

Additional ITA Comments and Reflections on the Functions paper

- The functions paper overlooks some key functions including common services, data collection and maintenance, monitoring and compliance, joint advocacy, etc.
- Regarding the issue the humanitarian assistance versus the development function, it needs to be said that there is a disconnection fundamentally due to the failures of the humanitarian function.
- On the issue of integrated data collection, the main focus should be in developing the capacities of national partners in "developing countries": any quality of data in the long run depends on these capacities.
- ECOSOC should provide the function of "thought leadership" and the UNDS should "implement".
- Regional commissions could have an increased role in coordinating the UNDS in the regions which currently is not the case ...the regional commissions currently "essentially" produce reports whilst they have an important "stock" of specialized knowledge.
- UNDS should definitely provide leadership on further formulation and implementation strategies of SDGs. As it now stands, SDGs are not yet fully understood at Country level, and among the stakeholders. It is very comprehensive and holistic, need integrated approach and yet we could easily lose focus.
- UNDS will need to define more specifically on how to take this leadership role. This is a subject for further discussion.
- UNDS should act as a clearing house, on the various SDGs Indicators. UN Statistical Division certainly is an important player. However the indicators, measurement etc. themselves have to be further developed and elaborated facilitated by UNDS.
- First and foremost it is important to utilize or even undergo a thorough evaluation at UNDS and its entities. How to restructure and make them more effective and efficient should also be based on careful evaluation and assessment.
- UNDS should not be expected to overtake everything in the development process for SDGs. UNDS is certainly ill equipped to do so if based on the existing conditions, it will take a massive reform and restructuring effort to bring the System to perform as the overarching Development System for SDGs.
- It is more important to strengthen Country Office, not by the presence of each of the UNDS entities but by the quality of the policy support and program implementation for some countries (such as LDCs). The presence can be rationalized.
- Assess further the roles and effectiveness of Developing as One and RC at country level.
- There needs to be greater emphasis on harmonization, complementarity of the UN Agencies to deliver TOGETHER AS ONE at the country level.

- Streamline operational procedures within the UN SYSTEM , eliminating unnecessary steps and procedures which hinder and delay implementation of different required actions, avoiding BUREAUCRACY and providing for a more swift and efficient system.
- it is also important to focus on functions that would reflect and lead to tangible impact from UN interventions, I would like to mention and reiterate here what I have addressed during our plenary session with the Heads and Members of State: Youth Employment (SME) s and Poverty Alleviation (namely in LDCs), South- South Cooperation, and Social Safety Nets, I have experienced this in reality, and the visibility and measurable impact were very positive.
- Structure projects and interventions according to Governments needs assessment to achieve better results.(governments in the driving seat)
- Revisit system wide reporting, and control measures.
- Introduce multidimensional approach to poverty pockets (labour intensive projects, Microfinance) a holistic and integrated approach would have a higher impact.
- More clarity on who does what and how and moving from compliance to performance and impact Business as Usual is not viable any more, hence, an integrated approach is critical.
- Alignment and support to National Priorities is key to achieving better and more tangible results, with strong dissemination to the public to achieve better visibility for the UN at country, regional and global levels (More VISIBILITY)
- The use of core resources should not be limited to the normative functions of UNDS. There must be a critical mass of core resources to allow UNDS to function as a neutral system at the service of all member states. Neutrality is not only necessary for the normative functions of the UNDS. As an example, it is also important for policy advice to be totally neutral.
- Regrouping of entities could be a good idea but should be presented in a way that guarantees that we will not end up creating new silos.
- Concerning the issue of linkages between humanitarian and development. It is important to ensure that the humanitarian is framed within a long-term national development strategy responding to exceptional situations. It is also crucial that what is urgent does not take over what is important. We have to make sure that firewalls are created and it is probably better to keep the Humanitarian and Development in separate accounts.
- To enhance system-wide coherence, the UNDS needs to streamline the documentation process among its various agencies. Unified terms and approaches should be adopted as wide as possible in the documentation of various agencies. All UN agencies should be cautious with the use of internal jargon except for in some professional areas such as medical, finance, legal, or accounting area. The complicated internal jargon system just aggravates the problem of silos and lack of coordination in UNDS.
- There is no need to change the name of UNDS to reflect its shift of focus on sustainable development.

- To promote knowledge sharing with greater involvement of member states, rather than the conceited term of “thought leadership”. Knowledge sharing at least has two advantages. First, the knowledge production and sharing process has never been just a purely theoretical process. It should be evidence-based with country practices and experiences constituting an important portion of the knowledge producing process. In this aspect, the middle-income developing countries such as China, India, and Brazil have much to contribute in the knowledge producing and transfer process. International institutions should and also can not monopoly such a process of knowledge sharing. Second, any knowledge sharing targeted at specific recipient country need the active involvement of national government and local communities, with improvised terms and conditions based on various local contexts. Knowledge sharing is a two-way process rather than one-sided transferring.
- Emphasis needs to be put on the role of Middle-income developing countries and the rising importance of new type of South-South Cooperation. There is very rare mentioning of this point in the UNDS, which will be definitely crucial for it to implement its mandate and improve performance.
- For global challenges that require collective actions, there first needs a lessons-learned process from past major crises of global concern, such as the Ebola crisis, Arab Spring leading to great regional instability, and refugee crisis in Europe, etc. Considering the compound nature of such challenges and difficulty of setting up one unique agency responsible for addressing them, an *ad hoc* approach may be more feasible. Based on the experiences and lessons learned from the tackling of Ebola crisis by international community, some top level coordination around the world is workable when such kind of crises emerge. In the meantime, some key agencies with mandates covering this aspect should build capacity for crisis preparedness and early warning, such as WHO, UNDP, UNISDR, etc.
- The linkage between humanitarian and development areas. I agree that it’s critically important to make the humanitarian work aligned with the long-term development goals. Yet it’s also crucial for the UNDS to bear in mind that in short- and middle-term humanitarian assistance may sometimes become a major area for promoting development. It should be a precondition for sustained development to address vulnerability and fragility and strengthen resilience in the society.
- While maintaining its partnership with the old IFIs, in particular the Bretton Woods system institutions, the UNDS should also attach importance to some new MDBs, such as the AIIB and NDB. The specific focus of the AIIB on infrastructure development may provide great resources for alleviating the bottle-neck problem constraining development in many developing countries. And the NDB, as first MDB sponsored by middle-income developing countries, may have greater role in promoting new type of South-South Cooperation.
- Too much an ‘organization centric’ view. The larger issue is one of policy coherence between policies favored by BWIs and by the UN system. In recent times the gulf has been smaller than before, but one must still attend to the need for better coordination mechanisms.