

Review of the Role and Quality of the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs)

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List of Abbreviations

AWP	Annual Work Plans
BWI	Bretton Woods Institutions
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CCF	UN Country Coordination Fund
CPD	Country Programme Document
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DGO	Development Group Office
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
ExCom	Executive Committee of UNDG
ExCom Agencies	ExCom member agencies - UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFIs	International Financing Institutions
ILO	International Labour Office
JASZ	Joint Assistance Strategy for Zambia
MDGs	UN Millennium Development Goals
M&EF	Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
MFA	Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MYFF	Multi-Year Funding Frameworks
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
PGQS	Policy and Global Quality Standards Cluster
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
QSA	Quality Support and Assurance Mechanism (of DGO)
RC	UN Resident Coordinator
RCO	Resident Coordinator's Office
RCS	Resident Coordinator System
RDT	Regional Director's Team
RM	Results Matrix
SG	UN Secretary-General
SRC	UNDP's funds to Support the Resident Coordinator
SWAPs	Sector-Wide Approaches
TCPR	UNGA's Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review
UNCT	UN Country Team
UNDAF	UN Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	UN Development Group
UNDGO	UN Development Group Office
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNESCO	UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFPA	UN Fund for Population Activities
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	UN International Children's Fund
UNS	UN (Development) System
UNSSC	UN System Staff College
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation

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Executive Summary

This Review of the role and quality of the UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) was commissioned by the UN Development Group Office (DGO) and carried out by the Overseas Development Institute between August 2005 and May 2006. The Review ran concurrently and in cooperation with an associated but separate evaluation of the UN Country Coordination Fund (CCF), which was jointly commissioned by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the UK Department for International Development (DFID).

The UNDAF is the common strategic framework for the operational activities of the UN system at country level. It aims to provide a collective, coherent and integrated UN system response to national priorities and needs, including Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRSSs) and equivalent national strategies. A key component of the UNDAF process is the formulation of a Results Matrix (RM), which forms the UN's business plan at country level.

The Review had four objectives: first, to improve the content and relevance of future UNDG global support for UNDAF processes at country level; second, to evaluate the degree to which second generation UNDAFs enhanced the UN's strategic role at country level; third, to assess the effectiveness of UNDAFs in promoting better harmonisation and alignment at country level; and fourth, to develop a set of criteria for assessing the overall quality of UNDAFs. The findings for the first objective are largely based on those of the CCF evaluation.

The Review found that, in terms of content and relevance of UNDG global support, there was a positive verdict on the work that DGO does to support country teams. DGO's activities for reform include training, policy development, guidance and sharing of experiences, as well as direct funding of coordination activities. The CCF report concluded that DGO has been efficient in its operations and a careful steward of resources. The main constraints to the reform process have not been financial but rather institutional (e.g. inter-agency cooperation versus individual agencies' interests, non-aligned incentive systems), although the strengthening of UN Country Teams and of the role of Resident Coordinators to achieve integrated country programmes may require additional funding.

The Review used the findings of two previous evaluations, complemented by a literature review of sixteen countries and direct visits to nine countries to draw out conclusions of progress made over the last eight years in the quality of UNDAFs. From this evidence, six positive aspects of UNDAFs were observed: (a) they have become more focused; (b) they are doing quite well in following country processes (such as PRSSs); (c) they provide good cross-cutting theme opportunities; (d) there is a higher level of government involvement; (e) they have strengthened the UN's collective identity and built team work; and (f) they are now seen more as a country- and regionally-owned (rather than HQ-owned) process. However, certain negative aspects were also detected, such as: (a) the continuing burden of transaction costs which have reduced little over the last 5 years; (b) the lag with regard to new aid modalities which are outpacing progress in the coherence of the UNDAF in some countries; and (c) the difficult problems of focus and prioritisation.

From these findings some further issues arose, including: (a) the confusion as to the scope of what are 'UNDAF' versus 'non-UNDAF' activities; (b) opportunities missed for enhanced advocacy and fund-raising at the country level; (c) an imbalance between UNDAF preparation and implementation in terms of staff roles and responsibilities; (d) more attention needed on costing outcomes; (e) more strategic thinking required by the UNCT; (f) the mixed quality of the RMs; and finally, (g) the need for more attention to the regional dimension of support, sorting of priorities against resources and enabling greater coherence at this level.

In terms of the effectiveness of the UNDAFs in promoting harmonisation and alignment efforts, a similar conclusion can be drawn: considerable efforts have been made, but there is as yet no significant pay-off in terms of better strategic positioning of the UN at country level, nor evidence that the UNCTs have fully exerted their comparative advantage in programming. Views of other donors are favourable with regard to the UNDAF process, although most said the UN was punching below its weight. The UN has worked hard to be part of the PRS process, but has little to show for it, despite the MDGs being a common language between national processes and the UNDAF. There are concerns that the UN is not keeping up with new aid modalities such as budget support. Views by Governments are less critical, as most see the UN as a counterweight to the Bretton Woods Institutions, more neutral and better at taking up sensitive issues. The UNCTs appeared to be strong in countries with post-conflict issues of transition.

Finally, the report develops a set of criteria for assessing the quality of UNDAFs, drawing on existing preparation guidelines, on previously proposed criteria for quality assessment, and on the perceived weaknesses in quality of UNDAFs, particularly the RM and the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (M&EF). Guidelines are proposed in two parts: a first one covering programming structure (internal logic, strengths and realism), and a second one looking at the aid effectiveness agenda. The first set of criteria include the following: comparative advantage, risk and uncertainty, results, accountability for results and cross-cutting issues; while the second set relates to those elements identified in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness: ownership, alignment, harmonisation, managing for results and mutual accountability.

Recommendations cover the following areas: (a) the content and relevance of UNDG Global Support, which includes a reconsideration of the incentive systems at personal and organisational level, attention to various components of training, a simplification of guidelines and an enhanced use of neighbouring country experiences within a regional context; (b) the role of the second generation UNDAFs, covering strategic thinking at regional level, use of cross-cutting themes as an area of UN comparative advantage, adjusting the level of attention towards the RM and M&EFs, and clarification of which agency activities are 'inside' and which are 'outside' the UNDAF; (c) helping the UNDAFs reach better alignment with other aid modalities; and (d) proposed quality criteria.

1. The UNDAF Review: Purpose, Objectives and Methodology

1.1 Introduction

The UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) is the common strategic framework for the operational activities of the UN system at country level. It aims to provide a collective, coherent and integrated UN system response to national priorities and needs, including the Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRSs) and equivalent national strategies. This response is delivered within the framework of the MDGs and the commitments, goals and targets of the Millennium Declaration and international conferences, summits, conventions and human rights instruments of the UN system. The UNDAF emerges from the analyses of the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and represents the following step in the preparation of UN system country programmes and projects of cooperation.¹ The CCA is the common instrument of the UN system to analyse the national development situation and identify key development issues with a focus on the MDGs and the other commitments, goals and targets of the Millennium Declaration and international conferences, summits, conventions and human rights instruments of the UN system.

In 2002-03 major revisions were agreed by the collective membership of the UN Development Group (UNDG). These being:

- the CCA and other analytical work of the UN would feed into, rather than duplicate, similar national work and priority-setting processes (e.g. PRSs). UN teams were asked to be pro-active and exercise maximum flexibility in their decision-making on the CCA processes, so as to maximise coherence with national plans, and
- an UNDAF Results Matrix (RM) was introduced, to ensure that the UNDAF reflected the UN's collective response to national priorities, and was prepared after the key PRS priorities had been established. The RM is the UN's business plan at country level.

There is continuing agreement and pressure to make aid more effective, committing development partners to progressively align aid with national processes, harmonise and simplify procedures, and better priority-setting. The UN agencies are expected to combine to promote capacity enhancement of national partners, drawing on their own comparative advantages as providers of technical assistance, capacity development, policy dialogue and advocacy.

This report is presented in four chapters (plus annexes). Chapter 1 outlines the UNDAF Review; its purpose, objectives, outputs and methodology used. The Review was carried out in close collaboration with a related evaluation of the Country Coordination Fund (CCF), which held some issues of relevance to the UNDAF exercise. Chapter 2 presents various contextual issues and essential background

¹ See UN Common Country Assessment and UN Development Assistance Framework: Guidelines for UN teams preparing a CCA and UNDAF in 2004, page 16.

material. These include general issues relating to aid harmonisation and alignment, the results of previous related evaluations, the structure of UNDG global support for UNDAF processes at country level and the subject of incentives at institutional, agency and personal levels which constantly recur throughout the report.

Chapter 3 describes the findings of the Review, classified by the four objectives, whilst Chapter 4 presents the recommendations and provides a summing up.

1.2 Purpose of the Review

The purpose of the Review is to assess trends and progress in the UN's capacity to strategically position itself at the country level, with respect to other donor agencies and in its efforts to support national priorities and the MDGs. In particular, the quality and usefulness of so-called 'second-generation' UNDAFs and UNDAF Results Matrices (RMs) (developed since 2003) in focusing UN activities on areas of comparative advantage are reviewed, along with the relevance and efficacy of UNDG global support to country-level processes, including guidance and training. The UNDAF/Results Matrix procedure has now been introduced in approximately 35 countries, therefore it is timely to see if these tools performed as expected, and if they are helping the UN to respond effectively and strategically to national priorities and needs. They are intended to help UN country teams to prioritise their cooperation with national counterparts in areas of comparative advantage, taking into account the activities of the wider donor community. A key issue is the quality of the UNDAFs, the embedded RMs and M&E Frameworks (M&EF).

1.3 Objectives of the Review

More specifically, the objectives of this review are to:

1. improve the content and relevance of future UNDG global support for UNDAF-related processes at country level, including funding, policy guidance and training. The Review will assess their effectiveness so far and examine ways in which they could better respond to the needs of UN Country Teams to ensure that UNDAFs are strategic;
2. evaluate the degree to which 'second-generation' UNDAFs represent a step forward in defining the UN's overall strategic role at country level in the drive to support country policies and the implementation of national poverty plans/PRSs in order to achieve the MDGs;
3. assess the effectiveness of UNDAFs in promoting better harmonisation and alignment efforts at country level between the UN at large and other donors, following the principles of the 'Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness'; and
4. develop a set of criteria for assessing the overall quality of UNDAFs, that can be utilised by UNDO in similar future exercises.

1.4 Outputs of the Review

1. A forty-page interim report ('Strategic Positioning of the UN at Country Level: An Independent Review of the Role and Quality of the UNDAF') of the findings of the desk review of sixteen second generation UNDAFs, produced for a meeting of Review and CCF Evaluation participants and donors at ODI in September 2005.
2. An interview checklist to guide the three consultants working on both the CCF evaluation and Review, so that common information could be collected.
3. A five-page 'talking points' report ('The View from Outside: Presentation of First Lessons from the ODI/Netherlands/UK Review') presented at the UNDG Meeting 'Quality of UNDAFs and the Implications for Training and Support' on 11 January 2006.
4. A summary report given to the meeting of the CCF donors in New York on 25 January 2006.
5. The present full report 'Review of the Role and Quality of the UNDAFs', addressing the four objectives with findings and recommendations.

1.5 Methodology

There are three elements to this Review: desk review of literature; country visits and interviews with UNCTs, government and donors; and interviews with staff of DGO, regional bureaus and regional support offices.

The desk review covered a predefined selection of the second or third generation UNDAFs. The countries selected for the review were: Albania, Armenia, *Bangladesh*, *Burkina Faso*, *Cambodia*, *Georgia*, *Ghana*, Guyana, Indonesia, Iran, Kazakhstan, *Namibia*, Philippines, Romania, Uganda and Vietnam (italicised countries were later visited).²

Valuable information was extracted during the desk study to provide general comparative information and also for detailed briefs for the country visits that were to follow. Each brief was divided into the following sections: i) National Priorities as defined; ii) UN efforts to align; iii) a table comparing national priorities and UNDAF outcomes; iv) Coordination and harmonisation; v) the RM and M&EF; and vi) Support Systems (see Annex 5). Findings for this group of countries are presented in Annex 5.

In addition a large amount of other literature was reviewed, covering issues of aid effectiveness and harmonisation processes, and specific agency material, mostly directly tied to the countries visited. The conclusions of this desk review were presented to all members of the team, donor representatives and a member of DGO staff at the beginning of September 2005. Briefing material prepared for the country visits was also fed back to those specific countries.

² Zambia and Afghanistan were also visited. The UNCT in Vietnam, while welcoming a visit, preferred to send substantial literature that has been drawn on for the Review.

Country visits and interviews were carried out with UNCTs following discussions and selections with UNDGO staff. Subsequently, some of the UNCTs selected were unavailable or could not accommodate the team within the Review and CCF evaluation time frame. It was agreed that all team members would visit Georgia in the first week of October 2005 to, among other things, get a common consensus on methodology and issues to examine. Team members then visited the following seven countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Ghana, Namibia, and Zambia, accompanied by a member of UNDGO staff.³ Key observations from these country visits are provided in Annex 2 (which is a common annex with the CCF evaluation).

Finally, members of the team visited UN regional offices in Bangkok and Johannesburg, as well as UN agency headquarters and UNDGO in New York. The joint missions held between the consultants and UNDGO, as well as some teleconferences, have enabled contact to be maintained between the two groups.

³ As UNDGO staff accompanied the Review and CCF evaluation team on all country visits, the Review cannot be regarded as completely independent as the presence of UNDGO staff may have inhibited interviewees from being frank about the performance of DGO (especially with regard to Review Objective no 1). However, it is hoped that this was counterbalanced by the sharing of experiences and lessons that accompanied the interviews.

2. Contextual Issues

2.1 Aid Harmonisation and Alignment

The approach of ‘harmonisation and alignment’ aims to simplify donor practices of development cooperation in programme countries, align these practices with national development priorities, and strengthen national systems for planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting. With specific reference to the UN, harmonisation refers to the process of unifying procedures so the UN can act as one body at country level; alignment refers to adapting these procedures as a whole to those used by national authorities.⁴ The Rome meeting of February 2003 committed the development community and partner countries to action in this area, while, following the UN Secretary-General’s ‘Programme for Reform’ in 1997, the operational agencies of the UN system under the umbrella of the UN Development Group (UNDG), had already started the process of harmonising a wide range of tools and procedures. Guidelines have been issued that place national development strategies such as the PRSs at the centre of the UN’s cooperation with partner countries. The challenge now lies in the implementation of these new guidelines.⁵

In March 2005, the Paris High-Level Forum followed up on the Rome commitments, with a Declaration on Aid Effectiveness: Ownership, Harmonisation, Alignment, Results and Mutual Accountability. The principles of this Declaration (raised in the Review’s Terms of Reference under objective 3) are:

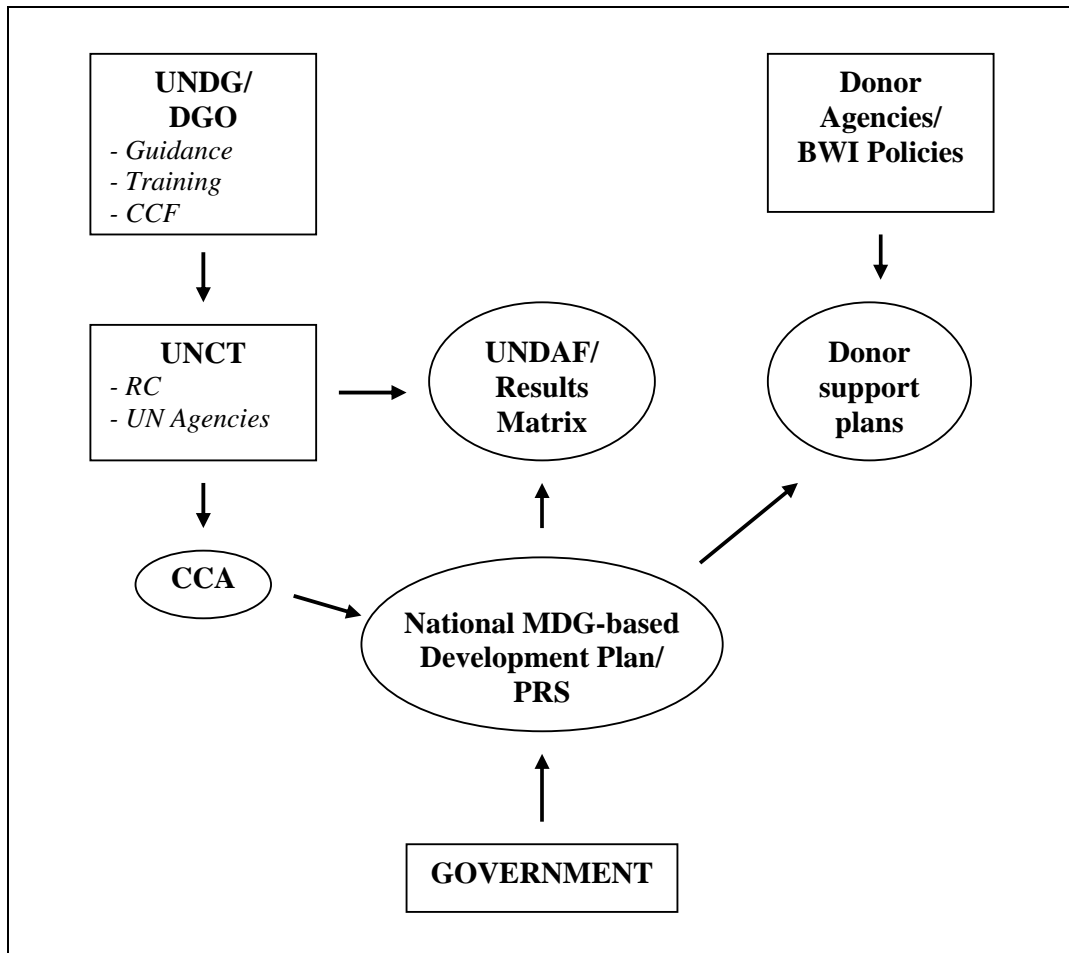
- Ownership: Partner countries exercise effective leadership over their development policies, strategies and co-ordinate development actions.
- Alignment: Donors base their overall support on partner countries’ national development strategies, institutions and procedures.
- Harmonisation: Donors’ actions are more harmonised, transparent and collectively effective.
- Managing for Results: Managing resources and improving decision making for results.
- Mutual Accountability: Donors and partners are accountable for development results.

Figure 1 sets out the main components of the complex set of interactions that the Review tries to address. The Figure shows that the UNDAF is a UN programming document that bases itself on national priorities which are often defined through a PRS (for example in 9 out of the 16 UNDAFs under the desk review). The UN is a relatively minor player in total development assistance, but its influence is generally thought to be greater than the volume of aid flows suggests, due to its strong technical advice, ability to act as a broker between other partners and the level of trust ascribed to it by governments, compared to bilaterals and some other multilaterals, for example, which have a high level of conditionality in their aid flows.

⁴ UNDG, UN Reform Country Teams At Work. New York, page 17.

⁵ UNDG, UN Reform: Harmonization and Alignment to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals, February 2005.

**Figure 1: Harmonising with National Development Plans:
The main actors and instruments⁶**



2.2. Findings of Previous Evaluations

The UN has carried out evaluations of the UNDAF in 2001 and 2004, serving the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review, prepared by DESA and reporting to ECOSOC.⁷ These past evaluations were internal reviews and gave less weight to UNDAF as a contribution to a national process and how the UN was trying to strategically position itself at national level, both of which the Review is trying to address.

In 2001, UNDAFs had been completed in 28 countries and work was in progress or planned for 60 countries. The UNDAF was seen by recipient countries as a means to better integrate and harmonise country programmes with national development plans.

⁶ This figure is a slightly modified and updated version of the one that appears in the original Terms of Reference in Annex 1.

⁷ This section is drawn from the two reports: ECOSOC 2001, Progress in the implementation of the multi-year funding frameworks and evaluation of the UN Development Assistance Framework, A/56/70-E/2001/58; and ECOSOC 2004, Evaluation of the Common Country Assessment and the UN Development Assistance Framework, E/2004/100.

The evaluation lacked evidence to show that the UNDAF provided an input to national policy formulation or that it helped Government policy formulation or donor coordination.⁸ In some instances the UNDAF did address sensitive issues such as human rights, internally displaced persons and alternative development strategies, however UNDAFs were often expressed in vague terms and seldom identified targets, expected results and timelines, and M&E was inadequate. Improvements were also needed on the quality of the CCA.

National ownership and participation was limited as there was no consistent effort to ensure full involvement of Government or civil society in the CCA. The major concern regarding the process was the increasing transactions costs, as the CCA/UNDAFs did not lower these costs through a replacement effect by reducing requirements for country programming. CCA and UNDAF processes reinforced the collective identity of the UN, but the perception was that it remained a process imposed by UN HQ in New York. The greatest barrier to joint programming activities was the synchronisation and reconciliation of procedures, which needed to be simplified.

Joint programming was sporadic and UNDAF was seen as not useful then as a framework for programming resources. In this regard, there was a lack of resources for the development of the UNDAF process. On technical support the evaluators concluded that more advantage should be taken of the UN system's diversity of mandates and perspectives in order to ensure high quality, more professional and objective CCAs.⁹

In July 2004 the DESA evaluation noted that 106 countries had prepared CCAs, and 85 had prepared UNDAFs. By May 2004 UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP had harmonised their programming cycles in 101 countries. The evaluators noticed an improvement between first and second generation of CCAs and UNDAFs, based on more active involvement and inputs of technical support from HQ and regional structures. The various monitoring mechanisms instituted helped raise the quality of the documents, and the number of priority areas had been narrowed down. However, the improved analysis in the CCAs had not always translated into better UNDAFs: time-bound targets were not always adequately identified and results indicators were unsatisfactory, although the RM was emerging as a useful means of enforcing discipline and accountability.

The 2004 report drew attention to the Quality Support and Assurance system (QSA), a readers group consisting of specialists in the regional technical offices of ExCom organisations and some specialised agencies, however primary responsibility for quality assurance remained with the UNCT. The evaluators concluded that it was too soon to assess the impact and performance of the QSA as a means to enhance the quality of the tools.

This evaluation addressed the thorny matter of what is 'inside' and 'outside' the UNDAF. In the opinion of the evaluators, the issue was not whether the CCA and the

⁸ See Para 81. The authors of the report posed and tried to answer the question about the impact of the UNDAF on government policies, but now it is not the role of the UNDAF to influence national policies.

⁹ Although the diversity of mandates is now seen as a constraint rather than an opportunity.

UNDAF should include 'all' issues or concerns, but whether the 'core' issues shown in these tools adequately reflected the country's most important overall concerns, given the comparative advantage of the UN system.

Involvement and collaboration with the Bretton Woods Institutions (BWIs) on the CCA and UNDAF was still limited, more formalistic and political than substantive, and was not integrated into the BWIs work. In one area the evaluators noticed an improvement over the 2001 evaluation however; the CCA/UNDAF process had enhanced the degree of coherence of individual agency country programmes, a net improvement from the past, especially among the four ExCom agencies (UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP and WFP).

The burden of transaction costs remained, and there appeared to be little change compared with the 2001 evaluation. Furthermore, there was no conclusive evidence on the impact of the CCA and UNDAF as replacements for other documents or mechanisms. In 2004 there was little interfacing with documents such as the Human Development Report and its national versions, and national MDG reports. The CCA/UNDAF was focused on the MDGs and its implementation plan was aligned to these. CCA/UNDAFs often reflected significant convergence with selected national priorities, but the CCA/UNDAF was much more difficult when there were no government priorities or PRS.

Both 2001 and 2004 evaluations conclude that the CCA/UNDAF process helped build teamwork, confirming their value as instruments for UNCT cohesion, but in 2004 the process was becoming more country-led rather than HQ-directed. At the same time there are other forms of agency collaboration that do not appear within the UNDAF. Despite all these reservations, the team noted a general appreciation among UNCT members and other representatives of the UN system for the value and processes of the CCA and UNDAF.

These more positive results have been achieved partly as a result of four factors: (i) synchronisation of the four ExComs agencies' planning cycles; (ii) strict deadlines set within the process; (iii) intensive training and dissemination of guidelines; and (iv) financial support provided through DGO. But despite these improvements, there existed the perception (and reality) that the UN system is characterised by complexity and duplication and with some exceptions, the participation of the specialised agencies and other agencies unrepresented at country level had been limited.

These two evaluations requested by the TCP/R provide a very useful baseline with which to assess progress in the development of the CCA/UNDAF process (and introduce some of the key issues), although of course they were not carried out with a standardised methodology and so are not strictly comparable. When discussing the findings of the 2005 review, they help to assess the areas where there has been progress, the likelihood of continued progress, and where the significant barriers remain.

A third evaluation study of interest, carried out in 2004 and mainstreamed in the CCA-UNDAF process, was a review of the human rights-based approach (HRBA) to

development.¹⁰ This indicated a general improvement in what is a most difficult approach to implement, and there is genuine commitment to HRBA and enthusiasm to learn more among UN staff. The most widespread improvement is the thoroughness and clarity of the capacity analyses of duty-bearers and rights-holders, and there is a more sophisticated treatment of participation.

2.3 Quality Support and Assurance (QSA): The Structure

There is a fairly complex structure of support systems at country, regional and global levels, overlaid by working groups and policy groups, and further complicated by some rapidly changing aspects of the system. These structures guide – formally or informally – the development and quality of the CCA/UNDAF process.

At headquarters (global level), the principle actor is the Policy and Global Quality Standards Cluster (PGQS) of the DGO.¹¹ The PGQS has three main functions: support to the UNDG Programme Group (which it shares with all DGO clusters); regionalisation; and Quality Support and Assurance. There is a lot of informal assistance (or assistance provided via website materials) provided directly to regional teams and UNCTs from New York HQ. The CCA-UNDAF guidelines are a major source of support and advice, drawing on a lot of accumulated experience.

An interagency group called the Quality Support and Assurance Reference Group, reporting to the UNDG Programme Group and the Country Programme Support Group, monitors the overall functioning and support, makes recommendations for improvement, and identifies and disseminates lessons learned and best practices across regions.¹²

Training is organised using a dedicated unit of the UN System Staff College (UNSSC) in Turin, under the overall direction of the Coordination Capacity Support cluster of DGO. Country teams receive Orientation Workshop training, ideally at the beginning of the CCA process, and attend a Prioritisation Workshop (sometimes known as Strategic Planning Workshop) ideally when the CCA ends and the UNDAF is just beginning. The types, location and dates of workshops (2001-05) are given in Annex 10.2 of the CCF evaluation report, as well as the number of people trained, and the facilitating agency. In short, the function of global quality systems has been described as overseeing the functioning of regional support and oversight systems and ensuring global quality standards are being met by regions, including the sharing of experiences between regions, motivating and capacitating UNCTs.

At the **regional level**, quality support is provided by regional Peer Support Groups (a big change not evident in the 2001 and 2004 evaluations), and assurance and oversight by regional directors. Peer Support Groups are also known as the Regional

¹⁰ Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Human Rights-Based Approach to Development: Good Practices and Lessons Learned from the 2003 CCAs and UNDAFs, December 2004.

¹¹ A description of the structure and work of the UNDG and its secretariat, and the UNDO, is provided in Section 2.1 of the CCF Report.

¹² UNDG website: Quality Support and Assurance Reference Group: Terms of Reference, January 2005. <http://www.undg.org/content.cfm?id=824>

Readers Group, a group of technical staff currently operational in one (and a part) of the five regions, and are expected to provide continuous support to the CCA-UNDAF-RM process, particularly through reading and commenting on final drafts of the CCA and the UNDAF.

In the Southern Africa region a pilot is being established in the form of a Regional Directors Team (RDT), with a Secretariat composed of a coordination advisor, communications officer and coordination support officer. This team will take primary responsibility for quality control, identifying and assessing the capacities of CTs, developing work plans and ensuring technical support to CTs, and providing timely feedback on CCAs and UNDAFs. This RDT will be informed by five substantive technical programme clusters whose role will be to assist UNCTs with strategic thinking, development of best practice, programme development and coordinated and integrated implementation. The following groups have been proposed: i) humanitarian affairs and vulnerability; ii) HIV/AIDs; iii) capacity development; iv) food security; and v) MDG monitoring and information management support.

It is the **country level** that is the subject of QSA and training attention. More and more UNCT staff are experiencing their second, and even third UNDAF, which means that there is considerable experience, expertise and knowledge available at this level. Subsequently, there is ample justification for the flow of information and support to be seen as moving from, as well as to, the countries.

With all this noted, there remains the question of responsibility regarding UNDAF quality. In practice, quality has been largely determined by those generally well qualified to develop UNDAFs. This has tended to be the deputy Representatives of agencies who are at the top of their professional posts. However nature of the sign-off system for UNDAF quality has not been clarified.

2.4. The Issue of Incentives

The issue of incentives arises several times throughout this report, and this background information, which disaggregates the issues into three levels, is of relevance to the discussion and recommendations.

Among the efforts for aid harmonisation, incentive systems internal to aid agencies are identified in the development literature.¹³ High-level commitment to the harmonisation and alignment agenda has not yet been translated into significant changes in practice. The behaviour of individuals working in aid agencies is shaped by a number of factors.

At the political level there has been a significant effort by agency senior management to transmit to staff members that harmonisation is a priority, using high level statements, organisation of events, requests for reporting and distribution of materials. Unfortunately there are factors which inhibit agencies from delivering on

¹³ See de Renzio, P. with D. Booth, A. Rogerson and Z. Curran (2005) Incentives for Harmonisation and Alignment in Aid Agencies, Working Paper 248. London: Overseas Development Institute.

commitments to harmonisation, including reluctance if it becomes highly visible politically, concern regarding loss of funds and lack of leadership by partners.

At the institutional level, initiatives have been less consistent. Some agencies have accelerated decentralisation to countries, but this has often been accompanied by a disconnection between HQ and the country offices with insufficient support and guidance as to how harmonisation is to be achieved. Overall there has been a lack of institutional frameworks to encourage harmonisation in a systematic manner.

At the individual level there has been little concrete action on proper incentives. Recruitment policies, performance assessment and promotion take little or no account of efforts by the individual to promote harmonisation between organisations. On the positive side some training courses have been developed, and there exist informal incentives through peer recognition, which are important for self esteem and also for professionals who see the imperative need for agencies to work together.

In summary, the development literature proposes that for harmonisation to succeed, agencies need to promote and reward innovation and challenge the status quo. Positive incentives need to be enhanced at the three levels, and the link between headquarters and the field needs to be strengthened. Programme approaches such as SWAPs and budget support have built-in harmonisation characteristics which make their adoption advantageous for promoting harmonisation. Personalities and individual characteristics are fundamental issues, but interactions between agencies are powerful sources of change to internal incentive systems. The literature also recognises that whilst harmonisation is beneficial, it also has substantial associated transaction costs.

3. Findings of the Review

This Chapter (and the one that follows) is structured around each of the four objectives of the Review.

3.1 Content and Relevance of UNDG Global support

Improve the content and relevance of future UNDG global support for UNDAF-related processes at country level, including funding, policy guidance and training, by assessing their effectiveness so far and ways in which they could better respond to the needs of UN Country Teams to ensure that UNDAFs are strategic.

Many of the observations in this section are documented from the CCF evaluation document. Overall, this evaluation provides a positive verdict on the work that DGO does to support countries. The feedback from interviews was also generally positive.

DGO's activities for reform (training, policy development, guidance and sharing experience, and which therefore include support to the UNDAF), are mostly supported by the CCF. Instruments for achieving this reform are:

- training of UN staff and promotion of the necessary attitude, knowledge and skills;
- improving communications and knowledge management for the UNCTs; and
- increasing the coordination capacity of the Resident Coordinator (RC) system.

In laying out opinions of the efficiency of the CCF, the evaluation report has reviewed the training activities, DGO's information and knowledge activities, for example DevInfo and network of information for UNCT staff, as well as other DGO activities such as knowledge sharing through seminars and workshops, and training of UNCT staff to be instructors for training and support (e.g. in UNDAF prioritisation workshops). The conclusion of this area of the CCF evaluation is that (in terms of the allocation of funding) DGO is a 'careful steward of resources'.¹⁴ The report also judges that DGO works hard to distribute information and lessons learned between UNCTs.¹⁵

In terms of *funding*, CCF funds have been a valuable resource for coordination, and (with those from UNDP) have provided staff to coordinate the UNCT activities, as well as funding the training for CCA/UNDAF preparation. These resources have played a major role in bringing UN agencies together. The key results area with direct impact on the UNDAF is probably 'strengthening field-level coordination capacity for CCA and UNDAF (Key Result Area No 2 – see Table 2 of the CCF report). In 2005 this amounted to 27% of the DGO budget or just over \$3m. Also, the development of tools and processes for joint planning (KRA No 3) has been beneficial; expenditure was of the order of \$0.94m in 2005 or 8.4% of total DG budget.

¹⁴ ODI, CCF Report pages 22-23.

¹⁵ ODI, CCF Report, section 5.3.

A further conclusion of the CCF evaluation report was that the main constraints to the reform process have not been financial, but rather institutional (e.g. cooperation versus individual agencies' interests, non-aligned incentive system), although strengthening the UNCT and the RC role in particular to achieve integrated country programmes may require additional funding in the short-to-medium term.¹⁶

The desk-based review of the sixteen UNDAFs, although providing relatively little information on support systems, concluded the following:

- There were some comments about problems in funding the coordination efforts.
- The most common support was a commitment to use DevInfo and some training has been carried out in RMs, rights-based approaches, and gender assessment.
- Prioritisation retreats appear an important form of support and mutual learning. A number of retreat reports gave insights into the inter-agency discussions, which usually include some concern about the management of the process, and the resources available for it, and the decision-making process around priority-setting areas.

There is a clear link between resources devoted to the coordination process and how the process was completed, and the levels of participation. Where there was a full-time professional officer driving the process, then life was easier for all concerned. Some countries, including at least one visited, Namibia, had limited resources and the UNDAF process was difficult. In other countries, the high levels of motivation among country staff made up, in part, for this lack of resources.

As set out in Chapter 2, UNCTs have a variety of support systems to develop UNDAFs at global, regional and country level. Peer support and experience of previous exercises are becoming the most important resources. But as this staff experience and expertise grows, the high-level decisions relating to UN reform (governance structures, review of mandates and senior management support to reform) have to keep pace or staff expertise and motivation will outstrip the structure in which the agency works to apply that experience. That point appears to have been reached now. The quality of the UNDAFs is being constrained by the lack of high-level support that is being given to UNCTs. Staff in some agencies are not being given sufficiently clear indications of support nor incentives to devote time to improving the quality of the UNDAFs. For some agencies to devote some funding to the process, even if very modest, would be very welcome and would send an important message.

Given the improvement in the quality of UNDAFs over the last five years, the extent to which present and future DGO support will impact on quality is less clear, since these may be driven more by the difficulties in taking hard choices and, as noted above, the lack of messages and incentives from agency HQs.

¹⁶ ODI, Evaluation of the UN Country Coordination Fund, March 2006. Summary.

In terms of *policy guidance*, feedback from the UNCTs was generally positive: support from UNDGO was appreciated, with a couple of observations to the effect that the Office had become more flexible over the years (although there were the usual field-HQ spats to the effect that HQ does not ‘understand’ the field). Appreciation of the guidelines was mixed; said to be helpful but extensive, complicated and difficult to find solutions to specific questions. Guidelines lacked support on the role of specialised and non-resident agencies in the UNDAF process.

Support in terms of the *regional dimension* was mixed, and needs some careful analysis. Interactions between countries and regions are crucial for continued development of UNCT/UNDAF coherence at country level, and this is developed in the next section. Comments given about the regional readers group were good in some places, but it was said to be mechanistic in others. In Namibia, which was under the umbrella of the Southern Africa Regional Directors Team, it was unclear whether the role of this Team was in monitoring for performance or peer support.

The CCF report notes that response to the RDT is positive in about half of the countries of the region, mostly in the countries where there had been strong contact. In one other region, the staff found it difficult to give support: issues had to be discussed and thought through and hard choices had to be made. A third region made a similar comment that the regional team could play a more dominant role in achieving prioritisation, as it is very difficult for an UNCT to secure real prioritisation without external support from higher up. This points to the requirement of tailor made support, and an inventory or map of staff competencies and regional-level resources across all the agencies would be helpful.

The CCF report (see its Annex 9) provides a detailed list of *training activities* performed under the umbrella of UNDG. There have been a total of 147 workshops held between 2001-05, with an average of 1,124 participants per year. As always, the informal learning from other members of UNCTs was the most valuable aspect. Orientation workshops and prioritisation retreats are an important form of support and mutual learning, and now as the UNDAF process spreads, UNCT staff have become the best source of tutors. There was positive feedback during the country visits from all UNCTs about the training received; the only problems raised being a wish for more time, and that the training had been more focused on their country, or regional situation. In some countries, non-resident agencies struggled to attend, but this information is anecdotal and, without doing an analysis of workshop attendance data, this cannot be confirmed. In Namibia three non-resident agencies came to the prioritisation workshop in which they were most interested, although they thought that the UNDAF in that part of the world was too focused on the ‘Triple Threat’.

Some areas of training do need attention, such as RBM and even the Logical Framework and strategic planning. A potential area of harmonisation across the UN (not only for those who work on UNDAFs) is the common training, standardisation of terminology and methodology and orientation in key foundation areas such as the logical framework. In the area of evaluation, for example, core concepts standardised by the DAC of the OECD and the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) could form the basis of common training.

There were also some requests made for training in general development issues and particular modalities that staff had seen operating in their countries, such as PRSs and SWAPs. For some staff, the UNDAF process had opened up an interest beyond their own narrow technical specialities. Clearly some agencies have very minimal training activities and a rather poor human resource policy in terms of keeping staff skills up to date. In the long-run, coherent training and orientation across many agencies is an area to enhance in the UN.

The request for an example of what is a good UNDAF was an issue raised by both trainers and trainees alike. This is a very sensible suggestion: training courses (outside the UN sector) often use fictitious examples to great effect, to make both serious and amusing (to help bonding) points; however, feedback to the reviewer suggested that this would not work in the UN due to cultural sensitivities and issues over how individual agency performance might be caricatured. With UNCT staff being used more and more as trainers, this could be put together more informally within neighbouring countries or a region, however.

3. 2 Role of Second Generation UNDAFs

Evaluate the degree to which 'second-generation' UNDAFs represent a step forward in defining the UN's overall strategic role at country level in the drive to support country policies, the implementation of national poverty plans/PRSPs in order to achieve the MDGs.

Using the two TCPR evaluations of 2001 and 2004 as a starting point (see Section 2), this Review found improvements in successive generations of UNDAFs over the period from the late 1990s to those reviewed at end 2005. UNDAFs are becoming shorter and more focused, although, given the overall progress made, there are some exceptions which are hard to explain. The reviewer was informed of the recent UNDAF in Guatemala containing 120 outputs, which highlights how some of the UNDAFs in non-PRS countries had difficulty linking to (and trying to interpret) national priorities. It appears that, where present, the PRS forced a discipline on national governments in terms of priority setting, and as a consequence on UN support programmes.

CCAs have also improved, so the energy and allocation of scarce time of those involved in formulating UNDAFs is now turning to the RM and the M&EF. Although UNDG guidelines maintain that the RM is embedded in the UNDAF and is not a separate process, the Review found examples where UNDAFs and RMs did appear as separate items, e.g. the UNDAF had been completed but the RM was still to be finalised, and other indications that the UNCT ran out of steam when it came to completing the RM, or individual agencies had peeled off from the UNDAF process and were preparing their own RMs.

In terms of a process that involves assessment, prioritisation and implementation, there are the four elements of CCA, UNDAF, RM and M&EF; in the earlier years attention was focused on the link between CCA and UNDAF, when the RM did not exist. At the present, with capacity and expertise built up on the CCA, the centre of gravity has moved to the integration between UNDAF and RM. This definitely shows

progress. But still to come are improvements in the quality of the M&EF as this puts emphasis on the crucial aspect of implementation.

Taking the continuum of findings of the 2001 and 2004 evaluations as a basis, six positive points stand out:

First, UNDAFs have become more focused; this is evident in terms of fewer outcomes, and focus on national priorities. National priorities and UNDAF outcomes are presented side-by-side in Annex 5 for each of the countries reviewed.

Second, UNDAFs have done quite well in following country processes (including PRSs). Where they did not, it was not always due to the fault of the UNCT. The 16-country desk study reviewed UNDAFs, CCAs and related materials from the perspective of alignment and harmonisation issues. The first step in this review was to determine what the national priorities were. This was relatively straightforward in 9 out of the 16 countries as a PRS had been carried out, and there was a broad similarity in the objectives of these, irrespective of country: i) aim for economic growth through macro economic stability; ii) linked to improved governance through legal and public sector reform; and iii) various programming approaches for human resource development and excluded groups. It is with the latter set of interventions where the UN could make a substantial contribution. But staff of the BWIs also noted that prioritisation by national governments is weak, and the documents showed that the UN contributed little to the PRS debate.

Where national priorities were not based on a PRS process, objectives were much broader and varied, and understandably the UN struggled to line up with these objectives. But the MDGs can be a common language and linkage between PRSs and UNDAFs and where national plans do not mention the MDGs, the UNDAF can be seen as a tool to fill these gaps.

In terms of alignment it has been observed already that, where there is a PRS, the UN can fit in relatively easily with the social services sector (especially through the inputs of UNICEF and UNFPA). But from the documentation and the field visits it was not clear that the UN agencies themselves believed that they were working in the UN's area of comparative advantage, but more what individual agencies could contribute in a technical area.

Third, the UNDAF provides cross-cutting theme opportunities for agencies who are looking at different aspects of one issue, e.g. domestic violence, better integration of relief and development, land reform, youth and nutrition, and where there is a 'new' government and ongoing transition, an 'UNDAF'd UN' has an opportunity to punch above its weight. However, gender does not receive the attention it deserves, which is unexpected given the UN's track record in taking gender issues on board in its programming. UNCTs seemed to relax and do well with cross-cutting issues as they are not undermining their own agency mandates. The UN can also use its position to open up areas where bilaterals are hesitant to intervene (conflict prevention, land reform, police).

The role of the UN in implementing a rights-based approach has been innovative, but this should be recognised as a long-term process. Rights-based approaches do not

enter into PRSs and therefore form a valuable intellectual counterweight to the BWI-lead PRSs. Some areas of PRS objectives (e.g. support to excluded groups) are particularly well-suited to the rights-based approach. This has been an area of UN comparative advantage, but there is a need for more practice-related support in integrating the rights-based approach.

The issue was also raised (from the Cambodia visit) as to whether the UNDAF would have strength if it was more ‘theme- based’, which is of course linked to cross-cutting issues. Examples are joint data collection, youth and trafficking. One difficulty with this is in linking up with support at HQ because there is no direct fit with the HQ mandates. But perhaps cross-cutting issues *are* the comparative advantage of the UN.

Fourth, government involvement in the process has improved greatly from a very low base (and, where they are strong in themselves, the national civil society organisations), at least in terms of observing the process.

Fifth, comparing what was said in the earlier evaluation studies with today’s situation, the UNDAF is now seen more as a country- (and regionally-) owned process.

Sixth, there is some evidence of various positive UNDAF slipstream effects. First, there has been a continued strengthening of the collective identity of the UN and teamwork, drawing in more agencies from further afield (i.e. the usually non-resident). The process has generated much enthusiasm among the technical staff just below managerial level. This was a universal comment from UNCTs. Some agencies decided to work more closely together on issues outside the UNDAF. This can open up possibilities between UN agencies and external partners. Second, although UNDAFs and UN country team work are not without their weaknesses, as documented later in this section, so PRSs also have their deficiencies and the skills and collective identity developed in UNDAF formulation should allow the UN to make a greater impact in any future national priority setting (e.g. Accession, MCA, MDGs as well as PRSs follow-up) provided the timing and other conditions are favourable.

But there are still some negatives aspects which need to be taken into account.

First, many of these signs of good progress are neutralised by the continuing burden of transaction costs which seems to have reduced only a little over the last eight years. During the country visits, staff gave feedback to the effect that there was as yet little significant change in the way individual agencies operated because of the UNDAF. Efforts were poured into the UNDAFs but then agencies returned to operating the same programmes. Activities were not stopped because of an UNDAF decision, the overall quality of UN programming did not appear to rise significantly, and there has been only a modest increase in joint programming. The cost of producing UNDAFs were high in terms of staff time, meetings and other resources, but these have not been compensated by increased coordination and effectiveness through reduced or streamlined agency operations.

The transaction costs ‘bought’ a greater knowledge of other agencies’ activities, and some other pluses such as a stronger profile for human rights within the national objectives/PRS context. According to respondents, it is in the post-conflict countries

(Sudan, Afghanistan,¹⁷ Democratic Republic of Congo) where the UN has become a well-integrated unit (and the UNDAF process may not have been the major contributor to this). Reductions in transaction costs will only come with the introduction of significant management reforms at agency HQ levels (some of which are on the way). The slow but sustained improvement in the quality of UNDAFs suggests that this is a good time to attack areas that cause ‘transaction’ costs to remain.¹⁸

Second, in some countries ***new modalities are outpacing the growth in coherence of UNDAFs***. Although the UN agencies have taken the modality of the PRSs on board in their planning, they are falling behind as new aid-delivery modalities such as budget support and SWAPs are introduced.

Third, ***the difficult problem of focus and prioritisation remains***. Individual agencies do not want to admit their programming has less priority than that of another, and that they want to give up some areas in one country because another agency might be able to do it better. Outputs of the UNDAF are often tied to individual agencies. Outcomes still remain too broad, and there is a minimal amount of strategic alignment, i.e. how far the UN is positioning itself relative to other donors, and identifying where it has more critical mass or where it can work more effectively in areas compared with other donors (e.g. rights-based approach). (See Section 3.3. for further details.)

Setting priorities is a problem: outcomes still cover all bases and there is a great reluctance to say one thing came before another, or that the activities of one agency are more pressing than another. There is a plethora of terms in some UNDAFs: ‘measures’, ‘themes’, ‘action areas’, ‘areas of cooperation’, ‘cross cutting themes’ and ‘new joint programmes’.

There is no pooling of funds. This cannot be solved at country level because the institutional system does not encourage agency teams to take those steps. Agencies tend to refer to their mandates when designing actions, as opposed to what is strategically best for the country, or for the UN as a whole at country level. UNCTs find it hard to take the difficult decisions regarding prioritisation and sequencing of activities, and because of this UNDAFs were usually weak in identifying the UN’s comparative advantage. Priorities were not set and UNDAFs still reflected the idea of ‘business as usual’.

All that said, however, UNCT staff, especially those at technical/professional level, grappled with the many demanding aspects of the UNDAF with dedication and enthusiasm. For middle-management in particular and especially those in the specialised agencies, it was a most useful exercise and helped agencies to know more about each other. The enthusiasm of middle-level staff augurs very well for the time when they work their way up to senior-management positions. The reviewers saw examples of staff determined to be involved and aware of the need to cooperate at country level even if not generally ‘resident’ e.g. UNECSO and ILO (generally ‘resident’ only at regional-level). Staff from specialised agencies face less than whole-

¹⁷ See Annex 5 of the CCF Report for the Afghanistan country visit.

¹⁸ For a similar conclusion, see UNICEF (2004) ‘Assessment of UNICEF’s Contribution to UN Reform and its Impact on UNICEF: UN reform in the UN development groups. New York: Evaluation Office, September 2004.

hearted messages of support from their HQs and also experience problems with their own planning systems.¹⁹ Some specialised agencies do not have planning processes for country programming and in others, these are not well developed. But an opportunity may exist here for the UNDAF to influence development of these processes in a bottom-up manner.

Considering these positives and negatives, there are seven further issues or findings.

First, there is some confusion as to UNDAF/non-UNDAF activities, and a dilemma between coverage and focus. If all of the UN agency activities (including those of the specialised, standard-setting agencies) are ‘mentioned’ as corporate policy demands, then the UNDAF is far too broad. UNDAF teams were guided to do this and did so. There is an informal ‘rule of thumb’ that 80% of UN activities should be included in the UNDAF, although the 80% of what (Funding? Allocated staff time?) is not clear.

To try to resolve this problem, agencies can be grouped into three rather basic categories. There are the ExComs (UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP), which have made good progress so far in harmonising their programming. The specialised agencies, who are mostly resident despite having weaker country programming systems and funding modalities, can still enter the UNDAF process in a significant way by taking leadership in some areas and by some joint programming in the early years of the UNDAF implementation (e.g. FAO, WHO). The specialised agencies and others, mostly non-resident²⁰ agencies (UNESCO, ILO, UNHCR, and IFAD), obviously find participation more difficult. At a minimum, their involvement must not undermine or duplicate UNDAF activities. Revision of guidelines could be considered with these three groups in mind.

Most non-resident agencies are linked to the UNDAF very vaguely. This has three drawbacks: i) there is a weakening of the inclusive nature of the UNDAF; ii) it does not accelerate reforms that these agencies must make individually in country programming; and iii) there may be some very important comparative advantage of the UN to be shown by that agency which is not properly included. Some specialised agencies told the Review team that the UNDAF gave them an opportunity to press for reform in their own HQs. One possible solution that has been proposed is to include specific interventions outside UNDAF priorities in an annex or a ‘part 2’ to the UNDAF.

It may be time for an extensive review involving the differentiation of these agencies’ roles. Up to now, all have been expected to contribute to the UNDAF, and treated the

¹⁹ Although some good examples of specialised agencies taking strong leads in several countries, especially WHO which took the coordinating lead in concert with the health programmes of UNICEF and UNFPA, and to a lesser extent FAO, with food security programmes in concert with WFP and IFAD. In addition the ‘Decent Work Country Programmes’ of ILO have the potential to fit in very well with UNDAF – adding the employment aspect – but this potential is yet to be realised. On the other hand, UNESCO does not seem able to lead on education programming, although Namibia is an exception because the UNESCO regional office is located there.

²⁰ Of course the resident/non-resident distinction is one that does not apply equally in all countries, but a pragmatic decision can be made on the basis of proportions of countries having an office of that agency based on some threshold.

same in a highly inclusive way. This has caused boundaries to be stretched.²¹ Recognising the good, albeit slow, progress made by the UNDAF, now could be the time to be more specific about who is in, who is out and why. With confidence and expertise growing in the CCA-UNDAF process, it is time to clarify this issue.

Second, the UNDAF provides opportunities for enhanced advocacy and fund raising at the country level, although more thought has to be given as to whether this function is a proper one for the UNDAF instrument itself. Also, this changes the role of the UNRC from ‘inward’ coordinator to ‘outward’ spokesman, and involves splitting the UNDP Resident Representative position from the UNRC.²² The UNCT will need time to adapt to this new situation.

On fund raising, this is a major source of competition and incoherence. It will be a key role for future RCs. There is still a problem at country level when, despite the cooperation generated by the UNDAF, individual agencies then go back to approaching donors individually for funds at the programme-level. Indeed the incentive systems for Resident Representatives of the ExCom agencies rewards this sort of single approach funding, which is yet another example of how individual agency incentives work against harmonisation.

A more radical approach may be forced onto the UNCT if donors propose funding entire country programmes.²³ For the short term, fund raising does not need to be ‘consolidated’, but could be more than just agency-by-agency; a pragmatic approach is required, combining forces where it is sensible and learning by experience. In the longer run, as noted above, opportunities may exist for donors to come together and fund individual UNDAF outcomes, rather than ‘cherry-pick’ good projects. These points all have implications for the governance of the country team and the skills base of the RC, however.

Third, there seems to be an imbalance between UNDAF preparation and implementation in terms of what roles and responsibilities staff take on. UNCT staff were concerned that after the effort to design the UNDAF, implementation was going to be even more daunting. This suggests that the paper trail is too long to this point and does not get any easier. In some cases, there was little correspondence between UNDAF country outcomes and agency ‘country programme outcomes’; correspondence between indicators was hit and miss. Also, there was no clear link up between ‘partners’ in the various documents. This is another clear example of skewed incentives between what ExCom agencies do for their own HQs and what they do in the name of internal harmonisation, and is a priority that needs putting right. It is understood that decisions have now been taken to make the RM a single business plan for the ExCom agencies.²⁴ It is a well-accepted maxim that effort put

²¹ Also the distinctions between agencies as ‘ExCom’ and ‘specialised’ have been stretched in terms of the way they have operated over the last few years. Many ‘specialised’ agencies have large technical cooperation, non-core-funded programmes (e.g. WHO), while other agencies have taken on specialist areas of programming in order to seek extra budgetary donor funding (e.g. UNDP, which one expert has called the UN’s “specialised agency for governance”).

²² See also ODI, CCF Report, Section 6.

²³ There are many variants on the 3’1’s – one team, one coordinator, one programme is one variation, but some donors have been talking about ‘one funder’.

²⁴ The current proposal on the table from the UNDG Programme Group for the four ExCom agencies is that the collection of documents (UNDAF/RM, CPDs, CPAPs and AWP, all multiplied by four) be

upfront in designing programmes is rarely wasted, but this does not seem to be paying off in UNDAF preparation.

Fourth, a key area where there is still much to be done for the implementation of the UNDAF is in **costing UNDAF outcomes**. Staff in country offices seemed strangely reluctant to do this, given that some have many years of experience in costing their own individual agency programmes. Again, one problem is that there is a lot of competition at country level between agencies to fund raise. If the UNDAF is to coordinate better and win the support of those donors also trying to coordinate funding initiatives, then UNDAF outcomes must be costed and presented as such. This should be given extra attention in training: of course this adds to the load of UNDAF preparation, but perhaps could be seen partly as a post-UNDAF activity.

This is where generic guidelines could help, for example, to work out costings to meet an MDG for the reduction of infant mortality, maternal mortality or expansion of vaccinations. The generic costings could set out ranges according to different assumptions of country situations, and an experienced programme officer could make an estimation of the funds required to reach MDG-based UNDAF results. There has been some work in the UN on costing outcomes and, more recently, on costing the attainment of the MDGs, from which the experiences and skills developed might provide a basis for generic guidelines.

Fifth, **there has to be some strategic thinking on where UNCT effort is to be given greatest emphasis**; at the moment there is too much being hung on the UNDAF.²⁵ Those consulted by the review team emphasised the need for simplification in approach, but there was less consensus on how this could be achieved. Leaving too many issues open means a poor structure. Overall strategic positioning of the UNDAF was often weak, because of i) the diversity of UN operations; ii) its project orientation; iii) its skills-base (especially insufficient strategic and macroeconomic expertise); and iv) reluctance of UN agencies to ‘let go’ of some operations as part of the positioning and prioritisation process. Setting priorities therefore remains the big problem: outcomes still covered all bases (although there were some notable efforts to keep to 3-4 outcomes); there was a reluctance to say one thing preceded another or that the activities of one agency are more pressing than others, or that one agency with a similar mandate should give way to another. In some UNDAFs, there are many long ‘lists’ of priorities.

Sixth, the desk review showed that the **Results Matrices are a mixed bag**, and the ME&Fs more so. If the UNDAF can be seen as some kind of barometer of UN reform, then the RM shows even more the readiness of the UN to develop a serious business plan for implementation. The RM shows that despite some heroic efforts it

replaced by one document which has the following for elements: i) a statement articulating the strategic role of the UN in support of national priorities and how the participating agencies will work synergistically in support of that role; ii) the RM; iii) agency-specific contributions to that framework, including financial contributions; and iv) operational provisions and clauses for UN country operations. The specific fiduciary arrangements for individual agencies vis-à-vis the national government would be included in the document. Part (iii) and (iv) of this new UNDAF/RM would be used by the ExCom agencies for Executive Board approval for their programmes of support as long as these Executive Boards require such a formal approval of individual agency country programmes including programme budgets.

²⁵ The ‘Christmas Tree’ approach, as more than one staff member reminded the team!

has a way to go on this. As UN staff become more familiar with RBM in all areas of their work, so they will improve. The training should be reoriented towards the RM; a principle of RBM in action would be to start with the RM. The desk review also showed that the problem of spelling out risks and assumptions is the most pressing to address, while others include indicators setting, specifying outputs and accountability.

In the long-run, the CCA will disappear and will be replaced by national capacity to continually update (the field visits indicated that the CCA was rapidly becoming redundant, adding little value to policy choices), and the UNDAF may wither to be replaced by the RM. In terms of optics, it may be better to talk now about the 'UNDAF-RM process' or even the 'RM-M&EF process' rather than the 'CCA-UNDAF process' so as to put a heavier emphasis on implementation and a trust on staff judgement that they know what is to be done without extensive analysis. The training and support process should start with the RM and then investigate what information is needed to complete that instrument.

Seventh, the regional dimension is crucial. The South Africa regional pilot of a support team has been mentioned previously. The gap between countries and HQs is generally so great that a regional set up is necessary, and there is a pressing need for coherent regional structures to help with country prioritisation and focusing of the UNDAF. There is an element of 'blame the victim' in castigating UNCTs for not being focused while struggling to react to the broad range of country priorities. The UNCT has only limited resources to react to those priorities, but this can be helped greatly if there was some regional 'sorting' of available resources and prioritisation of what the UN can do by coordinating resources regionally. Unfortunately, the current regional institutional set-up is very fragmented in order to do this job properly. In an earlier draft the term 'regional UNDAF' was used and this was clearly the wrong term, but the suggestion is that light regional priority-setting will help UNCT square the circle of meeting country priorities while remaining focused. This will be easier to do in regions where country situations are homogeneous.

3.3 Effectiveness of UNDAFs in Promoting Harmonisation and Alignment Efforts

Assess the effectiveness of UNDAFs in promoting better harmonisation and alignment efforts at country level between the UN at large and other donors, following the principles of the 'Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness'.

To recap, the principles of the Paris Declaration are:

- Ownership
- Alignment
- Harmonisation
- Managing for Results
- Mutual Accountability

This section concentrates on principles 2 and 3, over others.

There is a lack of clarity over what harmonisation and alignment mean: harmonisation is often used to include both alignment and ownership.²⁶ Taking a simple definition from the UNDG which separate the two, harmonisation is the process of unifying procedures as a whole to those used by the national authority, while alignment refers to adapting these procedures as a whole to those used by the national authority (see Section 2.5).²⁷

For the most part, the Review draws a similar conclusion to that given for Objective 2. In other words, the UNCTs and the UNDAF process made considerable efforts to harmonise and align, but as yet there is no significant effort to show that these efforts have had significant pay-off in terms of better strategic positioning of the UN at country level, nor that these efforts have allowed the UNCTs to fully exert their comparative advantage in their programming.

Opinions expressed by donors on the UN operations were generally favourable, although most said the UN was punching below its weight. Recurring comment was that the UN has too much of a project mentality (although in Cambodia this was seen as a plus), which is an impediment to working strategically, and with new aid modalities. Many wanted to see the UN take a greater leadership role, particularly in chairing the donors' coordination groups. From the field visits opinion was most favourable in Afghanistan (a transition country). Here there was a close relationship with the World Bank, which was an active member of the UNCT and also channels some resources through UN-administered Trust Funds.²⁸ If this is the most positive and effective face of the UN vis-à-vis other partners, it was in the African countries (Burkina Faso, Ghana and Zambia) where the UN positioning was seen as least effective.²⁹ UN participation in the PRS was insufficient in Burkina Faso, though better in Ghana.

Usually the UN worked hard to be part of the PRS process but to little effect. One reason for this may be the level of control that the BWIs still have over the PRS process. Another reason may be because the expertise set is different in the UN compared to the BWIs, which have many development generalists. However, the MDGs are the common language between PRSs/other national poverty processes and UNDAFs, and this suggests that potential exists for stronger linkages in the future. So far UNDAFs and PRSs have followed parallel tracks in many countries. Yet PRSs have their limitations and uniformity, too, which suggests that there are opportunities for the UN to combine agency activities in key areas such as maternal health, rural employment, governance structure, institutional development and food security to complement the PRS/national priorities.

Concerns that the UN was not keeping up with development modalities were seen strongest in Zambia. The new move towards aid harmonisation is being implemented by the donors in cooperation with the Government and is known as the JASZ (Joint Assistance Strategy for Zambia). This envisages a lead donor with a small support

²⁶ See de Renzio et al., ODI, June 2005.

²⁷ UNDG (2005) UN Reform: UN Country Teams at Work: Synthesis of Resident Coordinator Annual Reports 2004. New York, June 2005.

²⁸ See ODI, CCF Report Annex 5.

²⁹ The UN was better, though not well enough positioned, in Namibia, where the World Bank was not present.

group in each major sector and ‘de-congestion’ of sectors, with donors withdrawing from sectors where they are minor players. A small group of donors has also begun to provide direct budgetary support. The JASZ process is a challenge for the UN. Due to the dispersal of its programmes and the sectoral mandates of many agencies, they have difficulty in ‘de-congesting’, while the many agencies tend to speak with many voices in donor groups.

The character of UN programmes in Zambia is also reflected by in-country staff, who are mainly project staff without broad strategic or sectoral skills. The JASZ donors welcome UN participation in the process and do not expect the UN to provide direct budgetary support, but they are looking for coordinated representation and a policy-level contribution. As the Zambia model is spread to more countries, then the role of the UN will continue to be sidelined, and the UN’s funds are too small to make a difference.

In Bangladesh there were strenuous efforts to align, good linkages with the PRS process, and the UN had worked with the Government to undertake an MDG report. The UNDAF was based on the challenges and gaps identified by the CCA, the PRSP and the first MDG report. The main donor coordination mechanism is the Local Consultative Group (LCG) which reviewed the draft UNDAF.

Views by governments were less critical in virtually all countries. Some, but not all, welcomed the UN’s large number of small funds, saw it as a counterweight to bilateral donors and the World Bank, and, in short, were much more comfortable in their negotiations. Governments were positive about the UN compared to other donors in the area of neutrality and taking up sensitive issues. In some countries they would have liked to see better single representation, rather than an endless stream of agency representatives, and, whilst this is being achieved in some countries, it is a new and uncomfortable ‘aid modality’ for UN agencies. In Afghanistan the government clearly appreciated its wide-ranging support and role as an honest broker with the bilaterals; in Cambodia opinion was more mixed, although it was acknowledged that the UNDAF and the National Plan were properly aligned (as they were in Ghana).

There is less information on the *views of civil society* on the UN’s efforts to harmonise. This is because i) in some countries, including some visited, the NGO sector was weak or non-existent; and ii) more mundanely, it was difficult to set up interviews with those who could be seen as representative. The reaction was positive in so far as they had been involved in the UNDAF, something that had only happened recently, although with so many NGOs in some countries there had to be some selection.

The strength of the UNDAF is its comprehensiveness, efforts to involve all partners, and the way it has aligned to PRSs where they exist. But where PRSs do not exist, the UNDAF runs into problems as a planning document, partly because there has been no proper articulation of national priorities by the government. The South African example of using the ‘Triple Threat’ is a good start to bring about some focus. In the longer run, UN priorities at country level would be strengthened following some effort by the UN in association with governments, to sketch out regional priorities. The UN has been asking a lot of UNCTs to make tough decisions on inter-agency priorities without greater support at the regional level.

In summary, in terms of the views regarding external agencies' participation in the UNDAF process, this seems to have been satisfactory, although all agencies talked about the curse of 'too many meetings', so the modality of harmonisation and alignment also have their transaction costs. There were some good examples of one-to-one interaction, but these can be personality driven, e.g. the IMF representative in Bangladesh who saw the UNDAF as a window on development. However, overall participation by governments was not deep, and that of civil society depended on the strength of the sector in the country.

But there is a dynamic situation as aid modalities change. The UN is finding its authority eroded, and experiencing difficulties in exerting its comparative advantage because it is seen as slow and behind in new aid modalities. The more advanced a country is with the introduction of new modalities, the more critical and pushing donors were.

3.4 Criteria for Quality of UNDAFs

Develop a set of criteria for assessing the overall quality of UNDAFs, which can be utilised by UN DGO in future similar exercises.

The starting point in proposing a set of quality criteria is to examine the basis for existing quality assessment criteria, in terms of what the Guidelines say that the UNDAF should address and how,³⁰ as it is reasonable for UNDAF quality to be assessed on what UNCTs were directed to do.

The key aspects of the Guidelines that affect quality are listed in Annex 6, drawn from the following sections:

Guiding principles that relate to quality (1.2); Results of the UNDAF that relate to quality (3.2); Structure and Content of the UNDAF document: the Results Section and Rationale for Choices made: UNDAF Results matrix (3.3 Section 2); Monitoring and Evaluation (Section 4); and Formulation of Country programmes and projects (Section 6).

In addition, DGO has (in December 2005) produced a set of draft questions to assess UNDAF quality. These are divided into the following five areas:

- Comparative advantage:³¹ presenting the UN's comparative advantage in terms of demonstrated capacity to achieve results and in comparison with other actors.
- Focus and Prioritisation: clarity of UNCT role and key deliverables as indicated by RM; do UNDAF outcomes focus on specific results; clear line of argumentation regarding intervention foreseen; is RM a true planning

³⁰ UN: CCA and UNDAF: Guidelines for Country Teams preparing a CCA and UNDAF in 2004, New York 2004.

³¹ Criteria to assess comparative advantage: (i) demonstrated track record of achieving results, leading to established credibility in priority area; (ii) recognised technical expertise in priority area; (iii) system and agency capacity; and (iv) geographical presence.

instrument including minimum expected results, a budget against results and an M&E framework.

- Alignment: Finalisation of UNDAF after completion of PRSP or NDP; UNDAF outcomes related to national priorities; UNDAF M&E aligned with national monitoring system.
- Logical framework: are number and range of UNDAF outcomes, planned activities, CP outputs all reasonable in terms of programme resources available; can agency be accountable for outputs; is chain of results logical; and are M&E indicators objectively verifiable.
- Conflict/transition Issues.

It is important to note that not all problems can be solved by actions at the country level, and that in order to improve UNDAF quality, a simple revision of the guidelines will not be sufficient; in fact this is usually the least effective means of improving quality.

The variations and issues relating to those aspects of UNDAF quality requiring attention were identified as follows:

Generally: If the UNDAF was broad and inherently difficult to implement, then the RM could not make up for these deficiencies. In reviewing UNDAFs there was a mixture in terms of the quality of the RMs and the M&EF. Good RMs were sometimes accompanied by poor M&EFs and vice versa. The Review suggests that things have turned out the wrong way round, with disproportionate time and effort devoted to CCA and UNDAF and not enough to RM and M&EF, given the importance of implementation. A radical view of the process would start with the RM!

UNDAF major weaknesses are:

- comparative advantage not emphasised;
- poor logic between the different parts of the documents;
- action not tightly enough defined;
- outcomes too broad and not easily measured;
- overall weak linkages between the RM and UNDAF, and the M&EF and RM;
- outputs not having any indicators in one large programme; and
- outcomes divided strictly between agencies, suggesting agency activities are not linked.

Results Matrix and M&EF major weaknesses are:

- poor identification of risks and assumptions;
- lack of targets and timelines;
- outputs not linked to those accountable;
- indicators not properly identified, often vague and very general. (This is not a matter of whether qualitative or quantitative – there should be a balance – but whether the correct indicator has been chosen. A quantitative element does help in later monitoring and evaluation.);

- broadness of outcomes so that there was no suitable practical indicator to show whether the outcome had been achieved or not. If national priorities are broad, then so will the outcomes;
- commitment to disaggregating results by gender which emphasises the general view that gender mainstreaming needs to be strengthened in the UNDAF; and
- M&EFs unrelated to the RM.

A proposed set of criteria could take the following points into account.³²

Part 1: Quality in terms of the Structure and Programming Logic of the UNDAF/RM/M&EF

Comparative advantage:

Criteria have to start with comparative advantage (as proposed in the December 2005 draft) because this is identified as the area where improvements are needed and where the UN can make the greatest contribution to aid effectiveness. UNCTs do not seem to face up to this directly. Proper identification of comparative advantage should lead more easily to better focus.

- Has the UNCT assessed its resources, achievements and strengths in relation to other actors and made choices for its proposed UNDAF actions?
- Conversely, has the UNCT made explicit where it will not be involved, and why?
- Has the UNCT said what activities it is discontinuing in the light of its UNDAF assessment and proposed results?
- Has the UNCT projected ahead and seen how its UNDAF assistance might need to adapt to changing national circumstances?
- Has the UNCT addressed its flexibility to change?
- Has the UNCT identified its institutional weaknesses, how far they matter in the UNDAF and how it expects to compensate for these weaknesses?
- Does the UNDAF programme of work match up with the resources available to do it?

Risk and uncertainty

UNCTs have to be realistic and open about what can go wrong or not proceed as well as they would like. A SWOT analysis could be used. This puts a heavy emphasis on the UNDAF as an instrument of implementation rather than just planning.

- Have the assumptions for UNDAF results been properly identified?
- Are they realistic?
- Have all the threats been identified?
- What will be done if things take a different oath from that expected?

Results

- Have the expected achievements been defined in a non-ambiguous way?
- Are they realistic?
- Are the resources available to meet the results?

³² Some of these proposals may require revisions of the guidelines if deemed valuable and necessary.

- Are the indicators realistic and measurable?

Accountability for results

- Who is responsible for implementing the UNDAF activity?
- Are the proper arrangements in place between agencies, including finance and delineation of responsibilities, and identification of complementary competencies?
- What are the proposed actions if the results are not achieved?
- Are there cost effective M&F procedures in place, with an emphasis on lesson learning?

Cross-cutting issues

UNCTs are good at cross-cutting issues, especially rights-based programming, and transition issues. Gender is less well handled.

- Have all the relevant cross-cutting issues been defined?
- Are all the relevant actors defined, along with their responsibilities and roles?
- How are the agency competencies synergistic?
- Have the results of the cross-cutting issue been well defined?

Part 2: Assessing quality in terms of the Aid Effectiveness Agenda

Criteria in Part 1 relate to the internal logic, strengths and realism of the UNDAF (including RM and M&EF). If these criteria are met, then many of the external elements (Ownership, Alignment, Harmonisation, Managing for Results and Mutual Accountability identified from the Paris Declaration on the Aid Effectiveness Agenda) will also be met. But to confirm:

Ownership

- Is the UNDAF contributing to country priorities and operating under the direction of government ministries and other institutions?
- Are there joint-monitoring structures to ensure that UNDAF interventions are being properly followed by all relevant actors?
- Are the arrangements for UNDAF coordination and implementation effective and allow proper government ownership?

Alignment (The following points are taken from the December 2005 proposal)

- Is the UNDAF finalised after completion of the PRSP or NDP?
- Do UNDAF outcomes relate to national priorities as expressed in the appropriate national document
- Is the UNDAF M&E system aligned to the national monitoring system?

Harmonisation

- What synergies have been identified between the UNDAF actions and those of other donors?
- Are the institutional arrangements sound, is it genuine joint activity with a reduction in transaction costs for the national authorities?

- Does the joint action exploit complementarities so that greater aid delivery effectiveness is achieved? If so, what are these key elements and what are the lessons learned/to be learned?

Managing for Results and Mutual Accountability

- Does the RM give confidence that management by results is possible?
- Is the institutional structure light enough to allow partners to be jointly accountable?

This checklist of criteria seems appropriate as a tool to be understood and assimilated by UNCTs. Changes in guidelines alone will not be enough to implement these criteria if they are considered valuable. In fact, some of these criteria require quite significant changes in staff structures and incentives at the political, institutional and individual levels identified in Section 2.4.

4. Recommendations

4.1 Content and Relevance of UNDG Global Support

- Senior management in the UN agencies need to consider the structure of incentives, send clearer messages and develop stronger incentives to encourage greater coherence between UN agencies at the country level.
- Components of training that require greater attention are results-based management, the logical framework, strategic planning and the new aid modalities of external partners such as budget support (even general development issues). Clearly some pragmatic choices have to be made. Common training in these is a potential area for harmonisation across the UN.
- The UNDAF process has generated a great deal of staff expertise in countries which should be organised for training and orientation. As UNCT staff have asked for ‘model’ UNDAFs for training purposes, this should be considered now that the quality of the UNDAFs has advanced.
- Training support should also be considered in the area of costing UNDAF outcomes.
- The time is ripe for a radical simplification of the UNDAF process that draws on accumulated staff experience: fewer guidelines, and dropping or substantially reducing the CCA. The CCA could be abandoned where there is no PRSP or equivalent national strategic framework. Guidelines can be revised to take note of the different status of agencies.
- Most countries are starting their second or third UNDAF. UNCTs are positive about training and guidelines, but say they are not country-specific enough. More country-specific training is desirable, and better country guidance is needed. As part of this, a ‘lessons learned’ paper might be generated by taking the previous UNDAF, any interesting or relevant information or evaluations for that country and comments by the Regional Readers Group. A small group of the UNCT could put together a guidance note advising on areas to focus on in the two-year run-up to the next UNDAF, and taking on board perhaps 2-3 other relevant UNDAFs (through proximity in the region, thematic, similar country size etc.).³³
- Prioritisation workshops could include critiques of previous UNDAFs by similar UNCTs. Using available evaluation information of the previous UNDAF could be the best means to go straight to a draft RM. Following this, various training techniques could be used, such as the CT for country ‘A’ working on the RM for country ‘B’ etc. A related training effort could be in assimilating areas where UNCTs have had problems such as: setting appropriate indicators, and more on mainstream RBM issues and terminology.

³³ The team heard several observations to the effect that ‘neighbouring country X did a good UNDAF, we could have adopted this and that idea here...’.

4.2 Role of Second Generation UNDAFs

- As regional structures are deepening, some sort of strategic thinking on resource allocation by UN agencies at regional-level is needed, to better support country-level work on country-level priorities. This would mean that UNCTs do not have to respond to all national priorities, which cause their UNDAFs to be insufficiently focused.
- The rights-based approach, gender and other cross-cutting themes are opportunities for agencies who are looking at different aspects of one issue, and can be promoted by UN agencies as areas of comparative advantage. These may prove to be the best areas of ‘focus’ for the UNDAFs. Some substantial guidelines for incorporating gender are needed.
- Countries facing implementation of the UNDAF should review their RMs and M&EFs as a first priority, making sure that they are as good as possible before going ahead with implementation. Countries should also set up a *cost effective mechanism* for updating UNDAF implementation or measuring progress towards MDGs using information gathered on a day-to-day basis. These actions will reduce the role of UNDAFs and CCAs as big ‘event’ when all other work has to wait.
- The confusion between what is ‘inside’ and what is ‘outside’ the UN should be resolved. There is a strong case for a ‘Part 2’ (allowed to be outside but linked to the UNDAF where appropriate) that could include the following agency programmes: i) the normative, standard-setting UN agencies; and ii) UN agencies with responsibility for regional and global issues. For both i) and ii), the UN has a strong comparative advantage over other non-multilateral organisations, therefore it is unwise to dilute these actions in an effort to develop an inclusive UNDAF.
- It may be time for a review of the differentiation of agency roles in terms of their relationship to the UNDAF. One idea proposed for consideration is that the UNDAF should focus on operational activities for development and the work of resident agencies, while normative activities could be summarised in an annex (or ‘Part 2’) and not be part of the UNDAF unless they involve operations; and non-resident agencies could be given opportunities to comment and make suggestions, possibly as part of the regional quality support process. A good UNDAF should be able to make clear the links between its development outcomes and how the normative, standard-setting agencies make an impact at country level. In the longer run, this may allow the normative agencies to give a better articulation of their own difficulties in integrating normative and development work at country level.
- Action should be taken to resolve the incoherence over the use of the UNDAF as a fund-raising document, and also as to what should be done to make UNCT’s more cohesive in their approach to fund raising.

- The role of the Resident Coordinator needs clarification. This Review repeats the conclusions of the CCF Evaluation which are as follows (see Section 6.2). The RC should be given more authority. It may be necessary to free RCs from day-to-day responsibility for UNDP programmes, in order to demonstrate their independence and impartiality. This would probably imply giving the next senior in-country UNDP staff member the responsibility for day-to-day management of UNDP programmes. A number of ideas could be envisaged for increasing the RC's authority: i) the RC to sign off on the UNDAF and have responsibility for monitoring implementation (under consideration); ii) the UNDAF to be used as an explicit basis for (ExCom) agencies own planning documents (under consideration); iii) the RC to sign off on agencies planning documents or results matrices, and iv) the RC to have the authority to initiate joint programming activities, but not have the sole authority.

4.3 Effectiveness of UNDAFs in Promoting Harmonisation and Alignment Efforts

- There is a need to better align UN instruments with emerging donor country instruments. Bilateral donors are pleased at the coming together of UN agencies, but are holding judgment on what this really means in terms of implementation. As suggested in a recent discussion with UNDG staff, staff need to be better trained in modalities such as PRSs and SWAPs, and make better linkages between these instruments and UN areas of comparative advantage. This would not be to expert level, but should be sufficient to understand how these impact on and align to their own programmes.
- UNRCs should be given the support and incentives to be the country chair of donors groups wherever appropriate, and to take other leadership roles as defined by Regional Directors.

4.4 Criteria for Quality of UNDAFs

- A set of criteria are proposed (see Section 3.4), which are in two parts: Part 1: Quality in terms of the Structure and Programming Logic of the UNDAF/RM/M&EF, and Part 2: Assessing Quality in terms of the Aid Effectiveness Agenda. Criteria in Part 1 relate to the internal logic, strengths and realism of the UNDAF (including RM and M&EF). If these criteria are met, then many of the external elements of the Aid Effectiveness Agenda will also be met. These criteria should be tested, and, if found valuable, a range of actions (some minor but many major) will need to be taken.

5. Annexes

Annex 1. Terms of Reference: Review of the Role and Quality of UNDAFs

BACKGROUND

The Overseas Development Institute has been approached by the United Nations Development Group Office (UNDGO) to submit a proposal for work related to an independent review of the role and quality of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) in developing countries.

Such review is meant to assess trends and progress in the UN's capacity to position itself strategically at the country level, both with respect to other donor agencies and in its efforts to support national priorities and the MDGs. More in particular, the quality and usefulness of so-called 'second-generation' UNDAFs and UNDAF Results Matrices (developed since 2004) in focusing UN activities on areas of comparative advantage will be reviewed, along with the relevance and efficacy of UNDG global support to country-level processes, including guidance and training.

OBJECTIVES

There are four main objectives of the review:

1. Improve the content and relevance of future UNDG global support for UNDAF-related processes at country-level, including funding, policy guidance and training, by assessing their effectiveness so far and ways in which they could better respond to the needs of UN Country Teams to ensure that UNDAFs are strategic;
2. Evaluate the degree to which 'second-generation' UNDAFs represent a step forward in defining the UN's overall strategic role at country-level in the drive to support country policies, the implementation of national poverty plans/PRSPs in order to achieve the MDGs;
3. Assess the effectiveness of UNDAFs in promoting better harmonisation and alignment efforts at country-level between the UN at large and other donors, following the principles of the 'Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness';
4. Develop a set of criteria for assessing the overall quality of UNDAFs, which can be utilised by UNDGO in future similar exercises.

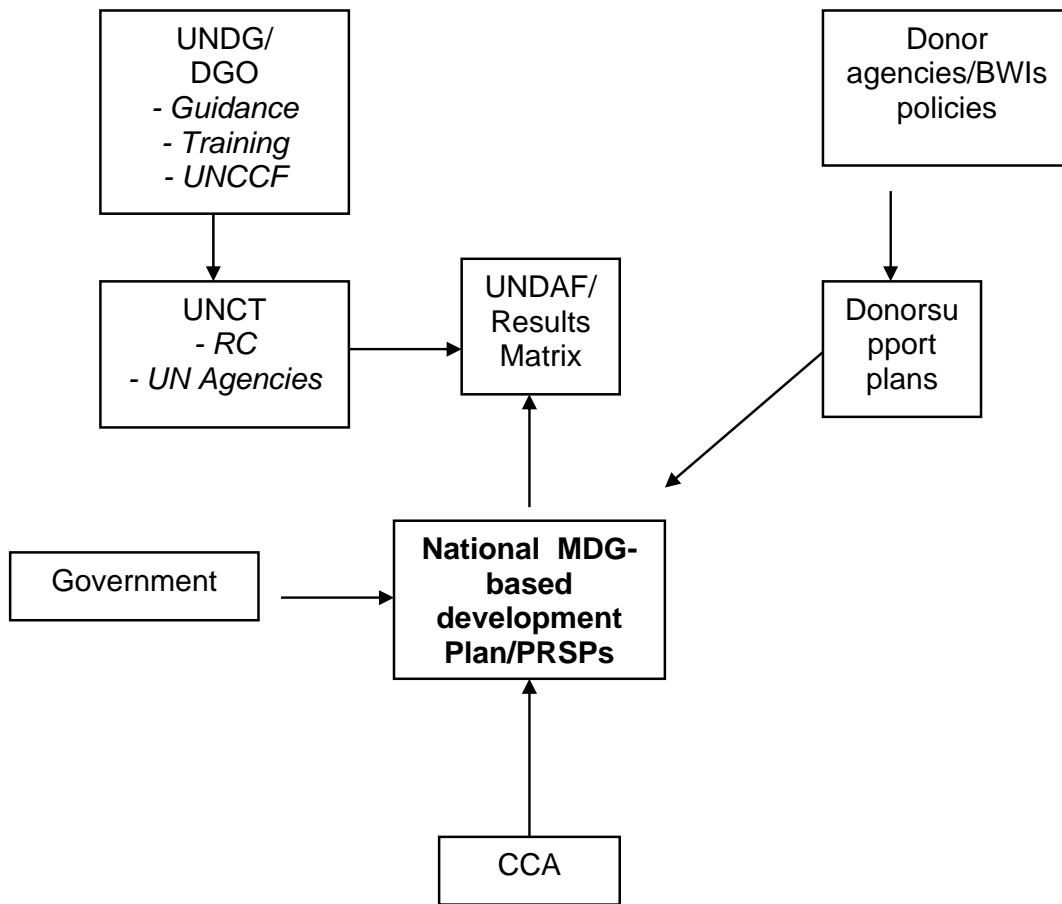
In graphic form, the figure below sets out the main components of the complex set of interactions that the review will have to address.

METHODOLOGY AND TIMING

The proposed methodology for the study is based on the following steps:

- A preliminary phase will look at relevant background material, and develop some basic guidelines for the UNDAF review, ensuring that these respond to the four main objectives listed above.
- A one-day workshop will be held in early July 2005 to discuss the proposed guidelines and the overall structure of the review, with participants from ODI (and possibly other external organisations participating in the review), the UNDGO, the Department for International Development and the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (these last two have been funding many of the relevant UNDGO activities through the Country Coordination Fund, CCF).

Figure 1: Harmonising with National Development Plans: The main processes and actors



- A desk-based study of 10-15 second generation UNDAFs will be undertaken in July and August 2005, following the proposed guidelines, to assess their overall quality in relation to the objectives of the review, and their contribution to a strategic positioning of the UN at country-level in support to country policies and priorities and the linkage with national poverty plans/PRSPs. The desk-based research will mostly consist of review of existing documentation, will involve phone and email interviews with key informants to cross-check specific data and information when necessary. While assessing the quality, specific attention will be given to the (institutional) process that has been followed; criteria will be established to measure ‘success’ and/or impact of the UNDAF. The results of the desk-based study will be included in a preliminary report to be submitted to the UNDGGO in early September.
- A series of more in-depth country case studies will be carried out in September and October 2005, including 3-5 country visits, where interviews and discussions will be held with a range of stakeholders, including UN Country Teams, other donor agencies, recipient governments and other relevant actors, such as the BWI’s. These visits could be complemented with trips to regional offices, when

deemed necessary, to gauge their role and inputs in the overall UNDAF process. Each country visit will be carried out by a senior researcher, a member of UNDGGO, and (optional) a representative of the UK or Dutch Government, and will last approximately 5 working days.

- A final report, summarising the results of both the desk-based and the field research will be submitted to UNDGGO and the donors by mid-November 2005.

COMPLEMENTARITY WITH CCF EVALUATION

The UK and Dutch Governments are planning an evaluation of their contributions to the Country Coordination Fund 2001-2004, which has been providing financial support to coordination activities through the UNDGGO, both at global but mostly at country-level. The main questions that the CCF evaluation is meant to address are:

1. Which activities have been funded from the CCF?
2. How did the CCF work?
3. Has the CCF been effective?
4. Has the CCF been efficient?
5. What are the lessons and/or recommendations?

Clearly, there are a number of commonalities between the UNDAF review and the CCF evaluation process, as CCF funds have been supporting the kind of activities that contribute to the overall objectives of the UNDAF process. Also, the same methodology could be applied in both cases. While no agreement has been reached as yet, the possibility of carrying out both reviews in parallel, (i.e. carrying out desk-based research on both topics and taking advantage of the same country visits) is being considered. This would increase transaction costs in the initial phase, as common guidelines and procedures would have to be negotiated, but is likely to generate significant economies of scale and of scope.

Annex 2. Summaries of Country Visits

Afghanistan visit 22-26 November, 2005:

Tony Faint, consultant and Tuesday Reitano, DGO

Background

Afghanistan is an extremely poor country with very low social indicators. It has suffered from protracted conflicts over several decades, from which it is hoped that it is now emerging. The security situation remains problematic, especially in the South and East of the country. Donors dominate the finances of the Government, with the US by far the largest. Afghanistan is in process of preparing an I-PRSP.

UN role and resourcing

The UN role in Afghanistan is unusual. It is one of the handful of countries in which the UN has a Security Council mandate and operates an 'integrated mission' (UNAMA), which has mandates in the fields of disarmament and reintegration, humanitarian assistance, refugee resettlement and the supervision of elections. UNAMA is headed by an SRSG, and the UN Resident Coordinator also has the role of one of the two Deputy SRSGs. UNAMA's relationship with the Government is close and pervasive.

The main UN development agencies are represented in Afghanistan alongside UNAMA, and there is curious arrangement whereby UNAMA has its own separate advisers in a variety of fields (such as governance, elections, gender) which are within the competence of certain agencies. The UN budget in the country is large. Setting aside the costs of UNAMA itself, the resource mobilisation targets in the recently prepared UNDAF total \$1.36bn over the 3 years 2006-2008.

Views expressed to the mission on the UN's operation in Afghanistan were generally very favourable. While it cannot really be called neutral in view of the SC mandate, the Government clearly appreciates its wide-ranging support and its role as an honest broker with the bilaterals. There is also a close relationship with the World Bank, which is an active member of the UN Country Team, and also channels some resources through UN administered Trust Funds.

In-country coordination

Due to the dominance of UNAMA and the dual role of the RC/DSRSG, UN family coordination is close. The RC is seen as acting for the whole UN family and the next senior UNDP staff member acts as de facto UNDP Resident Representative. The RC is supported by a small coordination office which has recently been strengthened by the addition of a Coordination Adviser with background in DGO, funded from the CCF (CPC cluster). The work of the office is appreciated by UN agencies who believe it has helped to bring them together.

Several joint programmes are being developed on the back of the UNDAF (see below). Joint premises are also well advanced importantly due to the UN's tight security regime. Compounds are mandatory and there are several in close proximity in Kabul, and also a joint compound (UNOCA) outside town, managed by UNOPS, from which some 7 UN Agencies operate, including UNICEF, UNFPA and WHO. UNAMA also has 8 regional centres, and there are common UN premises in two of these.

CCA/UNDAF

Sequencing was unusual: the CCA/UNDAF was prepared before the I-PRSP, which is only now being put together. This led to controversy with the Regional Directors who felt the UNCT should wait (a bilateral donor also told the team that was their view). However it was the universal view of the UNCT to go ahead. One effect was that the usual QS and advice from regional offices for the process was not forthcoming.

The UNDAF has been useful for the UNCT. A new strategic framework for the UN development agencies was badly needed – as the country moves from an emergency footing to longer term development. Its implementation matrix has been made the basis for their own plans by the ExCom agencies. It has also raised the profile of Human Rights issues in Afghanistan, and helped the UN to prepare for active participation in the I-PRSP. It may need to be re-visited, however, when the I-PRSP is completed.

The process was UN-centric, with Government, donors and civil society invited to events but little active participation, partly because the process was intensive and conducted with tight deadlines – the CCA took 3 months and the UNDAF itself only about 6-8 weeks to prepare. Training sessions for CCA/UNDAF were appreciated by the UNCT, but as noted there was little support from regional offices – and indeed ExCom agencies handle Afghanistan from 3 different regional centres (Cairo, Colombo and Kathmandu) and in the view of the CT are not well equipped on Afghanistan's particular needs.

The UNDAF is strong on the Human Rights aspect and built on the MDG report which had just been prepared by the Government with strong support from the UN.

Like most of its kind, the Afghanistan UNDAF did not in itself transform UN programmes in-country. The programmes are changing, but because of the consolidation of the Government and the move of the country from an emergency to a development status. Nor does it contain any real prioritisation of UN programmes – its four 'focus areas' are very broadly drawn, and in addition some activities are continuing outside UNDAF. However the UNDAF process certainly did bring the CT together and gave impetus to joint working amongst the agencies.

Tony Faint

29 November 2005, Summary prepared February 2006

Bangladesh country visit, 19-25 November

Richard Longhurst, consultant, ODI and Geoff Manthey, DGO

Background

Aid information:

Net ODA (US\$ million) in 2001 = 1,030; 2002 = 913; 2003 = 1,393

Net ODA/GNI in 2001 = 2.1%; 2002 = 1.8%; 2003 = 2.6%

Most ODA given to Economic Infrastructure and Services followed by Action relating to debt, Education and Programme Assistance.

Top ten donors in terms of gross ODA are: IDA (World Bank), Japan, UK, AsDF, US, Netherlands, Denmark, EC, Canada, SAF & ESAF (IMF).

UN Agencies present: FAO, ILO, IOM, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP, WHO, the World Bank and IMF.

Coordinating capacity: RC, Principal Officer, and Administrative Officer

A substantial and good quality UNDAF had been recently completed. There is a Local Consultative Donor Group (LCD). The UNDAF was linked to the parallel processes of the PRSP and MDG report. Most of the agencies were located in one building.

Appreciation of UN performance

Government is positive about the role of the UN although timetabling problems (and possibly weight of visiting missions) meant the mission met only one representative of the Government, although he was very influential. The Government Planning Commission took a lead in the Steering Committee process.

Donors said that the UN does seem to be working together more and moving in the right direction, although this was disputed by one donor who felt that it had not moved far enough. Donors agreed, however, that the profile of the UN was low and needed to do more to provide a counterweight to the large donors and the PRSP process. The personality tensions in the UNCT had weakened its performance with evident splits in the team. This had affected the perception of donors towards the UNCT. The question as to what action can be taken to resolve this unhappy situation remains unanswered, although natural staff rotation means that the situation is now resolved.

UN was a provider of high quality technical cooperation/advice, many of the UN staff were very strong professionals, but as yet the whole is not greater than the sum of the parts. Generally as regards better coherence, there is no clear verdict on the number of agencies and their diversity, the UNDAF notwithstanding.

Activities, Initiatives and Functioning

CCA/UNDAF: The UNDAF is a short document with 6 outcomes. It is complementary with the PRSP, linkages emphasised, UN's comparative advantage mostly emphasised, and RM is substantial, non-ExComs were well drawn in. CCA is one of the first rights-based reports. Governments have gone back and forth on PRSP, and the UNDAF is seen as less important. All government energy went into the PRSP with full version in 2004, presented at donors

meeting in May 2004, approved by October 2005 (for PRSP 2005-08). The PRSP was taken seriously by the Government, written by them and is a very good document.

There have been two CCAs, one draft UNDAF and one final UNDAF. The first CCA was ready in 1999-2000 but had problems with the government: with elections every 4 years in Bangladesh, the government has tended to change hands on a regular basis. There are periods when important decisions cannot be taken by the civil service and the politicians. The CCA is therefore solely a UN assessment, rather than one also endorsed by the Government, and is one of the first rights-based assessments. The UN began to draft the UNDAF but a new Government was installed in October 2001. The Government that vacated gave the PRSP sufficient attention and events in 2002 were all about the PRSP, UNDAF was not seen as important. There was a lack of harmony over country planning cycles because CCA was delayed and UNFPA had started its country programme.

Views within UN agencies on the process varied from agency to agency. UNDAF was time intensive with deputies of 4 ExComs attending at least 12 meetings to work on the matrix. The non-ExComs were less committed; the non-resident agencies were not seen in the process except for IFAD. ILO's Decent Work Country Programme was integrated in the UNDAF. There was good participation from the IMF, as the representative saw the CT as a development window outside the Ministry of Finance. The World Bank Country Director up to 2003 was heavily engaged; but the Director after 2003 sent a representative. There is a SWAp for the Second Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP II) - includes UNICEF - which is aligned to PRSP. However, there is no reference to this in the UNDAF.

Generally training workshops were very good, although could do more on linkages between planning and implementation partners. UNDAF could be a resource for fund raising, and could be a simpler process, with the template trimmed down. Support and feedback from DGO was good although it could be more direct and simple.

The MDG process is run in parallel, and was intellectually useful, inclusive and consultative, and stressed the process itself. The UNDAF shows the UNDAF-CCA-MDG-PRSP link. The World Bank did an MDG report in parallel, which was launched together with the UN's but the World Bank apparently did not consult with the Government.

The LCD working groups reviewed PRSP chapters, and were energetic middle-level professional agency staff. There is also a very active civil society. UNDAF2 was carried out in parallel with CCA2. As there is expertise on risk reduction and linking relief and development, risk reduction (floods) is the sixth outcome.

Area-based programmes (e.g. the Chittagong Hills Tract) appear to be good for joint programming, although there was a view that the CHT added an unnecessary 'layer' to the UNDAF.

On Common Services: in the building there are common services for travel, guards, security, cleaning, canteen, however there has been little joint action so far. Salary structures are not harmonised, but progress must be made on the Common House, procurement and financial procedures. Before harmonisation, each agency needs to plan better. The four senior operations officers of the ExComs were very keen to find opportunities for bringing the services together, but this was not easy. They will meet regularly to look for 'quick wins' but they will need support from UNCT Heads and country offices, and higher up the chain.

The Coordination resources were invaluable as this allowed a full-time UN coordinator and another full-time staff member for management of donor community. UNDP has funded coordination from 1999, and from 2004 from RC funds. The importance of having a senior national officer who does not rotate, and has country knowledge was emphasised. The UNRC

was disappointed that other agencies did not put funds aside for coordination. Agreed that UNDP wears two hats but other agencies should also wear two hats: they should have a minimum inter-agency budget. Each agency should allow some authority to delegation to the field for a small amount of coordination funds.

The RC Administrative Officer in charge of managing the donor community has been in the RC office since March 2005. They are in charge of the Local Consultative Group, which includes bilateral and multilaterals, and hold monthly meetings (there are 22 thematic working groups). World Bank was the Chair, now USAID, and UNDP is on the Executive Committee. This is a major means of positioning the UN. LCG is equivalent to the CG and now focusing on the PRSP.

The coordination staff went to Turin twice then became resource persons for the UNDAF retreat in Iran. There were regular agency meetings. In April 2004, UNRC hosted a UNDAF/CCA training workshop as part of UNDAF roll out for 2006-10.

Richard Longhurst
Report November 2005, summary March 2006

Burkina Faso country visit, 7-10 November, 2005

Ben van Baren, consultant; Jeanine van Krimpen, Netherlands MFA and Kai Buchholz, DGO

Background

2004 (Source: WB Country data profile)

GNI US\$ 4.8 billion

GNI/capita US\$ 360

Aid/capita US\$ 37.2

EC, France and IDA provide about 50% of ODA

UNS is active in an environment where partners are putting an effort in implementing the Paris Declaration and where government is taking ownership of the development process.

Agencies present: UNDP, WFP, UNICEF, UNFPA, WHO, FAO, UNAIDS, UNIC, UN-Habitat, UNIDO, WB, FMI

Part of the agencies located in one building, which is not considered a UN House.

Coordinating capacity: RC, Coordination Officer, Assistant, Human Affairs Coordinator (bridging financing by the Netherlands).

Appreciation of UN performance

Government is positive but clearly expresses the opinion that the UNS has to deliver and show that plans can be realised in practice.

Positive factors: i) participative process, leadership by government, ii) alignment to the national programme, iii) one has a better understanding of the UN system, its capacities and opportunities, iv) well managed process, v) harmonisation of Agencies' actions.

Weak points: i) process still ponderous, in spite of effort to alleviate it (process CCA), ii) little time to comment on drafts, iii) changes in persons participating as representatives of partners in process, iv) not sufficient reflection on lessons of process, v) linking with HQs complicates process, vi) silence after period of intensive cooperation. Will process continue?

Bilaterals expect more from the UNS than it presently shows. i) participation to the PRSP process has been insufficient, UNS is not sufficiently present in sector dialogue, ii) there is a lack of focus in agencies' plans, too much involved in small projects, iii) The CCA/UNDAF/CPAP process has not defined the areas of added value of the UNS, iv) partners' comments on the UNDAF have not been integrated sufficiently.

WHO has played a very much appreciated role in the health sector, taking the lead and guiding the process as a knowledgeable independent coordinator. Role which one would expect from the UN.

Comments of UN staff members: i) PRSP is very open and it is difficult to focus, ii) there is the viewpoint with some Agencies/persons that the UNS should respond to its mandate, which means that governments' requests should be complied with, which makes selecting/reducing areas of intervention difficult, iii) UNICEF has developed a strategic frame work worldwide, which is not placed automatically second to the viewpoints of donors, iv) process better than those seen in other countries (WB)

In general; There are in the country initiatives to get to better harmonisation between partners, basket funding and sectoral approach are developing. UN part of unofficial platform on harmonisation. The process goes on, partners are willing and interested to have the UNS play its role. However, the mission feels that they will not wait and the UNS has to move with the others in order not to miss strategic opportunities. HQs need to be more flexible and give possibilities to the UNCT to take part at country level.

Activities, initiatives and functioning

Policy and Quality Assurance

CCA/UNDAF: Heavy process, lightening should be considered. The need for a CCA in the presence of a good PRSP is questioned by different persons. Added value considered minor.

Remarks of the mission: i) the mission misses the real discussion on added value of the UNS and its comparative advantage in the CCA/UNDAF process/products, ii) difficult to get to clear focus due to : Including \leftarrow \rightarrow Excluding agencies. In this respect the question comes up in how far it is necessary/strategically wise to respond to all government requests for services within agencies' mandate. Agencies tend to refer to their mandate when the need of their interventions is discussed, iii) is it possible to make choices which reduce the areas of intervention of agencies without external support? One requests agencies to exclude themselves, which is very tough. External support required/ directives from organisation's higher levels, iv) the added value of the UNS should be the essential criteria for prioritisation v) in practice the CPD and CPAPs are steps which serve to get more focus in the programmes. Budget allocation from HQ limits options left for the UNDAF. Thematic groups have to revise the matrix in order to adapt it to the choices that have been made. This would also make the UNDAF better applicable as a monitoring instrument, vi) would it be an option to include an externally guided prioritisation step in the process before finishing the UNDAF? This would allow a much smoother translation from UNDAF into CDP and CPAPs. In the present situation agencies teams prepare CPDs and CPAPs in what seems a separate process, vii) The CCA/UNDAF as a process has proven to be a good instrument to develop cohesion and shared insights and stimulate cooperation at the SNU level and to increase the understanding by partners of the possibilities and potential of the UNS.

UNCT thinks: i) that an extra step would be ideal, but that one is making progress towards this situation, ii) flexibility from HQs is claimed to be essential for the agencies in view of being able to participate adequately in the prioritisation process, iii) the UNDAF defines joint programmes. UNCT sees problems for their implementation due to administrative barriers and limitations due to management systems. UNCT shows conviction that they must be realised. The mission team is left with the impression that joint programming is maybe seen too much as the only way in which the UNS has to position itself.

CCS : country support (country focal points) and training/facilitation

Support through DGO is considered good in general, some remarks: i) training and facilitation of CCA/UNDAF related workshops mechanisms are considered good and stimulating, ii) appreciation of the guidelines is mixed. They are considered helpful, but also very extensive and difficult when one wants solutions for specific issues, iii) CO training and web site info have not been effective due to language problems (training/web site in English, CO French speaking) iv) use of Focal Point very limited. There were questions raised (recovery costs, participation of agencies in group management) which the FP could have easily guided to knowledgeable and specialised persons. More frequent and systematic access to expertise at DGO level should be sought.

Regional support has been given by commenting on CCA/UNDAF. This was judged helpful for the UNFPA part. The mission wonders in how far the regional support could be

instrumental for a more focused UNDAF, clearer insight in added value and comparative advantage of the UNS.

The UNCT expects that the implementation of the joint programming will require an intensive external strategic support (overall view, integration of experiences and lessons from elsewhere) and also a certain freedom of action allowing the elaboration of the best mechanisms.

The Resident Coordinator and his unit

The RC positions himself very clearly as the Coordinator of the UNS. UNDP Deputy Representative represents UNDP. No remarks on double hatting observed. He plays a very stimulating role in pushing cooperation and trying to clearly position the UNS

Unit consists of RC, CO, Assistant and Officer for Humanitarian support. The latter is contracted with bi-lateral funds, to be taken over by other funding (CPC?). Role is related to instable situation in Ivory Coast. According to the RC the units' capacity should be increased in view of future intentions with joint programmes. The mission wonders whether these will automatically fall under the responsibility of the RC/Unit or that one of the agencies will be leading. RC is of the opinion that capacity in the area of communication should also be strengthened. Limitations for participation in basket funding/sectoral approach/budget funding is seen by the UNCT as an important inhibiting factor for a better positioning of the UNS.

CPC (mainly on transition)

Preventive action has been taken in view of consequences of potential conflicts in neighbouring countries. (Ivory Coast, Liberia) Humanitarian Officer contracted, contingency plan made.

Operations/administration

At operational level the Sub-Committee Operations has been operational since a year and it is working on the basis of an action plan. Joint initiatives taken for matters like building maintenance, travel services, uniform DSAs, fuel and car maintenance. Merging services not discussed.

No support sought yet from Dakar (regional office) or New York. There is no insight in savings. Initiative to ask DGO support to find out about possibilities with regard to a UN house has not been responded to.

Other issues

The UNCT is an enthusiastic and dynamic team with a will to make progress and to find solutions for obstacles in their way. Good initiative of the RC to include coordination/cooperation between agencies as an element of personnel assessment.

Cooperation between agencies is good, approach to ExCom and specialised agencies equal. Difference between agencies are created by their rules and regulations. Interesting initiative of WHO to present itself as one of the UN-family by preparing and presenting a CPAP.

Ben van Baren

Report November 2005, summary February 2006

Cambodia visit, 29 November-2 December, 2005

Ben van Baren – consultant, Liliana Ramirez - DGO

Background

2004 (Source: WB Country data profile)

GNI US\$ 4.4 billion

GNI/capita US\$ 320

Aid/capita US\$ 37.9

Cambodia is a post-conflict country and as such, both human and physical capital have been depleted, resulting in severe capacity constraints and poor social indicators. Alignment of donor support with NPRS priorities is an important step toward increased harmonisation. Partnerships across sectors and programs are at different stages of development, ranging from donors fully committed to joint planning, programming and budgeting (e.g. exemplary donor alignment in the education sector) to areas where partnerships have not yet developed (e.g., fiduciary framework).

The five major external partners are Japan, ADB, WB, the USA and France, accounting for approx. 77% of gross ODA in 2002-3. ODA accounted for 12.5% of GNI in 2003.

UN Agencies participating in UNDAF: UNDP, WFP, UNICEF, UNFPA, WHO, FAO, UNAIDS, UNHCR, OHCHR, ILO, UNESCO, UN Habitat, UNIFEM, WB; UN Coordinating capacity: RC, Coordination Officer

Appreciation of UN performance

Government: Appreciation mixed, Council for Development of Cambodia (CDC) critical, other entities positive. Observations:

- i) UNDAF and NSDP are properly aligned ii) attempts for cooperation by donors are appreciated, iii) positive contribution to national development of the country, guidance/finance, iii) important for human rights.
- i) more involvement of government in a next UNDAF would be appreciated, ii) CCA carried out by independent partner would have been appreciated. UN seen as more neutral than other donors, iii) TA is endless and does not sufficiently build capacity.

Donor's observations: i) Impression that many of the Agencies are genuinely trying to play their role, which is to use their neutral position: a) to support government to improve its performance, b) to bring government and donors and government and civil society together, ii) UN's capacity to run big projects is useful in the Cambodian context, UN is not so much seen as a provider of expertise because its rigid system complicates recruitment of experts with the required profile, iii) too much of a project mentality is an impediment for the UN to respond to requirements of budget support and the pressure to acquire funds promotes duplication of activities.

NGOs' observations: i) UN tends to involve NGOs more since the last two years ii) more coherence observed between agencies over the last years, iii) the deployment of experts is insufficiently linked to transfer of knowledge, capacity building iv) experts must be aware that their advice can have considerable implications for a country. Reference is made to the introduction of a user fee system in health care which made it inaccessible for the poor. Equity fund for the poor introduced to overcome problems. This is no sustainable solution. Advice should be given by highly experienced persons, it should be evidence based and take context and views of local stakeholders into consideration, v) UN should play a stronger role

as an interlocutor between government and civil society and not let prevail relations between UN and government too much.

In general: It seems that at the level of institutions in Cambodia there is not so much pressure on the UN to change and that one is satisfied with the role it plays. There has been limited involvement of the government and NGOs in the UNDAF process, the UNDAF document was not always known/ received by partners we spoke to.

Activities, initiatives and functioning

Policy and Quality Assurance

CCA/UNDAF started at a moment where cooperation between key donors (WB, ADB, DFID) was a fact. Personalities were the cause for the initiative to cooperate. They were triggered by the poor performance of their organisations in the foregoing period. Parties prepared a joint analysis of Cambodia's development context and agreed upon a certain division of areas of intervention. The UNCT decided to use the aforementioned country assessment as the basis for its UNDAF and not to make a CCA. The UNDAF is a concise document, strongly human rights based and with 4 result areas: Good Governance and the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, Agriculture and Rural Poverty, Capacity Building and Human Resource Development for the Social Sectors and (support to the planning process for) the National Strategic Development Plan. The UNCT decided to define themes, areas of products and services to which one or more agencies would relate as a way to maintain the strategic focus of the exercise. UNCT's approach to the UNDAF has been very practical and result driven. The product is a concise document with a limited number of results/outcomes, which however are broadly defined, thus leaving space for a wide range of activities and for limited focus.

Remarks with regard to the UNDAF and its follow up:

- The timing of the UNDAF process has not been optimal when seen in the light of the national planning process. The UNDAF was adopted in march 2005 whereas the NSDP 2007 – 2010 will be finalised and passed by the end of 2005 in principle. The NSDP and the UNDAF have a common base in the Government's Rectangular Strategy, which makes sure that they are tuned to a certain extent. Using the NSDP as a basis would have been a better option.
- Results have been broadly defined, also the UNCT is of the opinion that more work is required to define them more specifically.
- Analysis of the CPDs for the ExCom agencies and the preliminary UNFPA CPAP shows that there is a high degree of continuity in the programmes of the different agencies. This is also confirmed by comments of staff members.
CPDs all clearly refer to the UNDAF (with the exception of the WFP) and activities fit in its context. It is, however difficult to see what the UNDAF exercise will bring as an extra. Ideas around the themes have not materialised yet. A mapping exercise is required to define content of activities and the contribution of the different agencies. It is too early to get an insight in the effects of the present UNDAF, in what it is doing from the point of view of positioning of the UNS, the creation of synergies and added value. A thorough analysis needs to be made after for instance 2 years to assess the programme from this perspective and to see in how far the UNDAF has contributed to it.
- The UNDAF positions the UNS in broad terms, referring e.g. to its focus on human rights as a central issue for development and its neutral and impartial position as an asset. The Cambodia UNDAF is clearer in this regard than other UNDAFs I have read. I think however, that positioning/indication of added value and comparative advantage of the UNS are insufficient and not really operationalised in the documents and the development of further plans (CDPs, CPAPs, AWP's most probably)

- The definition of themes - examples are joint data collection, youth, HIV/AIDS and trafficking - is interesting and facilitates innovation most probably. One of the difficulties foreseen is that it will be more difficult to link to HQ for support because there is no direct fit with HQ's set up. (Where do you go with the theme youth?) More generally speaking one can say that other approaches require flexibility throughout the UNS.
- Changes will be slow and permanent attention will be required to attain them. Therefore systematic follow up and monitoring and evaluation are essential.

The overall process of UNDAF, CPDs, CPAPs and AWP is seen as heavy. Tuning between CPDs and CPAPs of the different ExCom agencies is still required. The intention that the CCA/UNDAF would relieve the programming burden for the agencies did not materialise. It was foreseen that the UNDAF would make heavy planning, strategising and dialogue unnecessary in the preparation of the CDP and CPAP. In practice this does not work out.

The UNCT sees the UNDAF as an instrument for positioning and the creation of synergies. It is also seen as a product that gives more clout to the UN.

As in other countries the UNDAF process has helped to bring people together and it produced ample cooperation within the UNS. This situation must be maintained and extended in view of the aspired stronger presence of the UNS with a better articulation of added value and comparative advantage. Thinking should be given on how to keep up this spirit and how to maintain and stimulate an open eye for a better performance of the UNS. The RC has a role here, M&E of the UNDAF can be an instrument and staff thought that continuity of this attention should be anchored at DGO level.

CCS : country support (country focal points) and training/facilitation

Preparation of staff members in Bangkok is considered adequate. The UNCT is satisfied with the support for the UNDAF prioritisation retreat. Facilitators' team reaction to the special circumstances (no CCA and theme definition instead of linking outcome to agency) was flexible.

Support by the Region was experienced as mechanic, directed at the application of the rules. Staff understands that it was difficult to give support, given the character of the required support: issues had to be discussed and thought through, choices had to be made. The consultant thinks that this points to the requirement of tailor made support.

When considering to skip the CCA there was uncertainty within the team whether one could divert from the rules. After all positive reaction, encouraging. DGO has become more flexible over the years. Consultant thinks that apparently the system of country focal points does not operate smoothly, although the set up with persons assigned to specific countries seems a good approach. A remark was made by a staff member that it would be good if people would pass along every now and then. It should be noted that also the DGO staff members accompanying the review team were very positive about their contacts in the field and their contribution to better understanding.

Operations/administration

The common services issue has been recently taken up seriously. Operational Committee is in place. Team enthusiastic, however, capacity limited.

Possible initiatives listed. Support for prioritisation would be welcome (e.g. experiences on complexity of introduction, expected gains). No tangible results yet. Positive for teamwork and professional development.

In order to push the issue, common services should be discussed in staff meetings with subsequent decisions.

UNS spread out over 13 locations. Initiatives for UN House have been taken. Perspective gloomy due to high costs for adequate plot.

Common cash transfer prepared, personnel participated in training. CamInfo, derived from DevInfo is seen as a very useful tool. Support for Operations management: not from HQ and Regional Office (not sought) but through website and own network of responsible person. Support could be improved by having an experienced resource person pass by regularly.

Website with discussion forum is in itself interesting but not accessed regularly. You don't have the time to go through the whole discussion and there should be a directive advice by an expert indicating what are the best solutions for specific issues.

Other issues

The UNDAF has been taken up by a committed and dedicated group of staff, looking for opportunities for new initiatives. Push for change comes from high levels in the UN organisation. Sense of urgency is apparently felt by the team. The RC in Cambodia positions himself as the UN Coordinator, double hatting does not seem much of an issue.

Trust and a position with authority are essential factors for the RC to adequately carry out his role. The role of the RC is very important for creating a spirit of one UN.

Agencies are not used to represent others. During the preparation of the programme, together with WB, ADB and DFID the UNS was represented by a delegation. This was a new experience and delegation members felt insecure about the reaction of the other agencies. This brings up the question in how far agencies are prepared for these situations, which will be more frequent when one wants to act as one UN. Does it impede progress in this respect? How can agencies be better prepared? Would special action be helpful?

Obstacles for cooperation are comparable to those observed in other countries:

- Mixed messages from HQs (Alignment with NSDP required ← → plans/mandates of Agencies)
- Rules and procedures (separate CPDs and CPAPs, different formats)
- Different flags present
- Lack of stimuli for cooperation/UNS or promotion of Agency

Ben van Baren

Report December 2005, summary February 2006

Georgia country visit, 3-7 October, 2005

Ben van Baren, Tony Faint, Richard Longhurst – consultants, Arthur Erken - DGO

Background

2004 (Source: WB Country data profile)

GNI US\$ 5.1 billion

GNI/capita US\$ 1,044

Aid/capita US\$ 48.1

Government young and impatient, many changes in policy. Ministers and Vice-ministers very predominant presence, almost no civil servant staff. Rigorous measures, emphasis on infrastructure, energy, education reform.

Data on aid from different sources during visit:

USAID 55 MM/yr; USDA >100MM/yr; MCA 300MM/5 yrs; UN 25MM US\$

UN Agencies present: UNDP, WFP, UNICEF, UNFPA, WHO, FAO, UNFEM, UNHCR, WB

Located in UN House with the exception of UNHCR and WFP due to limited space

About 300 staff of which about 60 international staff.

Coordinating capacity: RC, Coordination Officer with 1 assistant.

Appreciation of UN performance

Opinion of other partners on UN positive with the exception of DFID. UN very instrumental for the donor coordination meetings, which are important for smaller partners given the predominant position of US and WB. UN provides possibility for NGO's to participate in the dialogue

Activities, initiatives and functioning

Programming

CCA/UNDAF is a naturally developing process, which served as a tool for the exchange of information and shows where synergy can work. It brings people together and it brings discussion on a strategic level. The document is a tool which enhances communication and cooperation between agencies and development partners. It creates trust with donors and the signed document has a function for continuity.

There is a willingness to work together between agencies and partners. Limiting factors:

- agencies have their own programmes already
- prioritisation difficult, implies inclusion/exclusion
- 5yrs versus 2 yrs planning cycles ExCom ↔ Specialised agencies
- limited financing capacity UN

Role Assistant Coordinator (coordination, information sharing, pushing) has been important, support through DGO/region has been adequate: training staff, support workshops, guidelines. UN Georgia has sought support for human rights based planning, 3 consultants invited and financed from SRC budget

To be improved:

- There is a need that agencies learn how to strategically plan with a variety of agencies, the Training College should have a role in this
- CCA/UNDAF process lengthy and heavy, with difficulties in understanding the framework/log frames and a lack of common understanding/ interpretation of terminology, e.g. inputs, outputs, outcomes which led to lengthy discussions
- After the UNDAF ExCom agencies started preparing their CPAPs separately. Cooperation of UNDAF interrupted, teams abandoned.

Programming represents a heavy and complex burden. ExCom agencies do have to prepare the CCA/UNDAF, a Country Programme Document and a CPAP. Both UNDAF and Multi Year Funding Framework (MYFF) (for UNDP, WFP has annual human strategy) are guiding for CDP and CPAPs. This results in excessive, overlapping planning and double/contradictory directives (country priorities \leftrightarrow agency's priorities). Specialised agencies have different planning cycles.

Ideas in the UNCT on possible changes/improvements:

- Memoranda of understanding at high level, e.g. on school feeding, could enhance cooperation
- UNDAF needs to be constantly reviewed/updated, the more in a country with transition characteristics, it should be a rolling process. Monitoring needs to be properly organised.
- Some representatives think that there is a role for the RC in common fund raising. Presently there is competition between agencies.

The consultants' team observes:

- with regard to the UNDAF: Insufficient focus, too many priorities remained in the UNDAF, outputs not costed.
- cost – benefit of the UNDAF is questionable: reduce cost by simplification and increase benefit by better application e.g. through joint programming and use of the UNDAF document to present one UN
- double hatting RC creates problems, observations in this regard by almost all agencies
- question: would other set up UNDAF process (e.g. starting off with themes) result in the opening of new perspectives for cooperation? Present approach automatically strengthens old patterns
- members of the UNCT observed weaknesses in approaches, the UNDAF process and the consecutive planning cycles. Some took initiatives to overcome some of them (UNFPA), others followed the set patterns (UNDP, UNICEF). Causes for not pointing out the double/contradictory directives which they meet in practice may vary, but among them is most probably a preference to comply with what is thought to be preferred in the organisation.

Operations/administration

Operation Management Team (OMT), operations managers from all UN agencies in the country (also non-ExCom), meets regularly. Cost reduction by joining efforts in areas like services for common building, a joint editing house, joint audit services, joint fuel procurement, corporate prices for hotels, human resources training (regional). There has not been a cost analysis to get an insight in the savings. OMT plans to develop more initiatives.

Idea to use joint programmes as a pilot for financial and operational issues. Different financial systems are impediment for further integration in this field.

Units are operating separately. Merging them would be an interesting and much more efficient option. Radical intervention, difficult to realise through initiative at country level.

Introduction of DevInfo has been successful. The module has been customised for Georgia, government staff has been trained and the system will be used as a monitoring tool for government, integrating the MDGs.

Cash transfer system will be implemented, training has been provided.

Transition

OCHA left in 2003, agencies had to take over. CCF funded 'strategic planner' for a year. Formed Volatility and Instability team (2 staff) with a broad range of tasks on areas of disaster management, contingency planning, humanitarian strategy and information/risk management.

Broad focus on target groups, ranging from IDPs to minorities, disabled persons, orphans, old vulnerable persons.

Apparently no clear vision on position and partly occupied with UNDP mainstream functions. There is a gap between emergency and development. UNHCR thinks that refugee issue can be solved relatively easy and quick. IDPs more complicated due to the frozen conflict in the country.

Ben van Baren

Report October 2005, summary February 2006

Ghana visit, 14-17 November, 2005

Ben van Baren – consultant, Jeanine van Krimpen – Netherlands MFA, Kai Buchholz - DGO

Background

2004 (Source: WB Country data profile)

GNI	US\$ 8.5 billion
GNI/capita	US\$ 380
Aid/capita	US\$ 43.9

Ghana has relatively strong coordination and partnership among nine development partners through the Multi-Donor Budget Support (MDBS) framework. The Government of Ghana and nine donors are: (a) developing budget-support mechanisms with individual donors leading in key areas, (b) integrating annual policy, planning implementation and review process on the basis of the PRS and (c) streamlining and aligning the PRSC with multi-donor budget support. The UNS is not participating in the MDBS.

WB, United Kingdom and US are biggest contributors to ODA.

Agencies present: UNDP, WFP, UNICEF, UNFPA, WHO, FAO, UNAIDS, UNIC, UNIDO, WB, UNHCR, UNESCO

Coordinating capacity: RC, Coordination Officer

Appreciation of UN performance

Globally speaking positive, with an undertone that the UNS should be more present and play a more articulated role. CCA and more in particular UNDAF seen as a valuable instrument of which the application could be improved. The programming and implementation phase will show the real value of the process.

Government sees many positive elements with regard to the role the UNS plays and the CCA/UNDAF. Implementation will reveal the real value of the CCA/UNDAF.

Observations: i) CCA provided additional data, ii) UNDAF and GPRS are properly linked, iii) Participation appreciated and process provided better insight in expertise/potential contributions of UNS, iv) UN appreciated in MDBS for bringing in expertise and playing a mediating role at occasions. Participation in funding would create a stronger position, v) UN seen as an important partner for guiding processes, monitoring, support for data/information systems, advocacy, vi) UN has properly used its position to open up areas where bi-laterals were hesitant to intervene (conflict prevention, police), vii) strategic positioning in limited number of areas is not seen as a requirement, viii) process long / suboptimal timing of UNDAF vis-à-vis GPRS, ix) provisions for monitoring of the UNDAF are seen as insufficient. Attention needed.

Other partners have a mixed vision. Some say that the role of the UN in GPRS, MDGs, 2004 election and NEPAD/APRM is/has been positive. Observations: i) CCA unnecessary, has not added value for policy choices, ii) improve timing so that better linking to national processes is possible, iii) much more focus and radical choices are required, iv) engage with the power tool, money, iv) UN programme funds are insufficient to have the UN make a difference, v) in principle the neutral position of the UN and the expertise within the organisation as a whole are perceived as assets. In practice for some agencies this is sufficient to play a certain role in sector dialogue etc, others perceived as not able to do so.

Activities, initiatives and functioning

Policy and Quality Assurance

There has been a lack of clearness about the need of a CCA. Much work has been carried out for a document of which the added value is considered questionable.

The CCA/UNDAF process has started off with ample participation, which has dwindled. A limited group of committed and dedicated staff has finalised the work.

The process has provided a better insight for UN staff in the expertise of other Agencies and possibilities for cooperation. The same holds for some external partners.

The UNDAF presents possibilities for complementary and synergic activities by different Agencies, adding value to UN presence. Still, the focus of the UNDAF is limited. There are still too many areas for different activities, choices have still to be made. The CPD and CPAP serve as instruments to get to the final prioritisation, which should in fact take place during the UNDAF process. Will experience make the CPD/CPAP step superfluous or will the present loop remain necessary?

Joint programmes have been defined in the UNDAF. (Guinea worm, education). Apparently no problems are foreseen for the implementation (different from other countries), which might be due to the early stage of operationalising the foreseen JPs.

There is a spirit for cooperation with those who were involved in the process. The assumption is justified that the same spirit was created in former UNDAF processes. Why has this disappeared and how could it be maintained in the future?

The process has been heavy and lengthy. The intention that the CCA/UNDAF would relieve the programming burden for the agencies did not materialise. It was foreseen that the UNDAF would make heavy planning, strategising and dialogue unnecessary in the preparation of the CDP and CPAP. In practice CDPs and CPAPs are being prepared as almost separate instruments.

Obstacles for a wholehearted participation in the process and a focused result:

- Mixed messages from HQs (UNDAF derived from GPRS $\leftarrow \rightarrow$ mandates of Agencies)
- Rules and procedures (separate CPDs and CPAPs)
- Different flags present
- Lack of stimuli for cooperation. Choice between UNS and promotion of individual Agency

Overall the mission observes that a dynamic process is going on at national level (sectoral approach, basket funding). The limited financial contribution the UN can give is seen as an important limiting factor for UNS presence by some persons. UN's neutral position and its expertise at national and global level are seen as assets. However, clear positioning and a convincing presence are required to grasp the opportunities. CCA/UNDAF has not given a convincing contribution to a stronger UN position. Consider to intensify the dialogue with the development partners in view of clarifying UN's value added.

CCS : country support (country focal points) and training/facilitation

Training on CCA/UNDAF in Pretoria is considered to be good. Guidelines are available, users comment on applicability in practice.

Support for Human Rights Based approach sought and given from Geneva. Thought to be too theoretical.

The quality of the facilitation for the UNDAF prioritisation has not been satisfactory. Support by UNCT staff was required.

There are diverging views on the adequacy of the regional support. Some persons are of the opinion that the regional team has given valuable comments and suggestions for the UNDAF, others considered that the regional support did not add much value.

The mission wonders whether the region should not play a more dominant role in view of getting to a tighter prioritisation. It is thought that it is very difficult for a team to get to a real prioritisation (excluding options) without external support.

The Resident Coordinator and his unit

The RC Unit is composed of the RC and the Coordination Officer. The CO has no secretarial support, which results in the need to pay much attention to administrative and logistic tasks and a diversion from the essence of his coordinating task.

Comments on double hatting (RC/UNDP) were heard from different sides and understood to be related to the past. There is an opportunity for the new RC to continue positioning himself as the Coordinator.

Operations/administration

Operational Committee has organised the options for common services like car insurance, travel, consultancy services, fuel provision. There are limited possibilities to negotiate good prices because of the state ownership of part of the services.

Contacts exist at regional level for support. Considered to have little added value. The team is aware of the information on the web site and uses it.

Considering the establishment of a UN House. However, the perspective is bleak, reportedly for financial reasons. Common cash transfer is being prepared, staff has participated in training. It is expected that support will be required for the implementation of the common cash transfer.

Other issues

The CCA/UNDAF has been taken up by a committed and dedicated group of staff. Backing by some individual Country Representatives was essential for adequate contributions. Commitment by the UNCT as a whole seems to have been suboptimal (e.g., follow-through and focus).

Smaller agencies have not been so much present in CCA/UNDAF process; according to some staff there is a lack of guidance on the role of specialised and non-resident agencies in the process.

Ben van Baren

Report November 2005, summary February 2006

Namibia country visit, 13-18 November 2005

Richard Longhurst, consultant, ODI and Geoff Manthey, DGO

Background

Namibia's net ODA was \$146m. (2003), and is classified as a lower middle-income country; this is based on 'average' incomes, however, and parts of the country are very poor and are the focus of donor projects. Population is about 2m. The middle-income classification explains the absence of a PRSP, but there is a National Poverty Reduction Action Plan (Vision 2030). The National Planning Commission is the government agency overseeing donor coordination.

Agencies present: FAO, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. Four non-resident agencies (ILO, UNEP, IAEA and UNIFEM) also committed to the UNDAF. There is no World Bank resident office in Namibia. Major donor support comes from the EU and the German Government.

The UNCT in Namibia is small (30 staff in UNDP, 60 in UNICEF), so there are economies of scale in working together; communications are very good. The UN team is small. The Government of Namibia (GoN) has been a strong participant, insistent that the UN works together.

Coordinating Capacity: One coordinating officer with UNFPA contributed to the coordination process both with funds and staff time. Coordination funds to the RC are said to be limited – see further details below.

Appreciation of UN performance

The Government view of the UN is positive. It wants the UN to lead on the politically sensitive area of land reform, land valuation and taxation (where an FAO adviser has been appointed to the RC's office under work 'packaged' as sustainable livelihoods), and work on risk assessment. This work was not part of the UNDAF outcomes (for good reasons), although placed under the pillar of sustainable livelihoods. The Ministry of Health is pleased to see that WHO, UNICEF and UNFPA unite in their contacts with government. HIV/AIDS programmes have involved all stakeholders. The government appreciated that UNDAF was completed in good time as it therefore meant that their National planning Commission was not too over extended. It wants to see the UN moving into new roles, working as a catalyst and fund raiser, and providing support for capacity building.

The view of the donors was quite positive. Although believing that the UN punches below its weight, donors are pleased it is taking on sensitive issues. The EC does not know who to address in the UN; with no World Bank there are no Consultative Group meetings, no public expenditure review, nor sector strategies. The HIV/AIDS partnership forum works; it is the role of the UN to do donor coordination but has to canvass. UN sends out a project list of all donors which is very valuable.

Activities, initiatives and functioning

The UNDAF process was carried out under the leadership of the previous UNRC; the current RC came to Namibia three months ago having overseen the UNDAF preparation in Eritrea. The UNDAF is a short document that focuses on three outcomes (driven by the selection of the regional Framework for support to HIV/AIDS programming, the so-called 'Triple Threat', being HIV/AIDS, livelihoods and food security and eroding institutional capacity caused by

the impact of HIV/AIDS). It also has a good rights-based approach but problems in incorporating gender. There was a good level of engagement by all agencies and ownership by the government is good, but in many areas agency mandates already overlap (e.g. young people, maternal health). The weakest part of the UNDAF is the M&E framework and at the stage of RM the team was low on energy. Agencies are now doing their own agency RMs as to how to relate to UNDAF.

With health a predominating issue in the outcomes, the three 'health' agencies (UNICEF, WHO and UNFPA) were collaborating, with WHO taking the lead. The UNDAF was submitted to the Regional Readers group, and the GoN was closely involved and actively participated. Civil society participated but is quite a weak sector. There is however, confusion over the role of the Regional Director Teams.

Agencies had mixed but constructive views of the process: For some it is unclear how much UNDAF has improved the delivery of UN services; to be effective there needs to be changes. UNDAF can formalise existing overlaps, and the UNCT may add another layer; to some extent the CT dilutes what UN agencies do on their own. Streamlining of agencies is needed in the long run: the shift will come when all agencies pool resources and design a joint programme, but the current governance structures cannot allow this. The UNDAF process has drawn the UN agencies closer together, but it has been expensive in terms of staff time. Some found the methodology overwhelming and there is no methodology to manage and control joint funds in the UN system as it is. For others there are clear benefits in coming together although improvements are incremental. UNDAF gave an opportunity to plan together annually, however specialised agencies are not getting positive messages from Headquarters.

There was difficulty in including agencies outside the country, but non-residents attended three key workshops. ILO, UNIFEM and IFAD came, and were most interested in prioritisation, although thought that the UNDAF was too focused on the Triple Threat.

UNESCO Regional Office was involved in the CCA/UNDAF in its 5 regional countries, including Namibia. It has five sectors of work (education, culture, natural and social sciences, communications and education), and used Namibia as a test case for involvement in the UNDAF, especially for education as the government supports (a World Bank funded) Education Improvement and Training Plan. Education is mainstreamed into the UNDAF. The challenges for UNESCO for the UNDAF are: programme cycles do not match, it has five sub mandates which fit with difficulty into the UNDAF, it serves five countries from the small office, and has a cluster rather than a country strategy.

WHO has a Cooperation Strategy (2004-07) and a Biennium Work plan (2006-07) and has worked out a strategic agenda for technical cooperation in Namibia. Its work can be categorised as: i) work it does alone; ii) joint work with other agencies; and iii) activities on the UNDAF. The UNDAF process is encouraging joint activities outside its structure. WFP tries to design its relief programmes taking UNDAF into account using Vision 2030 (the national plan).

Implementation of the UNDAF: Three working groups (one per outcome) have been formed to guide follow up, reporting to a single theme group on the 'Triple Threat'. The chair of each working group speaks to the Government on that issue. The working groups are: HIV/AIDS, Livelihoods and Food Security, and Institutional Delivery Capacity for Critical Services. For fund raising it is expected that all agencies will hang on the three pillars, UNDAF is the entry point to individual agencies.

DGO Support: There was good training for RC, FAO representative, UNICEF and UNDP Economist. UNCT said funds were very limited for coordination purposes, and were contributed in-country by several agencies. UNPFA provided \$20,000 and staff time,

UNICEF \$30,000 and UNESCO \$5,000; UNAIDS paid an assistant for 12 months. They requested a more structured and reliable funding mechanism. The current coordinator, who joined the team in that capacity from November, will be on UNFPA funding for two months. She was preceded by a temporary coordination officer on 6 months funding. A JPO was also due to join the RC office at the time of our mission. RC funds provided to Namibia were \$145,000 for a year, for compiling CCA/UNDAF, UN in Namibia Newsletter and updating the National Development Plan.

Common services: most of the UN agencies are housed in the same building. UNESCO's regional office is in Windhoek (although not in the same building as the other agencies). UNDP performs common services on behalf of others then agencies reimburse. There is no common approach in payment of common services among agencies in the field. There may be scope to enhance the effectiveness of common services activities as a prelude to entering the UN House.

Richard Longhurst
Report November 2005, summary March 2006

Zambia visit 6-8 December, 2005:

Tony Faint and Ben van Baren, consultants and Arthur Erken, DGO

Background

Zambia is one of the poorest countries and has suffered long periods of stagnant growth due to overly statist policies. More recently it has had two PRSPs and passed the HIPC Debt Initiative completion point. It faces serious food shortages in the South and a very high incidence of HIV/AIDS.

The new move towards aid harmonisation (Paris Declaration) is being implemented by the donors in cooperation with Government, and is known as the JASZ (Joint Assistance Strategy for Zambia). This envisages a lead donor with a small support group in each major sector and 'de-congestion' of sectors, with donors withdrawing from sectors where they are minor players. A small group of donors has also begun to provide Direct Budgetary Support (DBS). The largest donors are USAID, the UK, the Scandinavian countries, and the Netherlands. These are also, with the exception of the US, the leading donors in the JASZ.

UN presence and the challenge of the JASZ

11 UN agencies are present in Zambia, all ExCom plus WHO, FAO, ILO, UNHCR, UNAIDS, ECA and IOM. The World Bank is also an active member of the UN Country Team. UN programmes in Zambia are small (about \$35m in disbursements this year, and a resource target of \$84m over 3 years in the UNDAF – excluding humanitarian aid) and tend to be spread thinly over many sectors and projects.

The JASZ process is a challenge for the UN. Due to the dispersal of its programmes and the sectoral mandates of many agencies they have difficulty in 'de-congesting', while the many agencies tend to speak with many voices in donor groups. The character of UN programmes is reflected in in-country staff, who are mainly project staff without broad strategic or sectoral skills. The JASZ donors welcome UN to participation in the process, and do not expect the UN to provide DBS, but they are looking for coordinated representation and a policy level contribution.

In-country coordination

The Resident Coordinator is recognised as leader of the UN family and has an office with two professional posts. The Country Team meets regularly and has a good team spirit, but in the main agencies run their own programmes separately.

There is a UN House which houses the ExCom agencies, and a second building houses WHO and UNAIDS. There is an active Operations Management Team and a good range of common services in the UN House.

The Team would like to expend facilities on the compound but have found their interaction with New York unproductive and frustrating. There is an OCHA presence in the RC's office to address the famine in the South, but Zambia is not classed as a conflict or post conflict country.

The quality of support provided from the region has recently been substantially upgraded by the creation of the co-located Regional Directors Team in Johannesburg (see separate visit report), offering the prospect of higher quality and more customised support.

UNDAF

Work on a new CCA was begun in 2004, but it was decided to abandon it and transfer the work to the Government's National Development Plan, then under preparation, and its Sector Advisory Groups.

A draft UNDAF was prepared rapidly (4 weeks) in early 2005, then set aside pending completion of the NDP. The draft is a concise statement of the UN's key priority areas in Zambia, and benefits from adopting HIV/AIDS as an over-arching objective. Its multiple activities and indicators are highly ambitious but there are few measurable benchmarks.

Good support was available for the CCA/UNDAF process both from DGO and the region, and UNDP and other agencies provided supplementary funding to enable additional events to take place (e.g. a human rights seminar). The MDGs are well integrated into the UNDAF as is the Gender dimension. Human rights are recognised as important, but not so central as in some other papers.

The CCA/UNDAF process has drawn the UNCT together and formed a springboard for joint activities. It should be helpful in coordinating the response to the AIDS crisis. But as with most UNDAFs it lacks focus and will do little to reduce the dispersal of UN activities.

The UNDAF has not transformed UN programmes in country, but the challenge of the JASZ may force the UN to change or be marginalised. The visiting team urged the UNCT to engage whole-heartedly. The UN will need to go further in speaking with one voice to the donors and in Sector Groups, and to raise its sights from the transactional to the policy and strategic level. Staff with these types of competence are needed in country, as well as prompt access to more specialised skills from regional and headquarters levels. Agency HQs need to understand the nature and importance of the changes that are taking place and provide flexible support to country teams in responding.

Tony Faint

Report 12 December 2005, Summary February 2006

Visits to regional offices, Bangkok and Johannesburg, November- December 2005

Bangkok: Ben van Baren, consultant and Liliana Ramirez, DGO

Johannesburg: Tony Faint and Ben van Baren, consultants and Arthur Erken, DGO

Background

The contribution of the Regional Offices to the UNCTs is institutionalised in their role in the Quality Support & Assurance system. The UNDG ExCom Regional Directors' on the QS&A System for the CCA and UNDAF Processes and Products states that:

'the QS&A System should be able to motivate, capacitate and support UNCTs, as well as review and effectively oversee the CCA and UNDAF preparation process and products. Consequently the system should:

- Accompany the preparation of individual CCAs and UNDAFs, by supporting and reviewing both the individual processes and products
- create conditions conducive for the improvement of the quality of CCAs and UNDAFs'

Set up of the regions and the regional offices is not streamlined at all: not aligned (regions have same country coverage) and not co-located (regional offices are located in same country). This holds for ExCom alone. Adding specialised agencies adds to confusion. There is an effort to get to a better ExCom regional alignment and co-location.

Bangkok

Short visit, spoke with two regional staff members related to the programme and one operations expert seconded by DFID and involved at national (Thailand) level.

Working practice

-There is a broad team (ExCom and non-ExCom) composed for the CCA/UNDAF support, with one leading agency (indicated by UNCT). The CCA and UNDAF are reviewed on the basis of a checklist with quality criteria, composed by the team. Examples of criteria: guidelines followed?, quality M&E, results specified? Comments given are e.g.: alignment with national plan, relevance for national system, logical flow/set up, output/outcome flow correct?

-Agencies will normally give more comments on CCA than on UNDAF; related to short time available for UNDAF comments (2 weeks).

-Communication between the members of a review team is difficult, difficult to get teams together (distance, timing)

-Giving support by the region to UNCTs is seen as important. Defined as a specific task for the interviewee (UNICEF), time reserved to carry it out.

-Quality of the UNDAFs is improving compared to former rounds: RBM improves accountability and there is experience in the system

Preparation/support

-Useful training given by UNSSC, experience of having passed through process is important for giving adequate support.

-Guidelines:

- too little instruction on how to make focus. It is difficult to tighten down the matrix. This requires in fact a change of behaviour, which takes time and cannot be easily realised by guidelines;

- there is a lack of clearness in the guidelines on what is expected on the mix of agency specific activities and a joint UN programme

Challenges

- Challenge is to come from the framework to a programme: continuity versus new things
- HQs send separate messages that have to be joined at country level (CPD, CPAP problem)
- Required for better functioning:
 - streamline regional set up (areas/overlap) plus synchronise cycles
 - decide on the core regional functions of the UN that are needed for the UN family
- Difficult in practice:
 - different finance/accounting systems (new cash transfer system is improvement)
 - resources: different systems complicating the transfer of people and different IT standards/programmes
- Sharing experts between agencies would be very good but it is not applied. It would be a good initiative to map out the experience which is available at regional level
- Staff should be more involved in the discussions on reform. This would increase commitment.

Operations

- Operations expert brings in experience from Vietnam, has been involved since a couple of months at national level. Not much done yet in Thailand since roll out common services two years ago. No coordinator available, not so much importance given to common services, some agencies are doing well, others less.
- Push from New York limited. Message that top attaches much importance to common services is important to get things done.
- Potential for rationalisation/savings are considerable, including sharing staff and outsourcing. Latter is difficult to discuss.
- Distance between Programme and Operation in UN is considerable: is a hindrance

Johannesburg

Early 2005 the UNDG ExCom Agency Principals established the UN Regional Directors' Team (RDT) as a pilot to support 10 UNCTs in Southern Africa to make a significant impact on the triple threat and attaining the MDGs. For 2005 three overall outcomes were articulated:

- Outcome 1: UNCTs working together more effectively to better support and strengthen countries' capacities to address the Triple Threat
- Outcome 2: Strategically reoriented UN programmes developed to respond more effectively to the Triple Threat
- Outcome 3: Increased resources mobilised to enhance the UN System's ability to better support responses of countries and the sub-region to the triple threat.

The RDT is comprised of the Regional Directors/Managers of UNDP, WFP, UNFPA, UNICEF, FAO, UNAIDS, OCHA, WHO and UNIFEM. The UNDP Regional Manager is the Chair for 2005. He is supported by RDT Coordination Officer, a regional information/communications specialist. A regional Programme Support Group (PSG), comprised of at least one senior programme officer from each agency advises the RDT on UNCTs support, identifies staff for UNCT support activities, supports UNCT capacity building and training initiatives in collaboration with DGO, UNSSC and the QSA group.

Based upon an analysis of the UNCTs annual reports and work plans and in consultation with the RCs and UNCTs and ideas of the RDT on regional initiatives the RDT developed a 2005 work plan and results matrix.

The 2005 RDT report shows a wide range of outputs that have been realised in line with the three envisaged outcomes. Many are not necessarily a consequence of the RDT approach but some can certainly be related to it like the joint programme on HIV/AIDS which is being developed in 4 countries with 'One UN Team' to manage the UN response by forging agreements on the division of labour and the role of lead agencies. The RDT also played a role in initiatives related to Food Security and Governance Capacity.

Response to the RDT is positive in about half of the 10 countries, more in particular in the countries where there have been strong contacts. The other RCs are not convinced of the added value of the RDT and consider it as an extra layer.

With regard to the future the RDT sees as a need:

- to improve and strengthen the support to the Residence Coordination System
- to find ways to improve the reliability and quality of UN presence (better CCA/UNDAF (RDT thinks that CCA/UNDAF has not gone far concerning the repositioning of the UN. The internal discussion on its importance for the UN has to be pushed), response to new aid architecture, quality of the technical support provided)
- to push the pace of the harmonisation of RDT's own work (physical co-location, one HIV/AIDS team on regional level)
- alignment of the region with SADC (14 countries)

It is difficult to assess the added value of the RDT as compared to the other regions on the basis of experiences so far. The RDT team itself is positive and dedicated. Initiatives taken over the past year show some good results. One can furthermore see some advantages of an RDT. Due to its institutionalised structure with additional support it has a potential to e.g.:

- better use the available regional capacity and in the longer run rationalise the expertise available in the region;
- get to improved knowledge sharing and building up of expertise at regional level;
- mobilise capacity with a strong link to experiences in the field to address issues like strengthening the CCA/UNDAF and formulating an answer to the changing aid environment

In this respect it is worthwhile to mention that the RDT expressed that it had experienced a positive influence of the presence on the same location.

Idea of RDT: Use CCF for initiatives and in places where it can make a difference. The RDT could have an advisory role because of the overview it has.

Common Services

The UNDG Common Services Advisor for southern/eastern Africa (one of the 3 full time advisors globally) is a member of the RDT. He has supported RCs/UNCTs in the region. In the region the first inter-agency Regional Operations Management Team (ROMT) has been established.

A package for common service management has been developed and is presently being introduced.

Ben van Baren

Report December 2005, summary February 2006

Annex 3. Interview Guides

CCF short guide for interviews

- Broad questions for government/donors/civil society

UN reform/performance

What do you understand by UN Reform at country level?

Is it changing the way the UN works in country? In what ways?

How effective is the UN operation in-country? Strengths and weaknesses?

Does the UN act coherently?

As a group or as separate agencies?

Does the UN work well with Government?

Assist national planning?

Does it contribute to donor coordination in-country? Role of RC?

- Questions for RCs/UN Country Teams

UN in-country coordination

Is coordination effective?

How has the picture changed over time?

What have been the main factors – e.g. processes (UNDAF), a vision of the destination?

Messages from HQ, from donors, from Government?

Is there a move towards more joint activities, programmes?

Has UNDAF helped to bring the CT together?

How has it fitted with agency planning systems, (e.g. for ExCom CPAP, CDP, annual plans)?

Are coordination/planning processes too time consuming? Could they be made more efficient?

Value of UN House?

Co-location, moves to common services?

Could more be done?

Transition (where appropriate)

How is UN/donor community/government handling transition issues?

Is there a transition strategy?

What support is available – from agency HQs, DGO, Regions?

Support for coordination

Usefulness of guidance?

Support from DGO centrally?

Support from Regions?

Budget system? Funding timely? Adequate?

- UNDAF short guide for interviews

Process

Did you find the process of completing CCA/UNDAF useful?
Did it add value to UN family work in-country?
Did it bring UN family closer together?
UNDAF II better than UNDAF I?
Was the distribution of responsibilities between UN agencies well defined?
What on-the-ground evidence of better coordination?
Was it cost-effective? How could it be streamlined?
Consultation: were stakeholders involved – Government, other donors, civil society?

Guidance/support

Was adequate guidance/support available? Written? From HQ? From Region?
Were training events well planned/conducted?

Product

Is the UNDAF useful for planning/managing programmes?
Clear view of UN family comparative advantage?
Does it help UN family/individual agencies to prioritise?
Foundation for joint working/programming?
How useful is the Results Matrix, both the process and the final tool.
Does the process: national priorities - UNDAF outcomes – RM hang together?
Risks and assumptions as shown in RM or M&E Framework, how well expressed?
How useful is the monitoring and indicators framework.
For wider donor coordination? With BWI? For Fund-raising?
Flexibility - validity over time?

Links

MDGs – used as basis? How far became a unifying force for UN, IFIs and government?
Treatment of cross-cutting themes – Gender, Environment, Human Rights
PRSP – value as national policy statement? Replacing CCA? How comfortable with this?

Transformational

Has UNDAF changed the country programme contents?
Changed ways of working in UN family?
Changed interface with Government? Other donors? Civil Society?
Has UNDAF sharpened the comparative advantage of the UN? What has happened to projects and programmes outside the UNDAF?
Have incentives to cooperate changed?

Annex 4: List of Persons Met

DGO

Ms Sally Fegan-Wyles	Director
Mr Arthur Erken	Associate Director
Mr Richard Olver	Associate Director
Mr Jean-Luc Siblot	Associate Director
Mr Geoff Manthey	Senior Policy Adviser
Ms Frances Kamikamica	Management Adviser
Mr Douglas Passanisi	Senior Adviser
Mr Kai Buchholz	Adviser
Ms Tuesday Reitano	Adviser
Ms Irina Stavenscaia	Adviser
Ms Liliana Ramirez	Adviser
Ms Emma Webb	Adviser

UNDG

Mr Mourad Wahba	Director UNDP Division for UN Affairs
Mr Ian McFarlane	UNFPA Special Assistant to the Dep. Executive Director

UNSSC

Mr Malcolm Goodale,	Project Manager RSC Learning System (by telephone)
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Afghanistan

M Jean Arnault	SRSG
Ms Ameerah Haq	UNRC and DSRSG
Mr Clark Soriano	Adviser, RCO
Mr Pablo Matheu	former RCO (by Telecon)
Ms Verena Linneweber	RCO
Mr Daniel Molla	WFP
Mr Hugo Botha	WFP
Ms Anita Narody	UNDP
Ms Sophie Baranes	UNDP
Mr Kazuto Tsuruga	UNDP
Mr Atiq Hasan	UNDP
Mr David Saunders	UNFPA
Mr Berndt Aasen	UNICEF
Mr Jawad Mofleh	UNICEF
Ms Deguene Fall	UNICEF
Mr Malama Meleisea	UNESCO
Dr Abdi Momin	WHO
Mr Adam Bouloukos	UNOPS
Mr Stephen Kinloch-Pichat	UNAMA Policy & Planning Adviser
Ms Katarina Lumpp	UNHCR
Mr Patrick Fruchet	UNMACA (De-mining)
Mr Saurab Sinha,	MDG Adviser UNAMA
Mr Richard Bennett	UNAMA Sr Human Rights Officer
Ms Monique Fienberg	UNAMA Field Support Unit
Mr Talatbek Masadykov	UNAMA Head of Southern Region Office
Mr Ashok Nigam	UNAMA Director, Institutions and Governance

Mr Jean Mazurelle
Ms Jackie Creighton
Ms Anja de Beer, Coordinator

World Bank
DFID
ACBAR (Civil Society Association)

Mr Wahidullah Shahrani
Mr Hanif Atmar

Deputy Finance Minister
Minister of Rural Development

Bangladesh

Mr Mokhles ur Rahman

Joint Secretary, ERD, Min of Finance

Ms Britt Hagstrom
Ms Anne Bruzelius
Ms Aud Lise Norheim
Ms Françoise Collet
Ms Janet Donnelly
Ms Annemieke de los Santos
Dr Mehtab Currey
Mr Kiya Masahiko

Ambassador, Sweden
Minister, SIDA
Ambassador, Norway
First Counsellor, EC
First Secretary, AusAID
First Secretary, Netherlands
Deputy Head, DFID
Counsellor, Japan

Mr Jorgen Lissner
Ms Renata Dessallien
Ms Shamim Hamid
Ms Ayshanie Labe
Mr Larry Maramis
Mr Michael Heyn
Ms Heli Uusikyla
Mr L-G Arsenault
Ms Rosella Morelli
Mr Evaristo Marowa
Ms Suneeta Mukherjee
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Annex 5. Desk Review of Country Reports

Review of the role and quality of the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF).³⁴

1. Introduction

The UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) is the common strategic framework for the operational activities of the UN system at country level. It provides a collective, coherent and integrated UN system response to national priorities and needs, including the Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRSs) and equivalent national strategies, within the framework of the MDGs and the commitments, goals and targets of the Millennium Declaration and international conferences, summits, conventions and human rights instruments of the UN system. The UNDAF emerges from the analyses of the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and is the next step in the preparation of UN system country programmes and projects of cooperation.³⁵

In 2002-03 major revisions were agreed by the collective membership of the UN Development Group (UNDG), being:

- the CCA and other analytical work of the UN would feed into, rather than duplicate, the similar national work and priority setting processes (e.g. PRSs). UN teams were asked to be pro-active and exercise maximum flexibility in their decisions making on the CCA processes so as to maximize coherence with national plans, and
- the UNDAF Results Matrix (RM) was introduced, to ensure that the UNDAF reflected the UN's collective response to national priorities, and prepared after the key PRS priorities had been established. The RM is the UN's business plan at country level.

There is continuing agreement and pressure to make aid more effective, committing development partners to progressively align aid with national processes, harmonize and simplify procedures, and better priority setting. The UN agencies are expected to combine to promote capacity enhancement of national partners, drawing on its own comparative advantages of provider of technical assistance, capacity development, policy dialogue and advocacy.

2. Methodology – Desk Review

This is a desk review of a predefined selection of second and third generation UNDAFs, which are: Albania, Armenia, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Georgia, Ghana, Guyana, Indonesia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Namibia, Philippines, Romania, Uganda and Vietnam.

A great deal of valuable information has been extracted both to provide general comparative information and for detailed briefs for country visits. In this report, each brief contains information bulleted under the following headings: i) National Priorities as defined, ii) UN efforts to align, iii) A table comparing national priorities and UNDAF outcomes, iv) Coordination and harmonisation, v) the Results Matrix and M&E Framework, and vi) Support Systems. Findings for the countries as a group are given below using the same subheadings.

³⁴ Based on work done by Zaza Curran, Katarina Herneryd, Tam O'Neil and Richard Longhurst.

³⁵ See UN, Common Country Assessment and UN Development Assistance Framework: Guidelines for UN teams preparing a CCA and UNDAF in 2004, page 16

3. Report Findings

This report is based on a desk based review of documents only, and so observations need some validation on the ground. It is clear that UN agencies and their staff are grappling with many very demanding and ambitious issues and doing so with a substantial dedication and enthusiasm. Only a small number of UNDAFs appeared to not to add value to the current process of agency development intervention. The process is a long and difficult one but there is clear evidence, seen in those countries that have started earlier than others, that benefits in the form of a better focused and aligned programme are being realised.

National Priorities as defined:

- The national objectives were defined by PRSPs in eleven out of the 16 countries, and so there is some similarity in objectives as they tended to follow a common direction: i) economic growth through macro economic stability, ii) improved governance through legal and public sector reform etc), and then iii) various programming for human resource development and excluded groups. There is a sound logic: get the economy stable and productive, sort out production and employment (especially rural), then the human resource elements, then take care of excluded groups, but be sure also to get governance sorted out.
- For one reason or another the UN often contributes little to the PRSP debate, and with few exceptions there was no reference to the role of the UN agencies in the PRSP process.
- Where national priorities were not based on a PRSP process, there was a much broader and more varied set of objectives, and in these countries the UN appeared to struggle more to line up with these objectives.
- BWI staff say in their reviews of national PRSPs that prioritisation by national governments is weak, and so this influences UNDAF in its efforts to set their priorities.
- However, the MDGs are the common language between PRSPs and UNDAFs and this suggests that, whereby up to now UNDAFs have followed PRSPs, UNDAFs will be able to inform all forms of national priority setting (e.g. Accession, MCA, MDGs as well as PRSPs follow up) more strongly in the future. Where national plans do not mention MDGs, the UNDAF is seen as a tool to fill those gaps.
- In a few countries there were links with SWAPs and these were mentioned in UNDAF outcomes.

UN efforts to align:

- Generally, UNDAF outcomes were often very broad, although later UNDAF processes (2 and 3) showed clear improvements in this area (in fact in most if not all areas) and outputs were often tied to individual agencies showing a sense of accountability. As noted above, where there is a PRSP, the UN can usually fit in relatively easily in the human resource aspects (especially through the inputs of UNICEF and UNFPA).
- What cannot be determined from the literature review is how far UNCTs are aligning strategically, i.e. how far the UN is positioning itself relative to other donors and identifying where it has more expertise and critical mass or where it can work more

effectively in other areas that other donors are not (e.g. RBA). There was little direct discussion about the UN's comparative advantage. In some cases the separation of outputs into different agencies made the Results Matrix unclear rather than a clear illustration of the UN's collective response.

- Setting priorities is the big problem: outcomes still cover all bases as there is a great reluctance to say one thing comes before another, or that the activities of one agency are more pressing than another. There is a plethora of terms in some UNDAFs: 'measures', 'themes' 'action areas' 'areas of cooperation', 'cross cutting issues', 'new joint integrated priorities' and 'new joint programmes'. In some UNDAFs, there are many 'lists' of priorities. In small countries UNDAFs are often too broad.
- The role of the UN in implementing a rights based approach in some countries is its most interesting and innovative approach. Rights based approaches do not enter into PRSPs (although they can be applied to national priorities identified there and elsewhere) but where there are other forms of national objective setting, there are usually calls for social justice etc. A good report by William O'Neil has reviewed this area and there was some good integration of rights based approaches into the UNDAFs, some have taken it very seriously. It forms a valuable intellectual counterweight to the BWI-lead PRSPs. Some areas of PRSP objectives (e.g. support to vulnerable and excluded groups) are well suited to the rights based approach.
- The desk review was not able to assess the role of the CCA as a foundation laying document, one reason being that not all CCAs were available. There is an indication that analysis provided in the PRSP has on occasions taken over its role.
- From the documentation it was not always clear that the UN agencies themselves believed they were working to their areas of comparative advantage, it was not often mentioned, and this could be emphasised more strongly.
- Of course it is not known what activities of UN agencies were taking place outside the UNDAF: if there were many, this would have undermined the whole process.

Coordination and harmonisation:

- Within the UNDAF cycle, those agencies with similar planning cycles have already harmonised these cycles, being UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA and WFP. It is difficult to judge without field experience but in some documentation a listing of agency priorities suggest that further harmonisation has not really taken place. Most documentation gives little evidence of joint working.
- The MDGs have again been a sound unifying force for agencies wanting to align objectives.
- In most countries, CCA/UNDAF working parties are being continued for programme implementation, which is a positive force. In some countries the BWIs were not involved in the UNDAF process, which was a weakening factor.
- The 'lessons learned' from Ghana are worth repeating: UNDAF1 was more of a stocking taking exercise, major lesson was for realism, time is needed to sort out common data bases, and to have an UNDAF in place before agencies set their work programmes, and finally the many harmonising processes that are in progress (certainly in Ghana) can be mutually reinforcing if they are understood by all parties. There has to be an extended learning process, in which the first stage just gets

institutions in place to cooperate without the there being any obvious benefits from that cooperation.

The Results Matrix (RM) and M&E Framework

- The RM can only be as good as the UNDAF outcomes structure, so they cannot be judged in isolation from this. The M&E framework is important because it (usually) includes the risks and assumptions, probably the most important aspect of the RM.
- The RMs varied in quality, a few were very good road maps for future action while others were vague and lacked the basis for accountability. Many indicators were far too broad while assumptions were similarly broad and absent in some cases. Also there were a few M&E frameworks which appeared unrelated to the RM. But later generations of UNDAF show a tightening of the RM structure which suggests that an effective tool is in reach. One suspects there is a reluctance to 'come clean' with the risks inherent in any programme, as this can reflect 'negative' thinking.

Support Systems

- There were some comments about problems in funding the coordination efforts. No mention in any place about the CCF.
- The most common support was a commitment to use DevInfo and some training has been carried out in RMs, rights-based approaches, and gender assessment.
- Prioritisation retreats appear an important form of support and mutual learning. A number of retreat reports give insights into the inter-agency discussions, which usually include some concern about the management of the process, and the resources available for it, and the decision making process around priority setting areas.

1. Albania

National Priorities as defined:

- Albania has a National Strategy for Socio-Economic Development/Growth and PRS (NSSED/GPRS), and progress reports indicate there was a good participatory process and strong government ownership. Diagnosis was limited by lack of reliable data. A GPRS Core Donors group was created, which included UNDP and UNICEF to support the GPRS process.
- The GPRS has the 'common format of: i) economic growth through macro economic stability, ii) improved governance through legal and public sector reform etc), and then iii) various programming for human resource development and excluded groups.
- The Government of Albania (GoA) is making concerted effort to make its national policy process consistent (NSSED/GPRS, MDG, EU integration and national budget process).

UN efforts to align:

- The CCA was conducted at the end of the GPRS period and centred on the MDGs, and the two-year MDG support programme fed into CCA process. Seven MDG groups were the basis for CCA theme groups. The CCA identified poverty reduction and support of national policy frameworks as key areas for UN intervention, although they were broad and common.

- UNDAF's (2005) overarching goal is to promote Albania's integration into the EU, using local MDGs as common UN objectives and the overall objective is to strengthen focus on equality in national development and poverty reduction policy, especially in human resource development.
- There are good attempts to align processes (MDGs, NSSED/PRSP, EU SAp and CCA/UNDAF), including joint reporting. The four UNDAF outcomes (see table) do reflect national priorities as they emerged from national policy processes but the linkages are not well defined.

Albania: Comparing national priorities and UNDAF outcomes

National priorities	UNDAF Outcomes
Macroeconomic stability Public sector governance and management Health and education Social protection and insurance Infrastructure (transport, water and sanitation, energy, telecommunications) Rural development (increased agricultural incomes, NR and non-farm economy) Urban development Environment	Strategic priorities/UNDAF outcomes: transparent and accountable govt enabling environment to ensure participation in decision-making increased use of quality (efficient, transparent, accountable, equitable) public services Participation of local communities in regional and local development strategies.

Coordination and harmonisation:

- The draft UNDAF was started in 2002 but stopped because of issues around harmonising programme cycles. A revised CCA was produced in 2004. Some new mechanisms were identified for facilitating coordination and joint working. A Donor Technical Secretariat (including UNDP, WB, EC, OSCE) now exists.
- Within the UNDAF cycle, UNICEF, UNFPA and UNDP have harmonised their cycles, although it is less clear how other agencies relate to UNDAF.

The Results Matrix and M&E Framework

- Indicators are general and vague (but acknowledged in the UNDAF), with poor identification of risks and assumptions (only four generic ones identified).

Support Systems

- There is a commitment to use DevInfo database and some has been training carried out.

2. Armenia

National Priorities as defined:

- A PRSP linked to the MDGs was produced in 2003. Armenia is data rich and so there is a good analysis of poverty incidence and causes. UNDP involved in technical support for PRS preparation. For national priorities see the table below with a policy matrix of 54 measures under the 8 headings given.

- There is a Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) developed by government in parallel to the PRSP development, and works to the eight areas above.

UN efforts to align:

- PRS had no mention of the UN; it is hard to see where the UN can force its way in although lots of scope for ILO in labour market and WHO in health.
- The CCA is rather overtaken by the good data available with a lot of general overview, then assessment of cross cutting issues (human rights, governance, gender equality, food security, poverty reduction, criminality and drug control, HIV/AIDS and environmental sustainability). No clear priorities are drawn
- The UNDAF notes the adoption of the PRS and says that it will work in the four areas shown in the table below.
- The UNRC report of April 2005 points to a social justice and rights based approach. Joint programming: in the process of implementing 5 joint programmes: i) HIV/AIDS training at regional level, ii) support to housing renewal, iii) assessment to identify highly vulnerable populations, iv) restructure Armenia birth registration system and v) strengthening social monitoring through Dev/Info.
- UNDAF incorporating a social justice and rights based approach (the rights based approach not supported by the BWIs in the PRSPs).

Armenia: Comparing national priorities and UNDAF outcomes

National priorities *	UNDAF Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ economic growth, ▪ state governance and combating corruption, ▪ labour market and social protection, ▪ health, ▪ education, ▪ utilities, ▪ environmental protection, and ▪ Monitoring of indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ poverty and economic equity (with 18 areas of cooperation, and 10 activities) ▪ social equity (20 areas and 13 activities) ▪ democratic governance (10 activities) ▪ environmental governance (11 activities). <p>i.e. 44 activities but later identified as 69 activities</p>

* Interim PRS

Coordination and harmonisation:

- This may be a harsh judgement and subject to correction but it is hard to see a common set of priorities and therefore where the coordination and harmonisation is happening. As this is the first round on UNDAFs and PRSP etc, these aspects of 'listing' may be an essential part of the process.

The Results Matrix and M&E Framework

- No RM was attached, this may be under development.

Support Systems

- DevtInfo is used here

3. Bangladesh

National Priorities as defined:

- The full PRS (officially still a draft as not yet passed by the Boards yet, but is being implemented as the PRS) outlines a roadmap for meeting the MDGs and other development challenges. It is based on four Strategic Blocks and four Supporting Strategies as indicated below in the table.
- The PRS is the roadmap for achieving the MDGs. Target setting against major goals is all within the context of the MDGs. The PRS has no reference to the UNDAF or the role of UN agencies in the PRS (a few UN agencies are mentioned but only in reference to publications or indices etc).
- Nevertheless there is a link with SWAps here: for the Second Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP II) - includes UNICEF – which is aligned to PRS. But there is no reference to this in the UNDAF.

UN efforts to align:

- There has been a strenuous and apparently successful effort to link up with the PRS. The UNCT in Bangladesh has been actively involved in the various national development plans. It has worked with the GoB to undertake a MDG Progress report and many UN agencies actively supported the PRSP process.
- The UNCT strategically places itself among the main development plans within Bangladesh and, therefore, the UNDAF is based on the challenges/gaps identified in the CCA, the first MDG Progress Report (2005) and the PRSP. Table 1 of the UNDAF shows the UNDAF-CCA-MDG-PRSP link, which is very valuable.
- The UNDAF has six national priorities which each have a corresponding UNDAF outcome (see table below)
- For each of these six areas, there are consolidated outcomes of UNCT activities clustered into four areas, expanded in the Results Matrix.
- The six national priorities reflect the UN's comparative advantage of technical expertise and “on the ground” practical experience supported by knowledge of best practices worldwide. Priorities are also a reflection of the work already being carried out by UN agencies.
- The CCA used a rights-based approach and the UNCT has adopted a RBA.
- UNDAF is firmly positioned within the aim of achieving the MDGs in 2015, addressing the gaps and challenges that need to be addressed.

Bangladesh: Comparing national priorities and UNDAF outcomes

National priorities (PRS)	National Priority/UNDAF Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Macroeconomic Environment for Pro-Poor Economic Growth ▪ Critical Sectors for Pro-Poor Economic Growth ▪ Effective Safety Nets and Targeted Programmes ▪ Human Development. <p>Supporting Strategies are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) ensuring participation, social inclusion and empowerment (ii) promoting good governance (iii) service delivery (iv) caring for the environment and sustainable development. 	<p>Democratic Governance and Human Rights: The human rights of children, women and vulnerable groups are progressively fulfilled within the foundations of strengthened democratic governance.</p> <p>Health, Nutrition and Sustainable Population: Survival and development rights of vulnerable groups are ensured within and environmentally sustainable framework.</p> <p>Education and pro-Poor Growth: The most vulnerable groups have improved life conditions, skills, services, and decent job opportunities.</p> <p>Social protection and Disaster Risk Reduction: Human security is strengthened and vulnerability to social, economic and natural risk is reduced.</p> <p>Gender Equality and Advancement of Women: Societal changes are realised to reduce discriminatory practices and to pursue equity and empowerment for women and girls.</p> <p>Prevention and Protection against HIV/Aids: Current low prevalence rate of HIV/Aids is sustained through preventive measures and the needs of the affected and infected people are met.</p>

Coordination and harmonisation:

- The UNDAF is seen as part of the process to enhance collaboration and harmonisation among the different UN agencies, and also part of a broader agenda to strengthen the harmonisation between all donors and their alignment to national priorities. All agencies participated in the UNDAF Prioritisation Retreat in August 2004.
- The draft UNDAF was shared with the UN regional networks to ensure feedback from non-resident and regional UN agencies (these are not named).
- The consolidated country programme outcomes have information about the UN agencies involved but there is no information about whether there will be joint working between the agencies to achieve the outputs/outcomes.
- The Local Consultative Group (LCG) – the main donor coordination mechanism in Bangladesh – reviewed the draft UNDAF, but there is no indication that the LCG will be actively involved in implementing or reviewing the UNDAF despite a description of the LCG and its thematic sub-groups. LCG is in the process of considering and preparing a Joint Assistance Strategy to be based on the PRS and other programmes.

The Results Matrix and M&E Framework

- RM is based on the UNDAF outcomes and country programmes which it groups into four broad areas – (i) policy change and reforms, (ii) institutional capacity strengthening, (iii) advocacy and partnerships, and (iv) knowledge management but no clear indication why the programme outputs/outcomes are clustered in this way.

- The Country Programme outputs do not have accompanying indicators and there is no information about baseline data, sources of verification and risks, challenges and assumptions in the RM or in the M&E framework.
- There is a degree of disaggregation: women, children and certain vulnerable groups.
- UN agencies and key partners (mainly GoB and civil society) are identified in the RM, but no discussion of other donors that will be involved in the UNDAF.
- The UNDAF has a separate M&E section which appears to be un-related to the RM. The M&E will be conducted by the GoB and the UNCT and an M&E Steering Committee. Indicators set out in the M&E framework of the UNDAF are not clearly linked to the country programme outcomes/outputs set out in the RM but are 3-4 separate indicators for each UNDAF outcome.

Support Systems

- Management of UNDAF rests with RC. UNCT received training in the purposes and new guidelines of the CCA/UNDAF process at country level.

4. Burkina Faso

National Priorities as defined

- There have been two versions of the PRS, in 2000 and 2004. The latter has four familiar ‘pillars’ of accelerating broad based growth, social protection and promoting access to basic social services, increasing employment for the poor and promoting good governance.
- The PRS is linked with MDGs

UN efforts to align:

- There has been a strong and largely successful effort by UN to align. The national priorities are clear in the PRS and outlined in UNDAF, and the RM is aligned with them.
- The UNDAF mentions that it is in coherence with the MDGs. The table (on p.30) outlines the relationship between MDGs, PRS priorities and UNDAF results. Whereas the PRS and MDGs are relatively well linked (and both with indicators) the UNDAF outcomes are only in very broad alignment to the MDGs here and indicators not specified in the same way.
- Mentioned in the UNDAF is UN agency work in rural poverty, reinforcing capacities of villages, girls’ education, vaccination coverage and maternal health programmes.

Burkina Faso: Comparing national priorities and UNDAF outcomes

National priorities	UNDAF Outcomes
<p><u>Pillar 1: Accelerating broad-based growth</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a stable macroeconomic framework • Increase the competitiveness of the economy and reduce factor costs • Support the productive sectors and speed up rural development <p><u>Pillar 2: Promoting access to basic social services and social protection by the poor</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote access to education services by the poor • Promote access to health and nutrition services, to safe drinking water and sanitation by the poor • Improve the living conditions of the poor: housing • Guarantee social protection to the poor <p><u>Pillar 3: Increasing employment and income-generating activities for the poor in an equitable manner</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease the vulnerability of agricultural activity • Intensify and modernize agricultural activity • Support producers' organizations and develop collective infrastructures • Increase and diversify the incomes of rural residents • Speed up access to isolated areas • Promote jobs for youths, and vocational training • Improve living and working conditions of rural women <p><u>Pillar 4: Promoting good governance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote political, administrative and economic governance • Promote local governance. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase the employment opportunities, especially for the youth and women. 2. Enhance access by the poor to social services and social protection. 3. Promote good governance. 4. Reduce the vulnerability of the rural economy and food insecurity for vulnerable groups and promote a sustainable environment. 5. Stabilise infection of HIV/AIDs.

Coordination and harmonisation

- The PRS is integrated into UNDAF 2 and seen also as a basis for CCA formulation.
- There is a definite improvement from UNDAF 1 to UNDAF 2 in terms of articulating priorities and outcomes, and is stronger on internal coordination
- The Government is emphasised as leader in coordination efforts, including supervision, follow-up and implementation. There is participation at retreats and meetings but little on substantive involvement of the government.
- There is an annual review of UNDAF, UNS and government co-presidents. On a technical level, a national committee of coordination of UNDAF (CNC) established comprising DGs of Economy and Planning, Cooperation, Statistical Institute etc., that follow UNDAF execution and the integration of country programmes with national programmes.
- The need for an institutional framework for the implementation of the UNDAF is emphasised. This includes elements of strategic partnership with the government; external coordination mechanism (the PRS in this case, together with UNDAF task forces); internal coordination mechanism (committee of Heads of agencies and 4 sub-committees of inter-agency coordination and thematic groups); RBM principles where sub-committees determine programme modalities and theme groups propose programmes relating to each result; and an increase in resources.
- Management alternatives suitable within the UNDAF framework are outlined (parallel management; grouped management; channelled management; combined management).

The Results Matrix and M&E Framework

- The RM fits in well with the UNDAF/PRS strategic position. It has few qualitative targets but none quantitative. M&E framework have some quantitative indicators.
- The Indicators mentioned taken from the PRS, MDGs, sectoral plans and CCA but are not outlined anywhere in document.

Support Systems

- UNDAF proposes to contribute to annual statistical surveys, reinforcement of the capacity of national statistical units, ONAPAD, Dev-Info and ONEP (observatoire national de l'emploi et de la formation professionnelle). UNDAF 1 had outlined some 'insufficiencies' in the coordination process.

5. Cambodia

National Priorities as defined:

- Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) has developed a 'Rectangular Strategy for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency' (if the format is seen then the 'rectangular' aspect is more obvious): see table below.
- RGC has started to align NPRS targets to those established as Cambodia MDGs, to cost and prioritise NPRS programmes in the annual budget, and link them to a MTEP.

UN efforts to align:

- As a coordination mechanism for alignment of donor initiatives, there is now a joint country strategy with AsDB, DFID and WB, and integration of UN agency planning cycles around a streamlined CCA-UNDAF process. There was a recent national workshop on alignment. RGC intends to merge the next (2nd) NPRS with the next (3rd) Socio-Economic Development Plan.
- UNDAF 2006-2010 is UN's response to priorities identified by the Rectangular Strategy, and draws on common analysis made with the WB, ADB and DFID. In addition there were intensive intra-agency consultations with Government, civil society, private sector and donors. Each UNDAF priority has expected outcomes and planned outputs.

Cambodia: Comparing national priorities and UNDAF outcomes

National priorities (the Rectangular Strategy)	UNDAF Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good governance (anti-corruption, legal and judicial reform, public admin reform including decentralisation, and reform of armed forces especially demobilisation. ▪ Overall environment for implementation consists of: peace, political stability and social order; partnership in development with all stakeholders, including private sector, donors, and civil society; favourable macroeconomic and financial environment, and international integration. ▪ Four strategic growth rectangles: enhancement of agricultural sector; private sector development and employment generation; continued rehabilitation and construction of physical infrastructure, and capacity building and human resource development (each of these strategic growth rectangles has 4 sides). 	<p>Within Governments Rectangular Strategy, UNDAF outlines four priority areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good governance and the promotion and protection of human rights ▪ Agriculture and rural poverty ▪ Capacity building and human resource development for the social sectors ▪ Development of the National Strategic Development Plan

Coordination and harmonisation:

- At the time of UNDAF1 (May 2000), the three IFIs, (WB, IMF and AsDB), developed new country programmes also giving high priority to poverty reduction and governance. The WB was envisaging the PRS at this time. UNDAF 1 reported that the country programmes of the UN agencies were reviewed and endorsed locally by the UNCT and the RGC before being sent to the organisations' respective HQs.
- The ExCom. agencies (UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP) agreed to harmonise their programme cycle from 2001 onwards. Technical agencies do not have country cooperation programmes but they are aligning their programmes within UNDAF.
- RGC has started to align NPRS targets to those established as Cambodia MDGs, to cost and prioritise NPRS programmes in the annual budget, and link them to a MTEP and has started to reconcile the contradictory monitoring frameworks developed for NPRS and for CMDGs.

The Results Matrix and M&E Framework

- Outcomes are broad, essentially saying that if outputs are achieved, they 'add up' to outcomes. If the four country programme outcomes 'add up' to the UNDAF outcome under that national priority? For each country programme output there is a group of agencies designated: they combine to achieve this through the TWGs – technical working groups.
- M&E Framework is log frame in structure, very good as part of the process of mapping out implementation, risks and assumptions are the key here but unfortunately they are missing or weak.

Support Systems

- Little information provided

6. Georgia

National Priorities as defined:

- The Government of Georgia (GOG) has prepared two PRSs, the Interim Poverty Reduction and Economic Growth programme (PREGP) in 2000, and the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction programme in 2003. The latter has the same basic components of many PRSs: macro economic stability, fiscal management, governance, some health and education, then environmental and resource management.
- WB-IMF's view is that it was a sound basis for addressing the challenges, with important linkages between poverty and the efficiency and effectiveness of social services, but wanted more attention devoted to gender and child protection. An emphasis on governance as a precondition for growth and poverty reduction, but lacked clear prioritisation, and there was a need for a more focussed approach during implementation. Reservations about some measures outlined such as direct government support to certain industries, subsidised credits to certain sectors and export promotion programmes. However, it was regarded as a credible poverty reduction strategy.

UN efforts to align:

- From the CCA of 2004, there was an analysis of the situation in Georgia in order to prepare ground for UNDAF 2. Based on a participatory, HR-based and gender-sensitive approach, the following very broad issues were identified as essential in strategic analysis: Poverty and economic growth, Governance, Basic social services, Volatility and instability (oddly), and Environment.
- This emanated from a CCA/UNDAF Orientation workshop held by UNCT in March 2004. UNCT drafted the CCA, submitted it to regional readers group. A team from OHCHR facilitated a HRBA to programming, and then regional offices of UNDP and UNICEF facilitated a write up of the CCA.
- The UNDAF is strongly linked to the MDGs. UNDAF is guided by the principles of the Georgian MDG Report (MDGR), and the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Programme (EDPRP), based on CCA which was completed by UNCT in August 2004. The UNDAF outcomes emerging from these 5 thematic areas were linked closely to Country Programme Outcomes and Outputs as summarised in the RM. All UNDAF activity conducted within the UN HRBA and UN perspectives on gender equality. Progress in achieving the planned UNDAF outcomes will be measured through M&E process
- There is a very strong approach to the HRBA in Georgia, and this required the achievement of specific outcomes and quality processes. What the HRBA requires is: Poverty and economic growth, e.g. ensure right to work; reform of social security system; Governance: fundamental to adhere to HR standards and norms, System of rule of law has to take place; Basic Social Services: Right to health care and education; Volatility and Instability: Right to live in stable and secure conditions; Environment: Right to live in safe and clean environment; and Women's and Child Rights.

Georgia: Comparing national priorities and UNDAF outcomes

National priorities	UNDAF Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Governance ▪ Macro-economic policies, especially in the fiscal area ▪ Business environment ▪ Human capital (education, health and social protection) ▪ Reducing the vulnerability of the poor ▪ Physical capital: energy, transport and communications, tourism, agriculture ▪ The natural environment 	<p>Based on a human rights-based and gender-sensitive approach, the following issues identified as essential in strategic analysis:</p> <p>Poverty and economic growth Governance Basic social services Volatility and instability, and Environment.</p> <p>The four areas of concern:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation • Management and Planning • Policy and Legal Framework • Accountability

Coordination and harmonisation:

- There has been a real effort to link national priorities, UNDAF outcomes and country programme outcomes as shown by a useful one page summary in the UNDAF. However, it is not clear how well this has come off.
- For implementation, UNCT will keep to existing CCA/UNDAF Theme groups, which will report to UNCT. The UNDAF reports in the text (but not in the RM nor in the M&E Framework), five major assumptions to affect the achievement of the outcomes, being macro economic stability continues, political stability continues, conflicts do not resume/escalate, changes in the regional and international political environment do not have adverse impacts on socioeconomic conditions, and social development received priority attention from the side of governments and donors.

The Results Matrix and M&E Framework

- RM shows Country Programme Outcomes and Country Programme Outputs (all related to UNDAF outcomes, in turn related to National MDGs, all under the umbrella five areas (Poverty and Economic Growth, Governance ... etc) and so aims for (and achieves) a greater level of specificity seen in other RMs reviewed in this evaluation.
- But no M&E Framework to hand to assess risks and assumptions (some of these came in the text).

Support Systems

- Little information available

7. Ghana

National Priorities as defined:

- Ghana has many years of experience, with several years of PRSs and now into UNDAF3. It has generated a lot of experience and it shows, together with a willingness to share lessons and learn from experience, the only one of the countries examined willing to be so open.
- Ghana's PRS (GPRS) has the five 'familiar' pillars: macro-economic stability, production and employment, human resource development, special programmes for the vulnerable and excluded, and governance. The indicators of GPRS do broadly relate to MDGs. See table below for a fuller exposition of the national priorities as shown by the GPRS. They have a sound logic: get the economy stable and productive, sort out production and employment (especially rural), then the human resource elements, then take care of excluded groups, but be sure also to get governance straight.
- The UN can make a significant contribution in the human resource areas and rural livelihoods if its comparative advantage is to be fulfilled.

UN efforts to align:

- As shown in the table, the UNDAF works to the UN strengths, and adding its human rights perspectives.
- Generally, there is alignment with PRSP and MDGs although outcomes still very broad.
- No more is said here because documentation has provided (the only country to do this) some 'lessons learned', which are added below.

Ghana: Comparing national priorities and UNDAF outcomes

National priorities	UNDAF Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining macro economic stability by reducing and restructuring the domestic debt, improving public expenditure management, improving fiscal resource mobilisation and pursuing price and exchange rate stability. • Increasing production and employment by focusing on the development of the rural economy through modernisation of agriculture, sustained environmental protection through re-forestation, enhancing infrastructural development and creating an enabling environment for private sector activities and development • Promoting human resources development which focuses on policies in a) access and quality education, b) access to health care, c) provision of potable drinking water and d) provision of sanitary environment • Implementing special programmes for the vulnerable and excluded through the creation of opportunities, including the assertion of right, access to services and to decent livelihood and improvements in the quality of life and the victims of HIV/AIDS, and • Ensuring good governance through accountability and transparency. The key areas of focus under governance are security and the rule of law, decentralisation and public sector reform. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 2010, the population of people in Ghana, particularly those living in the most deprived district whose right to health is fulfilled in increased. Various things are developed by no quantitative target mentioned. • 100% gross enrolment ratio and gender equity in enrolment, retention and completion achieved in basic education by 1020 in the most deprived districts. • Increased productive capacity for sustainable livelihoods especially in the most deprived districts by 2010, (Very broad) • By 2010, national responses to HIV/AIDS strengthened. • By 2010, policy, planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation processes at all levels are informed by an effective data management information system. • By 2010, capacity for equitable and participatory governance systems ate made more effective at all levels and guided by human rights perspectives.

Coordination and harmonisation:

- There have been two CCAs: 1998-2001 (with UNDAF1) and 2004 (UNDAF3) for CCA2. Following are the lessons learned from UNDAF1:
- UNDAF I was a pilot both as a product and a process, stock taking rather than a strategic exercise, taking inventory, assessing etc, trying to make it possible to develop a systematic effort to streamline use of resources and energies across agencies.
- Major lesson was need for realism. Decentralisation of agencies has helped, another lesson that UNDAF as a coordinating tool should explicitly treat cross –sectoral issues in order for the UN system to fully capture the benefits from future collaboration. Finally there is a need for a common database to provide inputs and monitoring data for the UNDAF, which gives further meaning to the CCA.
- This UNDAF2 framework provided the basis for the preparation of individual agency country programmes.
- Major lesson from UNDAF I was to have clearer management of cross cutting issues, including gender, environment HIV/AIDS and culture.

- UNDAF2 addresses itself to ‘how do the CCA, CDF, PRSP, UNDAF, CAS and PRGF relate?’ It is concluded that the processes and products are mutually reinforcing. The CDF process helps GoG to formulate its strategies and programmes, building on the analysis of the CCA. The PRS is an expression of strategy, and this is used to formulate the UN business plans: the CAS, UNDAF and PRGF.

The Results Matrix and M&E Framework

- RM is very detailed and more realistic than those seen in other UNDAFs. It notes the outputs expected of each agency which generates a sense of accountability
- M&E matrix was not available at time of review

Support Systems

- Information still being reviewed

8. Guyana

National Priorities as defined:

- Guyana completed a PRS in 2001. UNCT (PAHO/WHO, UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA) were actively participated in the PRS process and gave technical inputs to the PRS thematic groups on health, HIV/Aids, education, water and sanitation, governance, infrastructure, trade and economic matters.
- The High-Level PRS Committee chaired by the President has lapsed since mid-2004 but before that the government held the UN RC as a valued a trusted partner in the policy dialogue and interlocutor on behalf of the donor community;
- ***Links with SWAps: Guyana is one of the first seven countries selected as an Education for All Fast Track Initiative. UNICEF and the UN more generally have been involved in this. Donors involved in this have agreed to use a single, unified annual report on progress on this initiative, prepared by the GoG. This initiative has a clear link to Outcome 1 of UNDAF 2;***
- UNCT is also involved in the multi-donor Social Cohesion programme and has actively worked to integrate the programme into the individual agencies’ projects and activities. (However, this is not included in the UNDAF 2.)

UN efforts to align:

- The UNDAF mostly positions itself according to the main development challenges and priorities in Guyana (see UNDAF outcomes below). The UNCT has been actively involved in the PRS and MDG progress reports and the UNDAF reflects this broadly. However the UNDAF does not explicitly link the three national priorities and outcomes it has chosen to the PRS or to MDGs. It also does not argue that these have been chosen according to the UNCT’s comparative advantage;
- Both UNDAFs in Guyana place strong emphasis on a human rights framework for action which it sees as its comparative advantage (according to its own mandate) and also in line with national priorities to realise the human rights of all Guyanese;
- Guyana has been subject to political tensions, although this is not taken up significantly in the UNDAF II. The cross-cutting issues mention respect for human rights in the RM and M&E framework but social cohesion is only briefly mentioned in the executive summary and is taken up in a few country outputs under Outcome 2 (despite the UNCT being actively involved in a multi-donor Social Cohesion Programme).;

- UNDAF 2 states that it is an integrated response to Guyana’s development challenges from the perspective of national priorities (including human rights) and the link between MDGs and human rights is made strongly, but links are less strong between the national priorities/ UNDAF outcomes and MDG goals;
- UNDAF 2 links broadly to challenges identified in the MDG Progress Report i.e. Outcome 1 focuses on an aspect of reducing poverty (access to services), Outcome 3 calls for a reduction in poverty by stimulated growth and employment which links to the challenge of economic underdevelopment. However the link between Outcome 2 (empowered individuals and groups, strengthened institutions and enabling human rights framework) is weaker.
- The CCA claims that the impact of UN programmes will ultimately be measured against the MDG goals and targets (as well as other national targets and human rights instruments).
- The UNDAF is based on the CCA which organises the key challenges into three themes: expansion of human *capabilities*; enrichment and widening of choice/*opportunities*; and the fulfilment of freedoms and human rights through *empowerment*. The UNDAF follows this and the three national priorities/ UNDAF outcomes are also organised around these themes.

Guyana: Comparing national priorities and UNDAF outcomes

National priorities (PRS)	UNDAF Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Broad-based, job-generating economic growth; ▪ Environmental protection; ▪ Stronger institutions and better governance; ▪ Accelerated investment in human capital, with emphasis on basic education and health; ▪ Accelerated investment in physical capital; ▪ Improved safety nets; ▪ Special intervention programmes to address regional pockets of exclusion. <p>National Priorities/National Development Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elimination of poverty by investing in people and requisite physical capital; ▪ An inclusive system of governance based on the rule of law in which citizens and their organisations participate in the decision-making processes that affect their well-being; ▪ A macro-economic framework and sustainable economic base conducive to the elimination of poverty. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ By 2010, there will be at least a 10% increase in the number of Guyanese accessing quality services in education, health, water and sanitation, housing with capabilities enhanced to maximise available opportunities; ▪ Empowered individuals and groups, strengthened institutions and an enabling constitutional and human rights framework; ▪ Reduce poverty by 28% by 2010 through stimulation of growth and sustainable employment generation.

Coordination and harmonisation:

- UNDAF 2 is a result of a consultative process between the GoG and UN agencies. It has been formulated from the perspective of Guyana’s National Development Strategy

(NDS) (a civil society document), the PRS as well as the MDGs. Its aim is to provide a basis for individual organisations to plan their Country Programmes around a common set of agreed objectives and outcomes.

- A Prioritisation Workshop (Nov 2004) resulted in the identification of three interlinked *priority areas of cooperation* (which are the UNDAF outcomes) which GoG and non-government stakeholders thought had the potential for high impact and results taking into consideration the UN's comparative advantage. These priorities are closely aligned with the national PRS and address these national priorities from a human rights perspective.
- In terms of co-ordination of UN agencies during CCA/UNDAF process, three thematic working groups and a Steering Committee (including Government representation) were set up to support the CCA/UNDAF processes; concerted efforts were made to mobilise the active participation of the non-resident country team members;
- The WB and IMF were not involved in CCA/UNDAF process but the UNDAF 2 states that there will be concrete collaboration through the linkages between the MDGs, the UNDAF and the PRS;
- UNCT is involved in the number of joint donor initiatives including: Education for all Fast Track Initiative (see above in SWAps section), joint donor emergency response and the Social Cohesion Programme but these are not directly linked to UNDAF;
- UNDP and UNICEF have a new country cooperation framework with harmonised programming cycles starting in January 2006;

The Results Matrix and M&E Framework

- The national priorities and UNDAF outcomes are broad, and it is not clear how the outcome will contribute to the achievement of the national priority and in turn, how the country programme outcomes will achieve the UNDAF outcomes. Some UNDAF outcomes have stronger links between the three levels (cf. Outcome 2 on governance) than others;
- The RM is relatively brief but is expanded in the M&E Framework;
- Several indicators are directly linked to MDG goals and targets although the UNDAF outcomes are set within the timeframe of the UNDAF 2 (2006-2010) rather than the MDGs (2015);
- The M&E framework is more comprehensive than the RM and includes indicators for the country programme outputs together with the sources of verification; risks and assumptions are included for each of the country programme outcomes;

Support Systems

- There will be a continuing co-ordination process with thematic groups and technical task forces, reporting to an UNDAF Implementation Steering Committee of Heads of Agency and Government representatives.
- Members of the UNCT participated in training workshops and training on DevInfo database in 2003.

9. Indonesia

National Priorities as defined:

- Difficulties in accessing recent national development reports mean that comments here are restricted to the priorities listed (in table) in I-PRS.
- UNDAFs 1 and 2 interwoven with PRS and National Medium Development Plan. Key theme is that Indonesia is a period of political, social and economic transition with opportunities for the UN to support this process.

UN efforts to align:

- Clear change in language in UNDAF2 from UNDAF1 with placement of UNDAF within MDGs (UNDAF will support GoI in achieving MDGs) and the GoIs national priorities as expressed in the Medium-Term Development Plan. UNDAF2 is based on CCA, MDG Progress Report, PRS and Medium-Term Development Plan.
- Three priority areas (outcomes) identified in UNDAF 2 as areas in which UN system can work together most effectively to support the MDGs in Indonesia.
- UN, led by UNICEF supported GoI in preparing its first MDG Progress Report and the UN system has worked with GoI to ensure that MDG related issues are addressed in key national planning documents.
- Each UNDAF outcome is linked to one of the strategic targets contained in the PRS and Medium Term Development Plan. There is a clear linkage in most cases to the PRS, with the contribution of the UNDAF outcomes to the national priority being particularly clear in 2 & 3 (less clear in 1 because of the breadth of the priority/outcome). 2 & 3 also have good linkages between sub-outcomes (CP outcome) and UNDAF outcome. The linkages with the Medium-Term Development Plan are weaker.

Indonesia: Comparing national priorities and UNDAF outcomes

National priorities (Interim PRS)*	UNDAF Outcomes
<p>Main approaches to poverty alleviation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ increasing income by improving productivity ▪ reducing expenditure cost for basic needs <p>Through four basic policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Opportunity creation: govt and private sector create job and business opportunities for the poor ▪ Community empowerment: for poor to attain economic, social and political rights and participate in decision-making. ▪ Capacity-building of poor to increase their productivity and meet their own needs. ▪ Social protection of the poor. <p>Policies to operationalise the four basic policies include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ social protection policy (both govt and community based); ▪ human resource development policy (education, health etc); ▪ women empowerment policy; ▪ increasing local governance; ▪ enhancing good governance; ▪ promoting local organisation and institutional capacity; ▪ law enforcement 	<p>1. (Strengthening human development) By 2010, improve life chances and livelihood opportunities for all through enhanced Govt commitment to the MDGs, institutional support for achieving the MDGs and empowered community engagement in the achievement of the MDGs with a special focus on HIV/AIDS.</p> <p>Sub-outcomes/CP outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ increased education opportunities ▪ improved health and nutrition ▪ reduced incidence of HIV/AIDS in high-risk populations ▪ increased opportunities for sustainable livelihoods <p>2. (Promoting Good governance) By 2010, pro-poor democratic governance is realised with enhanced accountability, capacity and participation in the 10 poorest provinces.</p> <p>Sub-outcomes/CP outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ increased adherence to the RoL and HR ▪ strengthened participatory and decentralisation processes <p>3. (Protecting vulnerable people) By 2010, govt and civil society have better policy, legal frameworks and mechanisms to protect vulnerable people.</p> <p>Sub-outcomes/CP outcomes: reduced vulnerability of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ children and young people ▪ women migrant workers ▪ cultural communities ▪ people affected by social and natural disasters ▪ gender-based violence ▪ populations most at risk of HIV/AIDS.

* Most recent development objectives will be in national medium-term development plan 2004-9 but unable to find this online. There is a draft PRS (which UNDAF2 draws on) which could not be assessed.

Coordination and harmonisation:

- UNDAF 2 states that harmonised programme cycles of UN agencies will enable collaborative programme and the CPs/project documents will have explicit links to

UNDAF outcomes. Joint programmes will be explored where appropriate. Existing UN and donor coordination mechanisms – theme/working groups, consultative group – will be used to coordinate UNDAF activities where possible.

- UN system coordination and implementation mechanisms given for each CP outcome in the matrix (including with other donors through consultative group in some instances).
- There is a stated commitment to explore fund raising opportunities with donors interested in channelling funding through the UNDAF mechanism to improve donor and UN system harmonisation.
- UNDP CP 2006-10 states that it is fully aligned with the CCA. UNDAF will work focus on five objectives, each contributing to UNDAF outcomes (and this ranges from being the whole UNDAF outcome to contributing to one CP outcome).
- GoI to lead country's harmonisation programme but this is yet to be fully defined. The three main donors (JBIC, ADB and WB) already have some coordination mechanisms e.g. annual joint Country Portfolio Performance Review. UNICEF working with ADB, AusAid, EC, Netherlands and WB and GoI to design education sector strategy which will be financed in coordinated manner.
- Prioritisation workshop was held where priority areas were agreed. Working group comprising all UN agencies and GoI Ministry counterparts was established.

The Results Matrix and M&E Framework

- RM /M&E plan identifies relevant national priority against each UNDAF outcome. Generally good linkages between CP outputs, sub-outcomes (replacing CP outcomes), UNDAF outcomes and national priorities (although some are stronger than others, which is generally a reflection of how broad/focused the outcome is).
- Detailed CP outputs for each sub-outcome/CP outcome, including identification of lead agency and key partners.
- M&E Programme Cycle calendar outlines how and by whom each outcome will be measured. Joint UN/National Planning Board/Bureau of Statistic M&E working group will be established to further refine indicators and coordinate annual and mid-term reviews.
- Indicators (generally quantitative) identified for all sub-outcomes/CP outcomes, with baseline data in many cases. There is a commitment to disaggregate data by province and gender in the UNDAF annual, mid-term and final reports. Targets are not specified in most cases. Source of verification is identified. Minimal risks and assumptions identified in many cases.

Support Systems

- UNDG supported a three-day retreat to discuss substantive areas of the CCA as part of UNDAF preparation process.
- Joint training activities for UN staff and UNCT organised in areas of human rights (by OHCHR), preparing joint programmes and CCA/UNDAF process in 2004
- New RC Communications Office established in 2005 to work with UNIC and Inter-Agency Communications Officers Group to prepare a strategic UN system communications plan for 2005.
- Introduction of DevInfo MDG monitoring tool as key tool in M&E system. Training of Govt and UN personnel on DevInfo planned in years 1 & 2.

10. Iran

National Priorities as defined:

- The UNDAF refers to Iran's Five Year National Development Plans; the most recent being the fourth FYNDP (2005-200) which is entitled 'Knowledge-Based Sustainable Economic Growth and Development'. This is not available on the web.
- The UNDAF Prioritisation Retreat Report lists the priority areas in the Plan as including: Sustainable development and disaster management, Employment and productivity, Strengthening capacities to realise the MDGs, Economic competitiveness, and Science and new technology (p.2-3, Retreat Report). The latter - science and technology - also appears in the 'Vision Plan' of Iran for 2025 (p.13, UNDAF).

UN efforts to align:

- As the table shows, the UNDAF has made good progress to align with national priorities (even if the information outlines these only in very general terms). In particular the 'facilitation of transfer of science and technology, not seen in other national priorities (i.e. PRSs) reviewed in this report is given attention by the UNDAF.
- The UNDAF was endorsed by the GoI and the UNCT is set up as a framework under which UN agencies can support the country's long-term development (with specific reference to the 4th FYNDP) according to their capabilities and mandates (p.5, UNDAF);
- The introduction to the UNDAF emphasises the harmonisation and alignment objectives of the UNDAF (p.6, UNDAF);
- The emphasis on the UNDAF being a strategic planning framework was evident in the UNDAF Prioritisation Retreat where the facilitators advised the participants that they be very strategic in choosing their priority areas. Prioritisation was based on individual agencies' mandates leading to a very broad UNDAF whereas a strategic UNDAF would lead to greater synergy, improved long-term impact, more efficient use of resources, integration of human rights and gender etc (p.2, Retreat Report). However, the Country Programme Outputs in the Results Matrix (RM) are divided into each agencies' activities making it less strategic than was advised at the Retreat (see below in RM section for more details);
- The UNDAF outcomes are all quite broad (except the UNDAF Outcome for Area of Cooperation 4.2) but obviously linked to the outcomes of the CCA and the 4th FYNDP (either one or both). The links between the various levels of the UNDAF (the Priority Area of Cooperation, the UNDAF Outcome, the Country Programme Outcomes and Outputs) are not clearly linked and it requires a number of assumption about activities 'adding up' to outcomes;
- There is very little discussion on why the five priority areas were chosen. Apart from the obvious links to the CCA and 4th FYNDP, there is no discussion on the UNCT's comparative advantages or existing work programmes;
- Focus throughout on capacity building e.g. capacity for MDG monitoring is part of the UNDAF outcome for Priority Area 1 (p.8, UNDAF) and capacity building in disaster management (p.12, UNDAF) and in science and technology (p.12, UNDAF). This can be seen as a strategic intervention by the UNCT to assist the government and non-governmental organisations achieve the national priorities while also linked to the UN's comparative advantage.
- The UNDAF has an obvious focus on the MDGs, as noted in the Executive Summary: in order to assist the GoI achieve the MDGs, it will improve its coordination at the country level (p.3, UNDAF);

- A national priority in the FYNDP and the first priority areas of cooperation is ‘Strengthening capacities and capabilities for achieving the MDGs’. Information on this priority area is based in the first MDG report which was written by the GoI with the assistance of the UNCT in Iran;
- The UNDAF Outcome for Priority Area 1 has a selection of specific MDG issues. It is unclear why these specific MDG issues are the focus in the UNDAF Outcome – it could be the focus in the FYNDP
- The close link to the MDGs is also apparent in the CCA which focused on development challenges in the areas of social development and the MDGs (p.7, UNDAF);

Iran: Comparing national priorities and UNDAF outcomes

National priorities *	UNDAF Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sustainable development & disaster management; ▪ Employment and productivity; ▪ Strengthening capacities to realise the MDGs; ▪ Economic competitiveness; ▪ Science and new technology (p.2-3, Retreat Report) <p>*The 4th FYNDP is not available on the web but the UNDAF Prioritisation Retreat Report lists the priority areas in the Plan as above.</p>	<p><u>Priority area 1: Strengthening capacities and capabilities for achieving the MDGs*</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ UNDAF Outcome: Quality basic education services and primary health care – including reproductive health care, HIV/AIDS prevention and care services – to be made incrementally available for those in need, particularly vulnerable and marginalized groups (especially women and children) and their rights to participate in development to be fulfilled; national capacity for MDG monitoring to be established. <p>*See below</p> <p><u>Priority area 2: Strengthening good governance**</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ UNDAF Outcome: Capacities for a transparent and accountable Governance system, adherence to the rule of law and effective national management institutions to be strengthened in accordance with the recommendations of UN and other international conferences. <p>**This is one of the main challenges identified in the CCA</p> <p><u>Priority area 3: Improving economic performance and management and generating employment*</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ UNDAF Outcome: Improved combined economic performance and employment generation in Iran – by raising human capabilities and utilising sustainable small-technologies – especially for unemployed, poor, women, youth and small and medium sized enterprises. <p><u>Priority area 4.1: Sustainable development, disaster management and energy efficiency*</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ UNDAF Outcome: Global environment concerns and environmentally sensitive development to be integrated in national development frameworks. These are to be implemented through community-based approaches to sustainable use of national resources, capacity building, environmental assessments and the removal of financial, economic, legal, institutional and technological barriers. <p><u>Priority area 4.2: Disaster Management and Vulnerability Reduction*</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ UNDAF Outcome: Strengthened Disaster Risk Management at national and local levels. <p><u>Priority area 5: Facilitating the transfer of science and technology*</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ UNDAF Outcome: Improved national capacity for science and technology management, research and development <p>*This is the same as a national priority set out in the 4th FYNDP.</p>

Coordination and harmonisation:

- The UNCT all attended the Prioritisation Workshop for the UNDAF as well as non-resident UN Organisations;
- The Prioritisation Retreat highlighted some concerns about the planning around the CCA/UNDAF processes, including a lack of ownership by the government and UN agencies, poor planning and the fear that national and UN agency priorities would not be well integrated;
- After the Retreat, an UNDAF Management Group was set up and a number of Theme and Working groups were set up to manage and help draft the UNDAF Process and various UN agencies participate in these. These include the thematic groups on Gender, HIV/AIDS and Capacity Strengthening on MDGs, HR and Good Governance, a new inter-agency Theme Group and teams on external relations, security management, operations management and humanitarian affairs and disaster risk management.
- With each Area of Cooperation in the Results Matrix, there is information on Coordination Mechanisms and Programme Modalities. Although this is more a list of what each UN agency will be doing to achieve the UNDAF Outcome, there are examples of joint working, for example, in the first Area of Cooperation on strengthening capacity to achieve the MDGs, there is the work of the HIV/AIDS and Gender theme groups, work with the Global Education Initiative coordinated by the Ministry of Education etc.
- The programme cycles of the individual UN agencies will be harmonised for the UNDAF period (2005-2009) which “will enable effective individual and collaborative programming, as well as joint monitoring and evaluation activities”.
- The separation of Country Programme Outcomes/Outputs into the individual agencies does not help simplify the UN’s work, encourage harmonised work among the agencies or contribute to the UN being more effective. Without a process of combining the individual agencies’ work to create a combined UN framework for action, it is hard to see whether the UNDAF will help the UN work more effectively to contribute to national priorities.
- An UNDAF Management Team was established and co-chaired by the UN and a Government representative from the Management and Planning Organisation to manage the coordination process. This team comes under the RC and is directly responsible for the Working Groups on Science, Technology and Environment and on the Economy;
- The RC is also responsible for thematic groups on Gender, HIV/AIDS and Capacity Strengthening on MDGs, HR and Good Governance, made up of representatives from the GoI and UN agencies;
- A new inter-agency Theme Group was designed and approved by the UNCT, managed by the RC and has teams in it on external relations, security management, operations management and humanitarian affairs and disaster risk management;
- The UN Coordination Work plan linked to the RC’s 2004 Annual Report is structured around the UNDAF Outcomes. It includes the relevant Theme Groups involved in each outcome and also some Outputs and Activities. However, these Outputs and Activities do not directly correspond with the UNDAF and are the Annual Report’s own consolidation of the various outputs and activities listed in the UNDAF’s RM under each agency. The Results and Work plan from the 2003 Annual Report are structured around the MDGs and have only passing reference to the UNDAF (which was still not completed).

The Results Matrix and M&E Framework

- The County Programme Outcomes/Outputs for each UNDAF Outcome are divided into the work to be carried out by individual UN agencies under the broad UNDAF

Outcome. The number of Country Programme Outcomes listed under each agency varies making the total number of CP Outcomes under one UNDAF outcome as many as 11. Therefore it is difficult to see how the different agencies' activities are linked and how they, collectively, add up to the UNDAF Outcome or national priorities;

- The RM reads as if each individual agency devised their own Country Programme Outcomes for each UNDAF Outcome and these were just brought together in the RM rather than the Country Programme Outcomes being a joint list of Outcomes for the UNCT in Iran. Therefore there are differences in emphasis on the MDGs, how the UN will work together, monitoring and how the outcome is broken down into different outputs/activities;
- There is little information on how the Country Programme Outputs will be achieved or other general practical information. Many of the CP Outputs are broad statements such as 'capacity in X strengthened' or 'X enhanced' etc without further information;
- Some sections are more focused and comprehensive than others. The section on Disaster Management is the most comprehensive and focused;
- There are indicators for the UNDAF Outcome and for the individual CP Outputs. For each indicator in the M&E Framework, baseline data is either available or will be identified later;

Support Systems

- The facilitators for the UNDAF Prioritisation Retreat were from UN HQs;
- A Simplification and Harmonisation workshop was planned for the UN programme staff and GoI counterparts in 2004 but had to be postponed because of a lack of resource person available.

11. Kazakhstan

National Priorities as defined:

- See below: PRS not done, but there is a Kazakhstan 2030 Vision that sets out long term priorities with a Strategic Plan of Development Kazakhstan 2010.

UN efforts to align:

- UNDAF outcomes very broadly aligned. Collaboration with BWIs appears to be substantial and involvement with government also close as indicated in documents.

Kazakhstan: Comparing national priorities and UNDAF outcomes

National priorities (Strategic Plan of development 2010)	UNDAF Outcomes
<p>1. National security: Ensure development as an independent sovereign state preserving its complete territorial integrity.</p> <p>2. Domestic Political Stability And Consolidation Of The Society: Safeguard and strengthen domestic political stability and national unity, to put the national strategy into practice in the course of the current and the upcoming decade.</p> <p>3. Economic Growth Based On An Open Market Economy With High Level Of Foreign Investments And Internal Savings. Gain realistic, stable and steadily growing rates of economic growth.</p> <p>4. Health, education and well-being: Consistently improve standards of life, health, education and opportunities. Improve natural environment.</p> <p>5. Power resources: Effectively utilise power resources through rapid increase in extracting and exporting oil and gas with the aim of gaining revenues which would enhance stable economic growth and improvement of living standards of the people.</p> <p>6. Infrastructure, more particularly transport and communication: Develop these key sectors so they add to strengthening of national security, political stability and economic growth.</p> <p>7. Professional state: Establish an effective and up-to-date corps of civil servants capable of acting as representatives of the people in achieving our priorities.</p>	<p>Developing pro-poor outcomes: Reduced (income and human) poverty at national and sub-national levels</p> <p>Ensuring quality of life for all: Improved access to quality basic social services</p> <p>Promoting an enabling environment for democratic governance and the broadest participation of citizens in national development: Enhanced professional capacity, transparency and accountability of the governance structure and participation of civil society in decision-making</p>

Coordination and harmonisation:

- UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA have harmonised programme cycles and UN thematic groups around UNDAF areas.

The Results Matrix and M&E Framework

- RM aligns priority area, national priority and MDGs. Matrix very specific on other donors and shows considerations of comparative advantage. Good strategic placement of each UN agency.
- M&E framework good outlining qualitative and quantitative indicators and baselines.

Support Systems

- No information available

12. Namibia

National Priorities as defined:

- No PRS in Namibia, although there is a national poverty reduction strategy. Latest statement of national objectives is the 'Namibia Vision 2030'; it was preceded by the Second National Development Plan 2001/2-2005/6. Vision 2030 sets the long term objectives and the NDPs are medium term strategies for getting there.
- The long term objective is to move from a lower middle-income country to a high-income development country, with private and public sector capacity building at heart of the development strategy, including institution restructuring and building and human resource development.
- The driving forces of the vision are: education, science and technology, health and development (HIV/AIDS), sustainable agriculture, peace and social justice and gender equality

UN efforts to align:

- UNDAF 2 has commitment to achievement of Vision 2030, which is translated in the UNDAF into a focus on the 'triple threat' of HIV/AIDS, food insecurity and weakening institutional capacity.
- The timing of UNDAF1 was unfortunate as it came before the finalisation of the NPD2 and Vision 2030, while UNDAF2 demonstrates simplification and alignment around national priorities and MDGs. There are good linkages between the hierarchy of priorities, outcomes and outputs. However, there are issues around strategic positioning and coordination mechanisms.
- The MDGR process was linked to the preparation of the long term Vision 2030, the review of the NDP, and has underpinned the ongoing CCA/UNDAF process. The MDGs form a cornerstone in the national poverty monitoring system, which is currently being established with support from the UN. The MDGR provides new impetus for an action-based agenda for human development in Namibia.
- CCA process aligned with other national processes through joint participation in preparation of the MDG progress report and reviews of NPDII and the National Poverty Reduction Action Plan under the umbrella of the National Planning Commission Secretariat and involved all resident UN agencies (FAO, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCHR, UNICEF, WFP, WHO) and some non-resident agencies (IFAD, ILO, UNIFEM).

Namibia: Comparing national priorities and UNDAF outcomes

National priorities (NPD2)	UNDAF 2 Outcomes
<p>NPD2 objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revive and sustain economic growth; • Create more employment opportunities; • Reduce inequalities in income distribution; • Reduce poverty; • Reduce regional development inequalities; • Promote gender equality and equity and • Promote economic empowerment. <p>NDP2 strategies consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable provision and strengthening of enabling environment for economic growth and development; • Promoting environmental and ecological sustainability; • Promoting human resource development; • Promoting, expanding and strengthening participatory development and equity; • Promoting, strengthening and sustaining good governance and democracy; and • Expanding and strengthening Namibia's international role. <p>Priority areas: education and training; health and social services; housing; provision of water resources; agriculture, manufacturing, fisheries.</p> <p>There is also a National Poverty Reduction Action Plan, which focuses on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • equitable and efficient delivery of public resources for poverty reduction. • agricultural expansion (incl. food security and crop development options). <p>and non-agricultural economic empowerment (emphasising informal/self-employment options).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HIV response is strengthened through increased access to prevention, care and impact mitigation services, especially for vulnerable groups. ▪ Livelihoods and food security among most vulnerable groups are improved in highly affected locations ▪ Capacity of govt and civil society institutions strengthened to deliver and monitor essential/critical health, education and special protection services.

Coordination and harmonisation:

- Country cycles harmonised 2006
- The main conclusions of the CCA presented to Namibian stakeholders and UN agencies at UNDAF prioritisation workshop and various challenges identified. A core group was constituted to guide the UNDAF process, chaired by the Under-Secretary of Health and Social Services and the Director of the Development Cooperation of the NPC Secretariat and members of GoN, NGO and heads of UN agencies. Three technical WGs were established to develop the matrix and M&E plan around the three challenges. UNCT meeting on joint programming and consolidation of UNDAF held before final draft presented to stakeholders.

The Results Matrix and M&E Framework

- The matrix is good. In most cases complies with the guidelines e.g. links to national priorities, presents the outcome as a verifiable outcome. CP outcomes clearly relate to

UNDAF outcome, as do CP outputs, key agencies and partners identified and resource mobilisation targets for the individual agencies.

- A key set of country programme outcomes are identified for each UNDAF outcome, linked to a key set of country outputs, the sum of which clearly contribute to the achievement of the UNDAF outcome.
- M&E matrix generally good, including good quantitative indicators (the majority with specified baseline/targets) and sources of verification. Risks and assumptions identified but this area could have been strengthened.

Support Systems

- One of the CP outcomes is strengthening the national statistical system, including by strengthening the capacity of the NPCCS to implement DevInfo

13. Philippines

National Priorities as defined:

- MTPDP supported by government's banner programme for poverty reduction: *Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan (KALAHI)* (convergence strategy to deliver services in poorest areas through local government, efficient use of public funds and involve private sector.)
- No PRS. No other BWI instruments mentioned.

UN efforts to align:

- National priorities taken by UNDAF as those in the MTDP2001-2004 (not 2005-2009). So the questions needs to be asked why chose the former plan instead of present, this may be an outdated view of what the national priorities.
- The MDGs seem to provide an overall framework/coherence for the UNDAF although the UNDAF outcomes are not articulated directly in MDG terms but more concerned with alignment to national priorities. However, one of the 5 criteria for selecting the UNDAF outcomes was whether or not 'critical to the achievement of the MDGs'.

Philippines: Comparing national priorities and UNDAF outcomes

National priorities	UNDAF Outcomes
<p>Medium-term development plan 2001-2004 predates a Medium Term Philippine Development Plan 2004-2010 which is oddly not referred to in the UNDAF.</p> <p>Priority Areas: Macroeconomic Stability with Equitable Growth Based on Free Enterprise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring Sustained Growth with Equity and Macroeconomic Stability • Promoting Full Decent and Productive Employment • Enhancing Competitiveness of Industry and Services • Building on the Country's Strengths in Information and Communication Technology • Putting the Philippines on the International Tourism Map • Accelerating Infrastructure Development <p>Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization with Social Equity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modernizing Agriculture and Fisheries • Advancing Social Equity Through Agrarian Reform • Promoting Sustainable Management and Use of Natural Resources <p>Comprehensive Human Development and Protecting the Vulnerable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investing in Education and Training • Enhancing Health Care • Expanding Access to Shelter • Protecting Vulnerable Groups • Pursuing Balanced Regional Development • Securing Peace and Development in Mindanao <p>Good Governance and the Rule of Law</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winning the Battle against Poverty Through Good Governance • Improving Peace and Order, Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice • Harnessing Good Governance Through International Collective Action <p>No Cross-cutting issues, no mention of MDGs.</p> <p>Medium Term Philippine Development Plan 2004-2010 Not referenced in UNDAF Livelihood: Jobs, entrepreneurs, agribusiness Education: all in school, new buildings, computers Fiscal Strength: budget Decentralised development: infrastructure, power, water, decongestion, National harmony: elections, peace, divisive issues.</p>	<p>Macro-economic stability, broad-based and equitable development UNDAF Outcome 1: By 2009, increased incomes for both women and men among poverty groups in XX priority areas through enabling policies, public-private partnerships and assets reform measures that lead to expansion of sustainable livelihoods, community enterprises and Decent Work, increased productivity and managed population growth</p> <p>Basic social services UNDAF Outcome 2: By 2009, increased and more equitable access to and utilization of quality, integrated and sustainable basic social services by the poor and vulnerable</p> <p>Good governance UNDAF Outcome 3: By 2009, good governance reforms and practices are institutionalized by Government, local Government units (LGUs), civil society organizations and the private sector in a manner that contributes substantively to poverty reduction, protection of rights, sustainable human development and promotion of gender equality</p> <p>Environmental sustainability UNDAF Outcome 4: By 2009, increased capacity of stakeholders to protect/enhance the quality of the environment and sustainably manage natural resources</p> <p>Conflict prevention and peace building UNDAF Outcome 5: By 2009, the level of violent conflict has been reduced, and human security and the culture of peace have been promoted nationwide</p>

Coordination and harmonisation:

- Government consulted in CCA process.
- Annual internal reviews which will involve government same for joint mid-term review and end of cycle evaluation.
- Governments as implementing partners in results matrix.

The Results Matrix and M&E Framework

- Matrix in line with both UNDAF and National priorities.

Support Systems

- Training in RBA and gender assessment prior to CCA; DevInfo to be introduced and assist government in its implementation; Joint programming such as a common NGO certification system, UN wide website, common M&E framework.

14. Romania

National Priorities as defined:

- The accession of Romania to the EU is set for 2007 and is the main priority for the GoR. In order to achieve accession in 2007, Romania has to satisfy political and economic criteria.
- The Government has various strategies which are seen as the medium-term implementation strategies for EU accession. The UNDAF refers to a number of Government Strategies including: i) National Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion Action Plan (it was not possible to download this from the GoR's website). This identified strategic directions that cover a 10-year period and are in line with the MDGs (World Bank, 2003:53), and ii) National Development Plan (2004-2006) (not found on the web).

UN efforts to align:

- The UNDAF 2 is guided by national goals and priorities, by global commitments such as the MDGs and results generated from the CCA;
- The GoR has been nationalising the MDGs, with 8 goals and 21 targets. These are referred to throughout the UNDAF and are included as the National Priority/Goals in the Results Matrix;
- The *de facto* national priority in Romania is accession to the EU, making the associated requirements the main national priorities. The UNDAF fully recognises the importance of EU accession in Romania and many of the Outcomes are linked to the accession. For example, Outcome 1 (capacity strengthened in local and central government to be able to develop, implement and monitor sustainable policies etc) in the UNDAF is in response to key obstacles to reform and EU accession and focuses on achieving improved coordination in policy formulation and implementation;
- The RM sets out a priority area and then lists the national priorities that this area relates to e.g. for Outcome 1 the National Priority/Goal is "1) EU accession requirements (National Accession Plan); 2) National Strategy for Public Administration reform; 3) National Strategy on e-administration; and 4) Green paper on Public Services (p.13, UNDAF II)

Romania: Comparing national priorities and UNDAF outcomes

National priorities	UNDAF Outcomes
<p>A 'Government Program 2005-2008' is available on the Government's website, setting out the commitments and programme of action. The GoR 'undertakes and promotes democracy, capitalism and the European values for the purpose of Romania's durable economic development, increasing the citizens' welfare and regaining national dignity, and will promote the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consolidation of the rule of law and democracy; ▪ Redefining the state role through restraining intervention in economy and strengthening its functions as guarantor of legality; ▪ Strengthening the individual liberties, increase of citizen and family security; ▪ Guarantee and development of private property, integral restitution of properties abusively confiscated by the Communist regime, equal treatment of property; ▪ Functional market economy; ▪ Stimulation of the enterprising spirit; ▪ Social and economic cohesion, reduction of poverty and social exclusion; ▪ Equality of chances; ▪ Respect for minorities' rights; ▪ Romania's full integration with Euro-Atlantic economic and security structures (Romania joined NATO in 2004). 	<p>Capacity building for good governance UNDAF Outcome: By 2009, administrative capacity at central and local levels is strengthened for the Government to be able to develop, implement and monitor sustainable policies and programmes in key areas such as public service delivery, environmental governance and the protection of the rights of vulnerable groups. Key principles for this goal will be transparency, accountability and participation.</p> <p>5 associated Country Programme Outcomes.</p> <p>Economic growth (with a focus on vulnerable groups through social inclusion and capacity promotion) UNDAF Outcome: By 2009, national economic growth is enhanced and poverty levels among vulnerable groups are reduced through sustained social inclusion and capacity promotion.</p> <p>3 associated Country Programme Outcomes</p> <p>Basic social services UNDAF Outcome: By 2009, increased and equal access to improved social, health and education services (with focus on vulnerable groups and under-served areas)</p> <p>3 associated Country Programme Outcomes</p>

Coordination and harmonisation:

- Six thematic Working Groups, responsible for data collection and analysis, were set up for the CCA/UNDAF, coordinated by a Steering Committee. There are also Inter-agency Theme Groups on HIV/AIDS, Administration and Management and Media, then reorganised and reduced from eight to five Working Groups during a learning process following the first UNDAF – these groups include the ones above and two additional groups on human rights, democracy, poverty etc and education, culture and gender – but it is unclear from the website if these two additional Inter-Agency Theme Groups are still up and running (UNCT, 2005);
- What was originally designed as the UNDAF Prioritisation Retreat became an exercise to improve the coordination between the agencies during these processes
- The Inter-Agency Group is the main UN coordination mechanism. The RC has actively involved the WB and IMF as well as other UN agencies, and has also worked to involve a number of Heads of Agencies to make joint decisions. The Inter-Agency Group can be a powerful institutional instrument to support the implementation of the UNDAF

The Results Matrix and M&E Framework

- The RM is good but broad, complies with the guidelines as a clear, results-based account of the UNDAF. There are links between the various levels (UNDAF Outcome, CP Outcomes/Outputs) and areas of focus are carried throughout the RM (e.g. the focus on vulnerable groups is carried throughout the RM). There is a set of Country Programme Outputs for each CP Outcome and these do add up to the UNDAF Outcome. They all come under the Priority Area (although these are broad);
- UNDAF and CP Outcomes and outputs are also quite broad, especially when discussing governance issues, and are not expressed as verifiable outcomes.
- M&E Plan is a framework of activities with indicators, sources of verification and possible risks. While the indicators have sources of verification, very few have any baselines or targets. Apart from a few targets for specific quantitative indicators, the vast majority have no indication of the starting point or the goal to be achieved in the timeframe; they are open Outcomes about capacity being strengthened etc;
- The indicators in the RM and M&E Plan are a mixture of qualitative and quantitative. There are risks and assumptions for each CP Outcome which are related to each Outcome;
- The UNDAF explains that the indicators will be chosen according to the output and will be regularly collected from Government or donor sources.

Support Systems

- Overall management of the UNDAF rests with the RC and the RC Coordination Unit (or Inter-Agency Support Unit). The UNCT involved in the CCA/UNDAF processes was composed of representatives from 10 UN agencies.
- Both the CCA and UNDAF were managed by the six Working Groups and an Inter-Agency Steering Committee managed the CCA/UNDAF processes;
- The RC and UNCT will review the implementation of the UNDAF regularly at Programme Annual Review meetings. The RC's Annual Reports also serve as a review mechanism for the UNDAF.
- The UNDAF Prioritisation Retreat was facilitated by resource people from New York and Geneva

15. Uganda

National Priorities as defined:

- The (Poverty Eradication Plan) PEAP serves as Uganda's PRS and CDF

UN efforts to align:

- The areas of cooperation represent areas where UN feels it has comparative advantage to support objectives of PEAP and MDGs. The focus is on opportunities, empowerment, protection and security where the UN has global mandates, operational capacity and local experience.
- Alignment with national priorities (PEAP) and MDGs is emphasised and clearly outlined throughout the UNDAF, and so is its positioning in relation to them.
- National priorities clearly outlined in the PEAP.
- UNDAF makes continuous reference to PEAP objectives and relates areas of cooperation and outcomes to it. PEAP pillars are included in the results matrix, shown to correspond to respective priority areas. They are broadly in correspondence.

Uganda: Comparing national priorities and UNDAF outcomes

National priorities	UNDAF Outcomes
<p>PEAP 2004/5-2007/8</p> <p>Five pillars with respective priority areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Economic management (macroeconomic stability, fiscal consolidation and boosting private investment). 2. Production, competitiveness and incomes (modernisation of agriculture, preserve natural resource base especially soil and forests) 3. Security, conflict resolution and disaster management (end rebel insurgency by peaceful means if possible, end cattle-rustling, deal with internal displacement and abduction). 4. Governance (human rights and democratisation, legal system, transparency, accountability and eliminate corruption). 5. Human Development (primary and secondary education, improve health outcomes, ability to family planning, community empowerment and adult literacy). 	<p>Reducing poverty and improving human development;</p> <p>UNDAF Outcome 1: Increased opportunities for people, especially the most vulnerable, to access and utilize quality basic services and realize sustainable employment, income generation and food security;</p> <p>Good governance, and protection and promotion of human rights;</p> <p>Outcome 2: Good governance, accountability and transparency of government and partner institutions improved at all levels;</p> <p>Outcome 3: The promotion and protection of human rights, especially of the most vulnerable, is strengthened;</p> <p>Supporting the national AIDS response;</p> <p>Outcome 4: Individuals, civil society, national and local institutions are empowered and effectively address the HIV and AIDS, with special emphasis on populations at higher risk;</p> <p>Accelerating the transition from relief to recovery in conflict-affected areas.</p> <p>Outcome 5: People affected by conflict and disaster, especially women, children and other vulnerable groups, effectively participate in and benefit from the planning, timely implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes.</p>

Coordination and harmonisation:

- Joint mid-term review in April 2004. Ministries consulted in process. Government mentioned as partners in results matrix, i.e. as agents of implementation.
- MDG thematic groups include technical personnel from UNS, GoU and civil society.

The Results Matrix and M&E Framework

- Outcomes in results matrix mostly qualitative, although some indicators are mentioned in terms mostly of percentages.
- M&E matrix has several indicators but not baselines or targets set.

Support Systems

- No information to hand

16. Vietnam

National Priorities as defined:

- Five-year socio-economic development plan being developed at this time. See below for key themes of CPRSP (PRS)

UN efforts to align:

- UNDAF outcomes are broadly linked to the GoV's 10- and 5-year development plan but not explicitly linked to the CPRGS or other BWI instruments. However, the Country Programmes Outcomes are, in the main, only indirectly linked to these and instead relate directly to the crosscutting issues (apart from four that have been identified as directly relating to the UNDAF outcomes).
- UNDAF applies rights-based approach to the substantive issues identified by GoV and UNCT based on the analysis in the GoV's Socio-Economic Development Strategy 2001-10 (which also informed CPRGS) and the CCA (also using RBA). UNDAF preparation at same time as GoV 5-year plan for same period and benefited from discussion around this and are therefore closely aligned to GoV medium-term objectives
- UN has identified the crosscutting issues as being their area of expertise/ comparative advantage (including RBA and in relation to achievement of MD) and which positions them strategically to the extent that it focuses on these areas of their expertise where other, more technically-focused agencies, may not be working. The crosscutting issues are then applied to the UNDAF outcomes through the focus on inclusion and equity in the priority areas. There is a danger that programme outcomes will be only weakly related to national priorities via the UNDAF outcomes.

Vietnam: Comparing national priorities and UNDAF outcomes

National priorities	UNDAF3 Outcomes
<p>Areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Legal environment and public administration reform ○ Macroeconomic stability (fiscal, tax, monetary, trade policy) ○ Social environment for equality, grassroots democracy and legal support • Infrastructure development • Developing sectors and industries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rural agriculture ○ Industry/urban development ○ Infrastructure ○ Education ○ Health ○ Culture ○ Environment ○ Reduce inequality (regional and gender) ○ Safety nets 	<p>3 strategic priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) quality of growth (efficient, inclusive sustainable) (ii) quality & deliver of social and protection services for all (iii) laws, policies and governance conducive to HR for dev <p>plus some crosscutting issues (inclusion, youth, participation, HIV/AIDS)</p>

Coordination and harmonisation:

- In 1999 UNICEF, UNFPA and UNDG agreed to harmonise their programming cycles with GoV development planning cycle of 2001-5. UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA presenting draft country programmes for comment at head of UN agencies meeting in 2000 to facilitate areas of programmatic collaboration. UNDP/UNFPA and UNICEF Executive Boards held joint sessions in 2000 to review and approve country programmes using UNDAF2 as background. Specialised agencies indicate that will attempt to harmonise country programmes with new UNDAF.
- Much is happening in Vietnam around alignment and harmonisation with the establishment of a Partnership on Aid Effectiveness and a GoV-led Harmonisation Action Plan and the GoV preparation of an ODA Master Plan and revision to the Legal Framework for ODA. Provided government leadership and mechanisms to facilitate alignment. Also there is donor commitment to alignment to the 5-year plan, and attempts at sectoral alignment (e.g. education). A box is given on UN country programming referring to workshops organised with GoV and other development partners to identify UN priority areas and strategic outcomes as part of UNDAF/CCA process.

The Results Matrix and M&E Framework

- No indication of relationship between UNDAF outcomes and national priorities. Clear linkage of CP outcomes to the MDGs. Country programme outputs related to outcomes.
- Indicators, baseline data, sources of verification and risks and assumptions identified for each Country Programme Outcome. Poor identification of risk and assumptions. Indicators and sources of verification more comprehensive for some outcomes than others.

Support Systems

- Resources mobilised in 2002 from UNCT to support professional staff in RC office in support.
- UN Joint Training survey was undertaken in 2002 to assess training needs in order to develop more comprehensive UN training plan

Annex 6. Elements of DGO Guidelines³⁶ relating to UNDAF Quality

1.2 Guiding principles that relate to quality:

- Respond to national priorities
- Focus primarily and coherently on getting results in those areas where the UN can collectively make the biggest difference
- Build on existing analyses
- Aim to reduce the vulnerabilities of the poorest
- Integrate human rights principles and gender equality as sustainable development concerns

3.2. Results of the UNDAF that relate to quality:

- Greater synergy and sharper focus of activities supported by the UN agencies and increased opportunities for joint initiatives and programming that utilise their comparative advantages
- (Various results relating to risk and other aspects in transition countries)
- Integration of governance issues
- Strategic partnerships with other development partners

3.3 Structure and Content of the UNDAF document: Section 2: the Results Section;

- What the UN system expects to focus on
- Why it focuses on these areas
- How the expected outcomes will be achieved, and
- With whom

Rationale for Choices made:

- Links to MDGs or other commitments
- Collective comparative advantage of the UN system
- Priorities identified in the CCA
- Opportunities arising from dynamic situation
- Evolving prospects for national partnerships
- Major lessons learned.

UNDAF Results matrix:

- Operationalising of the UNDAF
- How country programme outcomes are elaborated
- RM should be used as a flexible and dynamic planning tool
- RM provides the basis for making decisions on parallel and joint funding
- RM used as a monitoring tool, so that progress for achieving outcomes can be objectively verified.

Section 4: Monitoring and Evaluation

M&E narrative includes description of: coordination mechanisms, efforts to strengthen national M&E capacities and of major risks and assumptions. The M&E framework lists indicators for each UNDAF outcome and related CP outcomes

³⁶ Section numbers refer to those in CCA and UNDAF Guidelines, 2004.

Section 6: Formulation of Country programmes and projects

The RM provides a clear and substantive link between the UNDAF and individual agency's country programmes and projects, with three linkages to be addressed:

- UNDAF outcomes to a national priority
- Outcomes of individual agency programmes or projects to the UNDAF outcomes
- Country programme or project outputs to country programme or project outcomes and UNDAF outcomes

Then DGO has (in December 2005) produced a set of draft questions to assess UNDAF quality. These are in five areas (a summary follows below):

1. Comparative advantage³⁷: presenting the UN's comparative advantage in terms of demonstrated capacity to achieve results and in comparison with other actors
2. Focus and Prioritisation: clarity of UNCT role and key deliverables as indicated by RM; do UNDAF outcomes focus on specific results; clear line of argumentation regarding intervention foreseen; is RM a true planning instrument including minimum expected results, a budget against results and an M&E framework
3. Alignment: Finalisation of UNDAF after completion of PRSP or NDP; and UNDAF outcomes relate to national priorities; UNDAF M&E aligned with national monitoring system.
4. Logical framework: are number and range of UNDAF outcomes, planned activities, CP outputs all reasonable in terms of programme resources available; can agency be accountable for outputs; is chain of results logical; and are M&E indicators objectively verifiable.
5. Conflict/transition Issues:

³⁷ Criteria to assess comparative advantage: (i) demonstrated track record of achieving results, leading to established credibility in priority area, (ii) recognised technical expertise in priority area, (iii) system and agency capacity, and (iv) geographical presence.