and development

In successive resolutions on the comprehensive policy review, the GA has consistently underlined the importance of strengthening national capacities and, as part of that effort, providing coherent United Nations system support and making optimal use of existing national capacities and systems.

Nearly all governments in a survey of programme countries were inclined to agree with the statement that the United Nations has been effective in developing national capacities. Nonetheless, capacity development was one of the three most frequently chosen areas by programme countries where they felt that the United Nations might make itself more effective and where it should be paying more attention. The findings of the survey suggest that the achievements of the United Nations development system in the area of capacity development did not seem to be reflected in the usage of national systems, with only about 10 per cent of the governments agreeing that United Nations entities use national procurement, financial, monitoring and reporting systems, or national evaluation capacities "as much as possible".

The United Nations development system should also be able to respond to a growing demand from programme country governments for specialized policy advisory support from the United Nations entities to deal with emerging global challenges. This includes enabling countries to take full advantage of the United Nations development system's normative, standard-setting, analytical and operational mandates and capacities, as well as the humanitarian dimension.

The General Assembly may wish to:

1. *Reaffirm* the importance of national ownership and leadership of operational activities for development of the United Nations system;
2. Call upon the funds, programmes and encourage specialized agencies of the United Nations system to practice greater transparency at all levels to facilitate mutual accountability as the basis for successful partnerships;
3. *Call upon* the funds and programmes and *encourage* the specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations system engaged in operational activities for development to strengthen

their focus on developing national capacities for development planning, implementation and evaluation with emphasis on the effective integration of the economic, environmental, and social dimensions of sustainable development. In this regard, countries should have full access to the mandates and resources of the United Nations development system, including the knowledge base and expertise of all resident and non-resident agencies;

4. *Recognize* that the achievement of several internationally-agreed development goals are of a transboundary nature and can best be addressed through global, interregional, regional and sub-regional cooperation, including South-South cooperation. In this regard, the General Assembly may wish to *encourage* the United Nations development system to take further measures to promote South-South and triangular cooperation in regular country-level programme implementation drawing on the vast experience of middle-income countries and other programme countries in sharing of knowledge, technology transfer and foster regional integration;
5. *Request* the funds and programmes and *encourage* the specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations system to further enhance institutional capacity development by strengthening and expanding the links between individual United Nations entities and line ministries, while preserving the balance between inclusivity and greater coherence of the United Nations system at the country level;
6. *Encourage* the United Nations development system to further promote, develop and support knowledge management systems so that recipient countries can avail themselves of knowledge and expertise that is not easily accessible at the country level, including resources at headquarters and regional level and from Secretariat and other non-resident agencies;
7. *Request* the funds and programmes and *encourage* the specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations system to expand the use of national systems, and in consultation with national governments, to develop and implement strategies to invest in national systems with a view to their future adoption by the United Nations development system. In this regard, the General Assembly may wish to *request* the funds and programmes and *encourage* the specialized agencies and other relevant United Nations entities to develop a strategy by the end of 2014 for the utilization of national systems, based upon targeted capacity assessments of national systems in relevant areas including programme planning, financial management, procurement, statistics, monitoring, evaluation and audit;
8. *Request* UNDG to design and implement standardized capacity assessments for each relevant area (procurement, statistics, financial management, reporting, evaluation and audit) by the end of 2014, taking into account the practices of other development partners, to arrive at informed decisions on the capacity of national systems, to identify the need for further capacity development, where required, and to develop targeted timeframes for fully using national systems in each programme country, taking into account the particular situation and requirements of countries in conflict and transition. In this regard, the General Assembly may wish to *request* the funds and programmes and *encourage* the specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations system, where the capacity assessments indicate acceptable

systems, to achieve full utilization of national systems for programme implementation in all programme countries by the end of 2016 and to report back biennially on the progress achieved.

(b) Gender equality and women's empowerment

Gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system has increased in large measure since the 2007 TCPR⁶. However, as discussed in the first report of the Secretary-General for the QCPR, the effectiveness of the gender mainstreaming remains hampered by several factors, such as lack of leadership commitment, weak accountability for results, limited staff capacity, limited knowledge, insufficient financial resources and undeveloped reporting systems. A recent review of the use of the Gender Scorecard also indicates that no UNCT is meeting the average target for gender mainstreaming, with the strongest performance in the area of planning and programming, but limited progress when it comes to gender budgeting, accountability, monitoring and evaluation and partnerships.

The General Assembly may wish to:

1. *Request* members of the United Nations development system to substantially increase the investment in and focus on gender equality and the empowerment of women outcomes and outputs in programmes in United Nations development frameworks, such as the UNDAF, including through the full and effective implementation of the UNDAF guidelines on gender equality and the empowerment of women;
2. *Call for* the full implementation of the United Nations System Wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) on gender equality and women's empowerment as an accountability framework to be applied throughout the United Nations system. In this regard, the General Assembly may wish to *recognize* the key role played by UN-Women in promoting accountability for mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment in operational activities for development of the United Nations system;
3. *Call upon* the United Nations development system to acquire sufficient technical expertise for gender mainstreaming in programme planning and implementation to ensure that gender dimensions are systematically addressed and, in this regard, to draw on the gender expertise available in the United Nations system, including in UN-Women, to assist in the preparation of the UNDAF and other development programming frameworks;
4. *Call upon* UN entities to ensure that the various existing accountability mechanisms provide for more coherent, accurate and effective monitoring, evaluation and reporting on gender equality results and on the tracking of gender-related resource allocation and expenditure, including through the promotion of the use, where appropriate, of gender markers, and by encouraging the use by United Nations country teams of gender accountability mechanisms to assist and improve their performance at the country level;
5. *Encourage* the United Nations development system to collect, analyze and disseminate comparable data, disaggregated by gender and age, in a regular and systematic manner to guide country programming, to support the preparation of organization-wide and country-level

documents, such as the strategic, programmatic and results-based frameworks, and to continue to refine their tools for measuring progress and impact;

6. *Request* the United Nations development system to expand and strengthen the use of the UNCT Performance Indicators on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (Scorecard) as a mandatory planning and reporting tool for all UNCTs, with an annual review of Scorecard recommendations so that they are systematically included in UNCT work plans;
7. *Request* resident coordinators to provide in their annual reports adequate and precise information on progress in gender mainstreaming and gender-specific programming, including the results demonstrated by the Scorecard, as well as progress made at national level in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women in accordance with national development plans, policies and priorities;
8. *Encourage* the United Nations development system to institute greater accountability for gender equality in evaluations conducted by UNCTs, in particular, ensuring the application of the United Nations Evaluation Group gender equality-related norms and standards as well as guidance on the integration of a gender perspective in evaluations.

(c) South-South cooperation

In 2008, the Secretary-General laid out a vision to mainstream support to South-South cooperation in corporate policy instruments and strategies of United Nations entities. The 2009 undg guidelines for the preparation of UNDAFs and the undg priorities for 2010-2011 both included South-South and triangular cooperation as vehicles for national capacity development. On the urging of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, a related framework of operational guidelines on South-South and triangular cooperation has been adopted with a view to enhance the mainstreaming of this approach in United Nations operational activities for development.

However, some global guidelines remain to be translated into concrete action at the country level. A Joint Inspection Unit evaluation in 2011 showed that out of 109 UNDAFs, only 17 explicitly refer to South-South cooperation and five had a specific South-South cooperation-related outcome. Six out of 24 UNDAFs starting in 2010 refer to South-South cooperation.

An important message of the first report of the Secretary-General for the QCPR was that the time has come for United Nations entities to transform South-South cooperation from an issue of special attention into a modality for regular, day-to-day programming within the United Nations system.

The General Assembly may wish to:

1. *Reaffirm* the comparative advantage of the United Nations development system as a relevant partner in facilitating and promoting South-South and triangular cooperation due to its universal presence in programme countries and the organization's importance as an impartial partner in supporting the achievement of the internationally-agreed development goals, including the MDGs;

2. *Request* the United Nations development system to strengthen support to South-South and triangular cooperation, drawing on the considerable experiences of middle-income countries and facilitating knowledge exchange, peer learning, technology transfer and regional integration as important contributions to national capacity development. In this regard, the General Assembly may wish to *request* the United Nations development system to capitalize on its particular comparative advantage in this area and support programme countries under national leadership through targeted capacity development of national systems with the objective to maximize the impact of South-South and triangular cooperation;
3. *Request* the funds and programmes and *encourage* the specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations system to mainstream South-South and triangular cooperation into regular country-level programming of operational activities for development, strengthening support mechanisms at global and regional level, including drawing upon the knowledge networks of global entities and capacities of the United Nations regional commissions and the UNDG Regional Teams;
4. *Request* the funds and programmes and *encourage* the specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations system to identify administrative rules, regulations and practices that prevent them from participating in South-South cooperation, propose solutions and report to their respective governing bodies by the end of 2013.

(d) Regional coordination

The 2007 TCPR emphasized the need for United Nations agencies to strengthen cooperation at the regional level. The ECOSOC-mandated regional coordination mechanisms (RCMs) and the UNDG Regional Teams, chaired by the regional commissions and the regional UNDG, respectively, constitute the main instruments for United Nations coordination at the regional level. The RCMs focus on policy, normative and analytical work in a regional context and regional and sub-regional programming. The UNDG Regional Teams provide strategic direction, programmatic and policy advice and oversight, technical support, quality support and advice (QSA) performance management and trouble shooting to Resident coordinators and UNCTs, as well as special attention on the UNDAF process and joint programming.

The linkages between the two regional support mechanisms and the resident coordinators and UNCTs at the country level remain work-in-progress as reflected in the surveys of programme country governments and resident coordinators and UNCTs respectively. The findings of the two surveys could be seen as an indication that programme country governments and UNCTs feel there is an urgent need for regional support structures to demonstrate their value-added more effectively.

The General Assembly may wish to:

1. *Request* the United Nations regional commissions and the UNDG Regional Teams to enhance their support to resident coordinators and country teams through demand-driven advisory services including with regard to the regional and sub-regional dimension of national development goals, and based on effective and efficient division of labour;

2. *Encourage* resident coordinators and UNCTs to draw more upon the normative-support work and policy expertise that exists within the United Nations regional commissions. To facilitate such collaboration, and in consultation with the regional commissions and the UNDG Regional Teams, the management of the resident coordinator system should organize on a pilot basis annual inductions for newly appointed resident coordinators in the regions at the headquarters of the regional commissions followed by a review after two years of the value-added;
3. *Take note* of the assistance provided by UNDG Regional Teams to UNCTs across a range of areas (including quality assurance and support to country-level programming and UNDAFs, appraisal of resident coordinators, trouble shooting at country level) and *request* the UNDG Regional Teams to substantially enhance their support to resident coordinators and UNCTs in providing expertise in the areas of operational support services, including the development of change management plans in connection with the implementation of common support services at the country level, facilitating headquarter-led guidance and business operations strategies and exchange of best practices;
4. *Emphasize* that the United Nations development system should further leverage its capacities at the regional level to enhance coherent and integrated support to countries emerging from conflict, particularly in Africa, with a view to preventing the spill over and recurrence of the conflict in the region/sub-region, and contribute to national reconciliation, post-conflict recovery and sustainable development;
5. *Stress* that the coherence and effectiveness of United Nations operational activities for development at the regional level could be enhanced by strengthening interaction between the Regional Coordination Mechanisms and the UNDG Regional Teams;
6. *Request* the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the United Nations regional commissions and the UNDG, to carry out a study and provide recommendations on how to provide regional support to UNCTs in the most effective manner;
7. *Request* UNDG and UNDG Regional Teams in close cooperation with the regional commissions to develop and implement a strategy by the end of 2014 for co-location of regional and sub-regional offices of funds and programmes and specialized agencies, with the objective to establish common premises of all United Nations entities at the regional and sub-regional level, wherever possible, and where security conditions permit, by the end of 2016.

(e) Results-based management and planning

Since the 2007 TCPR, there have been increased efforts on the part of the United Nations development system to enhance results-based management (RBM) within individual agencies and at the country level, through the UNDAF, as one of its five programming principles. Further impetus for improving RBM comes from demands in both programme and donor countries for the United Nations development system to demonstrate that it is achieving its objectives, that it does so efficiently and that its activities are relevant to the needs and priorities of programme countries and contribute to improved and sustainable development outcomes.

Analysis conducted for the preparation of the first report of the Secretary-General for the QCPR, as well as several other studies, have found that reporting on results within the United Nations system is not as effective as it should be. There are gaps, particularly at the country level, in the way in which results are understood by those who own and manage them; how results are used for decision-making; and communicating results to stakeholders including national partners. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E), which is an integral part of the RBM life-cycle of results, is also not performed consistently across United Nations entities and resources for M&E, in many instances, are inadequate.

The General Assembly may wish to:

1. *Request* the Secretary-General to intensify the efforts in strengthening and institutionalizing results-based management in the United Nations development system, with the objective of improving development results as well as organizational effectiveness. This includes simplifying, streamlining and harmonizing results-based management systems, including performance indicators, to eliminate the burden of multiple reporting, scaling-up capacity development for results-based management especially at the country level, strengthening knowledge networks and communities of practice for results-based management, and investing in developing better guidance and techniques in measuring and evaluating impact in areas that are not easily amenable to measurement;
2. *Request* the UNDG to articulate and implement by the end of 2014 a more robust results-focused approach to development cooperation that would streamline and improve the planning, measurement and reporting on system-wide results, e.g. using commonly accepted performance indicators as well as a common format or a 'One UN Results Report' (or scorecard) at the country level and provide a standardized results-based management terminology. A 'One UN Results Report' at the country level in lieu of agency-specific results reporting, as a standard practice in most programme countries, would ensure reporting on system-wide results as well as simplification and harmonization of results reporting. To report on progress on system-wide results, the development of a common monitoring system for results shall be fast-tracked and completed by the UNDG by the end of 2014. In this regard, the General Assembly may wish to *invite* the Executive Boards of the funds and programmes and the governing bodies of specialized agencies and other relevant United Nations entities to engage in a focused dialogue on how to balance the need for reporting on system-wide results with the current agency-specific reporting requirements, most effectively;
3. *Request* the UNDG to fully implement the Management and Accountability System and achieving alignment between results-based management and accountability by the end of 2013. This includes finding ways to strengthen the horizontal accountability of UNCTs for delivering and reporting on system-wide results at the country level. In this regard, the General Assembly may wish to *request* the UNDG to ensure adequate balance between horizontal and vertical accountability for results-based management and reporting at the country level;
4. *Request* the funds and programmes and *encourage* specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations system to focus on developing and sustaining a results culture in their

respective organizations. This includes identifying and implementing suitable incentives for results-based management, removing current disincentives to developing a results culture, investing in developing capacities and competencies for results-based management, and periodically reviewing their results-based management systems;

5. *Request* the relevant mechanisms charged with responsibility for independent system-wide evaluation, to conduct an independent evaluation of results-based management in the United Nations development system and make recommendations to the General Assembly. The evaluation shall assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of results-based management, taking into account the changes in the global environment, in international development cooperation, in funding practices and reporting requirements affecting the funds, programmes, specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations development system, and international trends in results-based management. The results of the evaluation shall inform efforts by UNDG to strengthen and institutionalize results-based management in the United Nations development system as well as feed into the next quadrennial comprehensive policy review.

f) Evaluation

Evaluation units in the United Nations system often possess limited staff capacity, and only few agencies such as UNAIDS, UNICEF, UNDP, UN-Women and UNFPA, have been able to decentralize their evaluation work. The financial and human resources for most evaluation units in the United Nations system are limited to their day-to-day work and participation in system-wide, joint or multi-agency evaluations often means working without extra resources.

While the 2007 TCPR resolution stressed the importance of evaluating the UNDAF, a relatively small number of countries conducted full evaluations. The majority chose to conduct a mid-term review instead, considering it more useful, with a view to stimulating the implementation process and as an input to the preparations of the next UNDAF, while also being less costly and time-consuming.

In 2011, in response to GA resolution 64/289 on system-wide coherence, the Secretary-General commissioned a comprehensive review of the existing institutional framework for independent system-wide evaluation of operational activities for development⁷.

This review assessed the possibilities for the United Nations to improve independent system-wide evaluation mechanisms in order to provide system-wide evaluations, which are independent, credible and useful, on priority strategic and operational questions or issues facing the United Nations system.

The review concluded that, while there is a demand for independent system-wide evaluation, the existing institutional framework is inadequate; no clear leadership or strategy for independent system-wide evaluation; coordination of independent system-wide evaluations has been ad hoc and inefficient; and the usefulness of reports has been variable. The review further concluded that the politicization of independent system-wide evaluation has been an obstacle to progress, but that there is willingness in the United Nations system to have substantive discussions and dialogue on independent system-wide evaluation.

The General Assembly may wish to:

1. *Call upon* members of the United Nations development system to support strengthened national ownership and leadership of evaluation of operational activities for development at the country level. In this regard, the General Assembly may wish to *request* the United Nations entities to intensify efforts to build national capacity in programme countries for evaluation of operational activities for development. Also, in this regard, the General Assembly may wish to *request* UNEG and the UNDG to develop guidelines for further strengthening of national evaluation capacities for operational activities for development of the United Nations system;
2. *Call upon* members of the United Nations development system to bolster institutional and organizational capacity for evaluation of operational activities for development, to adhere to the evaluation norms and standards of UNEG, to prioritize allocation of financial resources for evaluation, to increase training and skills-upgrading of United Nations staff and implementing partners in results-based management and monitoring and evaluation methods, and to ensure effective utilization of evaluation results;
3. *Note with appreciation* the findings and recommendations of the independent review (A/66/852) commissioned by the Secretary-General in response to General Assembly resolution 64/289 on system-wide coherence on a comprehensive assessment of the existing institutional framework for system-wide evaluation of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. In this regard, the General Assembly may wish to *reaffirm* that further strengthening of system-wide evaluation within the United Nations development system should be based on utilizing and enhancing existing mechanisms;
4. *Reaffirm* the need to strengthen independent system-wide evaluation of operational activities for development. In this regard, the General Assembly may wish to *recognize* that the Joint Inspection Unit is the only entity within the United Nations system with a specific mandate for independent system-wide evaluation and encourage the Unit to vigorously continue its ongoing reform efforts;
5. *Consider* further steps to clarify what Member States want to achieve through independent system-wide evaluation of operational activities for development of the United Nations system and how this can be best achieved;
6. *Welcome* enhanced coordination and exchange of experiences among United Nations entities engaged in system-wide evaluation efforts, in particular, the Joint Inspection Unit, the United Nations Evaluation Group, the Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office for Internal Oversight Services and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs;
7. *Request* UNEG, in cooperation with members of the interim coordination mechanism and other United Nations evaluation entities, to develop by end of 2013 a common policy and methodological framework for system-wide evaluation of operational activities for development;

8. *Request* the Executive Boards of the funds and programmes and *encourage* the governing bodies of specialized agencies and other relevant United Nations entities, including UNEG, to intensify the use of UNDAF and system-wide evaluations in lieu of agency-specific evaluations of operational activities for development, wherever possible, particularly in programme countries adopting the delivering-as-one approach.

PART V: QCPR follow-up and monitoring

Lessons learned from the preparatory process for the 2012 QCPR underscore the importance of underpinning future analytical reporting to Member States for the QCPR in an effective and evidence-based monitoring system, anchored in the collection and analysis of country-level information, data and indicators. A more robust approach to annual monitoring of QCPR implementation is particularly important since operational activities for development of the United Nations system account for nearly two-thirds of all system-wide activities of the organization. The establishment of an effective monitoring system would also reduce information asymmetry between Member States and United Nations entities and foster greater accountability for the implementation of the QCPR resolution.

The establishment of an effective monitoring system for the QCPR will require further strengthening of the institutional capacity in the United Nations Secretariat for policy review and system-wide statistics, analysis and reporting of funding flows for operational activities for development.

The General Assembly may wish to:

1. *Emphasize* the importance of the United Nations Secretariat establishing an effective and evidence-based monitoring system for the implementation of the QCPR resolution;
2. *Emphasize* the need to strengthen the institutional capacity of the United Nations Secretariat to undertake high-quality monitoring, evaluation and reporting on QCPR implementation as well as the analysis of system-wide funding flows for operational activities for development, with a view to facilitating informed intergovernmental deliberations and decision-making in the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council;
3. *Request* the Secretary-General to develop an evidence-based monitoring and reporting framework for the implementation of the QCPR resolution anchored in the collection of comprehensive country-level information, data and indicators and report on an annual basis to ECOSOC on progress made in the implementation of the QCPR resolution. In this regard, the General Assembly may wish to *request* the Secretary-General to conduct biennially a survey of programme country governments on the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the United Nations development system as an input to the monitoring of the implementation of the QCPR resolution. In this regard, the General Assembly may also wish to *request* the Secretary-General to consolidate the annual reports on QCPR implementation and funding in a single annual publication on operational activities for development of the United Nations system to facilitate informed intergovernmental deliberations at the operational activities segment of the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council;
4. *Invite* the Secretary-General to submit a proposal to the General Assembly in 2013 for strengthening the capacity of the United Nations Secretariat for policy review and

system-wide statistics, analysis and reporting on funding flows for operational activities for development of the United Nations system with the objective of enhancing the effectiveness of policy guidance and oversight provided by the General Assembly and ECOSOC of United Nations operational activities for development.

Endnotes

¹ The second report of the Secretary-General on funding of operational activities for development of the United Nations system will contain more detailed recommendations in this area.

² For detailed analysis on funding of United Nations operational activities for development, please refer to the 2012 Secretary-General's report (A/67/94-E/2012/80).

³ See UNDESA 2011 Funding Update, July 2012.

⁴ There are currently 130 United Nations Resident Coordinators, who are also UNDP Resident Representatives; 93 Designated Officials for security; 32 Resident Coordinators/Humanitarian Coordinators; 11 Deputy Special Representatives of the Secretary-General/Resident Coordinators/Humanitarian Coordinators; 3 Deputy Special Representatives of the Secretary-General/Resident Coordinators; 1 Executive Representative of the Secretary-General/Resident Coordinator; and 2 Designated Security Coordinators.

⁵ Ten governments in integrated mission countries/areas participated in the survey.

⁶ Gender mainstreaming is *"the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels"*, but it is also recognized that gender units or focal points are still needed and that *"gender mainstreaming does not replace the need for targeted women specific policies and programmes or positive legislation"*

⁷ Independent System-Wide Evaluation Mechanisms, Comprehensive Review of the Existing Institutional Framework for System-Wide Evaluation of Operational Activities for Development of the United Nations System Mandated in General Assembly Resolution 64/289, Final Report, by: Angela Bester and Charles Lusthaus, April 2012.