Evaluability Assessments of the
Programme Country Pilots
Delivering as One UN

SYNTHESIS REPORT

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UNEG
United Nations Evaluation Group

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CEB	Chief Executives Board (of the United Nations System)
DaO	Delivering as One United Nations
ExCom	Executive Committee (of the United Nations Development Group)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
HLCP	High-level Committee on Programmes
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ITC	International Trade Centre
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
RBM	Results-based management
RC	Resident Coordinator
RDT	Regional Directors Team
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound
TCPR	Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDGO	United Nations Development Group Office
UNDOCO	United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	United Nations Refugee Agency
UNHCHR	United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNV	United Nations Volunteer
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

FOREWORD

In 2007, the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination requested the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) initiate an evaluation of the Delivering as One United Nations (UN) pilot programmes. UNEG proposed a three-stage approach to the evaluation, comprising an evaluability study, an evaluation of process and an evaluation of results. This report presents the results of the evaluability study.

This evaluability study is a technical assessment of the parameters that will make it possible to fully evaluate both the results and the processes leading to the results in the Delivering as One UN pilot countries when a full evaluation is eventually conducted. The parameters include the following: the quality of design for the achievement of results; the initial appraisal of processes that optimize involvement of relevant national and international stakeholders; the existence of adequate sources of information to assess results and processes leading to results; and national ownership and leadership in the evaluation process.

Recognizing the specific context of each country, UNEG conducted a separate evaluability study in each of the pilot countries. The approach to the basic parameters for the study was defined in close consultation with national partners and the UN Country Teams. In addition, UNEG reviewed the evaluability of the systemic support provided to the pilot initiatives by the UN Development Operations Coordination Office (UNDOCO). This report synthesizes the findings and recommendations of these individual studies.

In the absence of a system-wide evaluation mechanism, UNEG developed *ad hoc* arrangements to manage, fund and perform quality assurance on the evaluability exercise. Strategic guidance and oversight was provided by all UNEG heads. A Management Group was established comprising the heads of evaluation of FAO, IFAD, ILO, ITC, UNCTAD, UNDESA, UNDP, UNECA, UNEP, UNESCO,

UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIFEM, UNODC, WFP and WHO.[1] The heads of evaluation of FAO, UNICEF and WHO co-chaired the Management Group and coordinated the overall process.

The evaluability study would not have been possible without the financial and technical contributions of UNEG members. UNICEF provided the services of a senior staff member, Mr. Lucien Back, as the evaluation coordinator. Mr. Back participated in the Cape Verde, Mozambique and Tanzania evaluability studies and was the main author of the synthesis report. UNEG senior staff, supported by consultants, participated in each of the evaluability missions and report writing. The UNEG senior staff included Mr. Masahiro Igarashi, UNCTAD (Albania); Mr. Backson Sibanda, UNODC (Cape Verde); Ms. Carla Henry, ILO (Mozambique); Mr. Deepak Thapa, WHO (Pakistan); Mr. Geoffrey Geurts, UNESCO (Pakistan); Mr. Martin Barugahare, UN-HABITAT (Rwanda); Mr. Jean Quesnel, UNICEF (Rwanda and Viet Nam); Mr. Segbedzi Norgbey, UNEP (Tanzania); Ms. Belen Sanz, UNIFEM (Uruguay); and Mr. Francisco Guzman, ILO (Uruguay).

The UNEG Secretariat established a trust fund and managed the hiring of consultants for these exercises. In addition to a contribution by the UN Development Group Office (UNDGO/UNDOCO),[2] individual UN organizations made substantial contributions. In the case of some organizations, the financial contributions represented a significant share of their evaluation budgets. Most members of the Management Group also made major contributions in kind.

UNEG has adhered to the UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the UN system in preparing this report. Quality assurance was provided throughout the process by the Management Group and all UNEG Heads. Draft reports were shared with UN Country Teams and comments from national governments and from UNDGO/UNDOCO were incorporated in the final individual reports and the synthesis report.

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[1] These organizations are spelled out in full in the list of Acronyms and Abbreviations.
[2] Note, as of May 2008, UNDOCO replaced UNDGO. It will be referred to as UNDGO/UNDOCO throughout the remainder of the report.

We would like to express our deep appreciation to the governments of the pilot countries and other national partners for their active interest and support. We were pleased to present the emerging findings of this study at the meeting of the pilot countries in Maputo, Mozambique on 21-23 May 2008. We were also pleased to share the findings of this study at a monitoring and evaluation workshop organized in early September 2008 in Viet Nam for the pilot countries. We are extremely grateful to the UN Resident Coordinators and Country Teams in the pilot countries with whom we have engaged closely throughout the process and who provided useful comments on the draft reports and validated their findings in consultation with national partners. We would like to highlight the efforts of the UN Country Teams in the pilot countries that have already begun to adopt the recommendations of the country reports. Above all, we would like to thank the Chief Executives Board, High-Level Committee on Programmes and the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) for entrusting this work to UNEG and enabling us to conduct the evaluability assessments in an independent and credible manner.

By conducting early evaluability studies, UNEG has sought to support governments and UN teams in the pilot countries and the UN system in identifying strengths and weaknesses in the design and early implementation of Delivering as One initiatives. We hope that this study will enable governments and their UN partners to take early corrective measures, initiate results-oriented monitoring and conduct their own self-assessments. At the same time, we hope that the evaluability study will be useful in the conduct of a future independent evaluation of the Delivering as One pilot initiative.

Saraswathi Menon
UNEG Chair

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background and context

1. At a meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, on 20 April 2007, the United Nations Chief Executives Board (CEB) endorsed the call of the High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) for an evaluation of the Delivering as One (DaO) pilot initiatives.[1] It also called upon the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) to urgently establish parameters and processes for evaluating the pilot programmes and asked to be kept fully informed of progress.[2]

2. During the 14th Session of the HLCP on 20-21 September 2007, UNEG presented a three-stage process: an assessment of the evaluability of DaO by March 2008; a process evaluation of the pilot experience by September 2009; and an evaluation of the results and impacts of the pilot experience by September 2011. The HLCP reiterated its support for the evaluation and requested that United Nations Development Group (UNDG) and UNEG members consider the funding requirements for the evaluation. In addition, HLCP requested UNEG review the timeline for the evaluation, as in addition to the need for a professional product, it was also necessary to consider the political factors that necessitated early results. The HLCP recognized the need to produce credible evidence based on evaluative methods whilst taking into consideration the demand of governments and the United Nations (UN) system to have early access to information for decision making.[3]

3. The CEB endorsed the scope and process for the UNEG evaluation during its Second Regular Session on 26 October 2007 and encouraged all members and UNDG to contribute to the funding of the evaluation.[4]

4. UNEG presented a progress report on the evaluability assessments to the 15th Session of the HLCP on 13-14 March 2008. HLCP expressed its appreciation for the work undertaken and looked forward to the outcome of the evaluability process, which would provide the basis for further work. It noted the professional and independent nature of UNEG and the need to strengthen its functioning over the long term. It encouraged the CEB Secretariat to continue to work with UNEG in developing an approach for the independent evaluation of DaO requested in the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCPR) resolution of 2007[5] and to ensure that the UNEG mandate, membership and involvement in recent TCPR rounds would be well understood and supported both by UN system organizations and Member States.[6]

Scope and purpose of the evaluability assessments

5. This report presents the outcome of the UNEG evaluability assessments of the DaO pilot initiatives. The evaluability assessments were designed to be the first stage of an overall evaluation process but can also be viewed as stand-alone products that may be useful to a future evaluation. The assessments describe and analyze the basic parameters that will make it possible to fully evaluate at a later stage both the results of the DaO pilot initiatives and the processes that will lead to these results.

6. In practical terms, the evaluability assessments serve three main purposes: they respond to the need of the HLCP and the CEB for information and analysis; they provide provisional evaluative feedback to the governments of pilot countries and the UN Country Teams (UNCTs), including global and regional support mechanisms coordinated by the United Nations Development Group Office (UNDGO) (which was recently renamed the United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office [UNDOCO]); and they define the basic parameters by which any future evaluation, whether commissioned by the General Assembly or the CEB, can fully assess the processes and outcomes of the DaO pilots in 2009-2010.

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[1] Pilot programmes were conducted in eight programme countries: Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uruguay and Viet Nam.

[2] United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, 'First Regular Session 2007, 20 April 2007', document CEB/2007/1.

[3] 'Report of the 14th Session of the HLCP on 20-21 September 2007', document CEB/2007/7. TCPR Resolution A/RES/62/208, paragraph 139, www.undg.org/docs/9816/N0747625.pdf

[4] United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, 'Second Regular Session 2007, 26 October 2007', document CEB/2007/2.

[5] TCPR Resolution A/RES/62/208, paragraph 139, www.undg.org/docs/9816/N0747625.pdf.

[6] 'Report of the 15th Session of the HLCP on 13-14 March 2008', document CEB/2008/4.

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Implementation of the evaluability assessments

7. In the absence of a system-wide evaluation mechanism, UNEG created an *ad hoc* Management Group composed of the Heads of evaluation (and in a few cases their representatives) of FAO, IFAD, ILO, ITC, UNCTAD, UNDESA, UNDP, UNECA, UNEP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIFEM, UNODC, WFP and WHO.[7] The Heads of evaluation of FAO, WHO[8] and UNICEF co-chaired the Management Group and coordinated the overall process. In addition, the UNICEF Evaluation Office provided the services of a senior staff member as a full-time interim evaluation coordinator between January and April 2008. Strategic guidance and oversight was provided by all UNEG Heads.

8. The country missions were led by DaO Management Group members or senior staff from UNEG member agencies. Consultants compiled and analysed information obtained during the country missions and prepared draft reports that were then reviewed by the country mission leader before being submitted for peer review to the UNEG DaO Management Group. Final drafts were shared with the Resident Coordinators (RCs) who validated the reports (in consultation with governments and other UNCT members) and provided comments. The mission leaders were responsible for incorporating comments in the drafts and finalizing the reports. At Headquarters level, regular consultations took place with the UNDG, including its subsidiary working groups and UNDGO/UNDOCO. This provided much of the information analysed in the section on the systemic support to the DaO pilots.

9. As a network of Heads of evaluation in the UN system, UNEG works in a voluntary fashion without a regular resource base beyond contributions from its members. The UNEG Secretariat managed a small trust fund and hired consultants for the evaluation. The exercise largely depended on significant contributions from UNEG members, UN organizations and UNDGO/UNDOCO. All members of the Management Group made financial and in-kind contributions from their limited budgets.

Approach and methodology

10. The independence and credibility of the DaO evaluability assessments have been ensured by adherence to UNEG Norms and Standards.[9] The evaluability assessments, which have used several methods and information obtained from a variety of sources, have been validated and cross-checked to the greatest possible extent.

11. During country visits, key documents were systematically consulted and analysed. The UNEG missions conducted both individual and group interviews with a number of national and external stakeholders, such as senior representatives from central and line ministries, civil society, donors (both those involved in the DaO and those that are not), the RC and members of the UNCT. The views of non-resident agencies were captured through mini-surveys and telephone interviews.

12. Each mission began with briefing sessions with the RC, the UNCT and national stakeholders. At the end of each mission, the preliminary findings and conclusions were shared with the same constituencies. Draft reports were circulated with these stakeholders for validation and feedback.

Main findings and implications

Overall evaluability of DaO pilot initiatives

13. The DaO initiative is intended to make the role and contribution of the UN system at the country level more relevant (that is, more responsive to needs and priorities of the countries), more effective (producing better outputs, outcomes and impact) and more efficient (reducing transaction and overhead costs for the UN system and for national and international partners). To observe noticeable changes in effectiveness will require a time-frame of several years.

14. This evaluability assessment has identified process indicators that are in line with the TCPR resolution of 2007 and with practices that exist on the ground. Main findings and implications of the evaluability assessments are articulated around the process indicators.

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7 As of April 2008, ITC, UNECA and UNHCR had also joined the Management Group. These organizations are spelled out in full in the list of Acronyms and Abbreviations.

8 Until March 2008, when the Director of the FAO Evaluation Office retired. The Head of the WHO Evaluation Unit assumed the responsibility of co-Chair as of April 2008.

9 UNEG Norms, available online at www.unevaluation.org/unegnorms; UNEG Standards available online at www.unevaluation.org/unegstandards.

National ownership and leadership

15. The studies conducted in eight countries suggest that national ownership and leadership of the DaO process are strong and that the programmes are relevant, as UN supported programmes are aligned with national policies and strategies. However, these trends had already manifested themselves before the start of the DaO initiative and may just have been reinforced by the DaO process. The TCPR resolutions of 2004 and 2007[10] directed the UN system to build capacities in the programme countries to design and implement national policies and strategies and to achieve Internationally Agreed Development Goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

16. The UN system also supports countries adhering to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (this includes all pilot countries except Uruguay) in meeting the challenges related to mutual accountability and greater aid effectiveness, and in exercising national ownership and leadership in this context. The fact that the UN system has a broad mandate related not only to aid effectiveness but also to development effectiveness could, in some countries, be better understood by national and international partners.

Access to mandates and resources of the UN system

17. The DaO initiative has enhanced the pilot countries' access to the mandates, resources and expertise of the entire UN system, including those of non-resident agencies. Maintaining the focus of DaO, especially with an increasing number of UN organizations contributing to the process, has been a challenge in some cases. There are still some variations in membership in UNCTs.

18. Inclusiveness is a challenge not only for the UN system (delivering as one), but also for the national side (demanding as one). In some countries, there is room for improving inclusiveness of traditional UN system partners, such as line ministries, non-governmental organizations, other civil society institutions and the private sector.

One Programme

19. What distinguishes the One Programme from the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and joint programmes? In most cases, the One Programme covers several clusters and joint programmes and represents a part of the UNDAF. While the strategic intent of clusters and joint programmes is usually defined with reference to national policies and strategies, the rationale and the programme logic of the One Programme are not articulated in a sufficiently clear manner. The One Programme needs a vision statement describing its unique role and contribution, and the comparative advantage of the UN system in the specific country context.

20. Clusters and joint programmes should have specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (sometimes referred to as SMART) objectives and indicators that are logically linked to the vision statement according to the principles of results-based management (RBM). This would provide a better rationale for the joint programmes. A good application of RBM is important for an adequate monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system. Improvements in the design of the One Programme and the creation of an adequate M&E system would greatly enhance the evaluability of the pilot initiatives.

21. The TCPR and mandates of UN organizations cover cross-cutting dimensions, such as gender. These should be clearly reflected in the vision statement and objectives of outcome areas and clusters. Mandates of the UN organizations usually share a common framework, such as the Millennium Declaration, the MDGs, the World Summit Outcomes or the TCPR. Their expertise and other resources are largely complementary. A good example is the gender dimension, which is guided by intergovernmental consensus in a comprehensive and explicit manner,[11] to which different UN organizations can bring different contributions in terms of capacity development. This should be clearly reflected in the design of the One Programme and the joint programmes.

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[10] General Assembly Resolution 50/250 and TCPR Resolution A/RES/62/208.
[11] Op. cit., 5, paragraphs 56-66.

22. None of the DaO pilots address issues related to humanitarian action by the UN system, even in those countries that had to deal with humanitarian situations (such as Mozambique and Pakistan). The DaO experience has hence been confined to operational activities for development of the UN system.

One Budgetary Framework/One Fund

23. What distinguishes the DaO approach from more traditional programming is that, in principle, it ensures resource mobilization and creates other conditions that make it possible to actually deliver what is planned for and agreed upon between the governments and UN organizations. Predictable and, to the greatest possible extent, un-earmarked funding of the UN system is key to the success of DaO. In addition, funding should not be limited to core contributions and other un-earmarked funding modalities such as thematic funding. This has only partly been achieved in most pilot countries.

24. The divergence of financial rules and regulations among UN organizations still creates challenges in the management and disbursement of funds. This may affect the ability of DaO to implement joint programmes and demonstrate results in the short and medium term.

One Leader

25. The RC system is owned by the UN development system and its functioning should be participatory, collegial and accountable. While there has been much progress in delineating the roles and responsibilities of the RC and Resident Representative of UNDP (especially with the appointment of empowered UNDP Country Directors), there are still challenges to establishing the clear authority of the RC over members of the UNCT, who remain primarily accountable to their own organizations. This is partly resolved by codes of conduct for UNCTs, but these do not resolve the issue for organizations in which decision making is highly centralized in Headquarters.

One Office

26. Most pilot countries have not made much progress in finding locations that would allow all resident agencies to move into common premises. There has also been limited progress in the simplification and harmonization of business practices, as this largely depends on initiatives and support at Headquarters level, which is generally not expeditious. There are some attempts to rationalize support services, such as procurement, information technology, transport, telecommunications, travel and banking. The use of national public and private systems for support services is still relatively underdeveloped.

Reduction of overhead and transaction costs

27. It is still unclear how overhead and transaction costs related to the delivery of UN support can be reduced and how savings on operational costs can be used for programmes. The notion of 'transaction' needs to be defined in clearer terms for the UN system, government of the pilot country and other partners, such as donors who face transaction costs. As far as the UN system is concerned, this requires clarifying key concepts and analysing business models of different organizations, which can probably be done only at Headquarters level.

28. At the country level, a future evaluation will have to adopt an empirical approach, which would entail identifying specific cost centres—such as procurement, information technology and transport—and documenting the evolution of cost before and during the application of DaO measures. The extent to which rules and procedures allow savings to be made into programming funds should also be analysed. Regarding transaction costs for national and international partners, efficiency gains can probably best be gauged through perception surveys.

Assessment of the evaluability of the systemic support

29. Systemic support provided by UNDG, its subsidiary bodies and its Secretariat (UNDGO/ UNDOCO) has not been guided by a comprehensive conceptual framework for DaO at the central level beyond provisions of the TCPR resolutions of 2001, 2004 and 2007, and the inspiration derived from the vision developed in the High-level Panel Report on System-wide Coherence. Throughout the DaO process, the emphasis has been on piloting new approaches in the field with a view to abiding by the principles of national ownership and leadership, and the dictum that *one size does not fit all*. Therefore, systemic support in its present form was not evaluable.

30. As the DaO pilots are dependent on rules and procedures defined at Headquarters and require

consistent guidance, a future evaluation will have to include a strong Headquarters component. To make the systemic support more evaluable, UNDG, its subsidiary bodies, and UNDGO/UNDOCO should do the following: develop a more systematic inventory of challenges; document good practices at the country level; articulate the outstanding issues that require inter-agency or intergovernmental decision making; and develop a coherent intervention strategy with clear goals, objectives and performance indicators.

The Way Forward

Suggestions for the self-evaluation of DaO by pilot countries

31. A key purpose of the evaluability assessment process was to comply with the mandate set out in the 2007 TCPR resolution,[12] which notes the voluntary efforts to improve coherence, coordination and harmonization in the UN development system, including at the request of some country pilot programmes. The resolution encourages the Secretary-General to support pilot countries in evaluating and exchanging their experiences with the support of the UNEG.[13]

32. The suggested self-evaluation by pilot countries also complies with another provision in the 2007 TCPR resolution concerning evaluation of operational activities for development. The resolution emphasizes that programme countries should have greater ownership and leadership in evaluating all forms of assistance, including that provided by the UN development system. The UN system needs to intensify its efforts to strengthen evaluation capacities in programme countries.[14]

33. During the evaluability assessments at the country level, an effort was made to identify national institutions and individuals that could constitute important resources for evaluation in the pilot countries. As a result of the evaluability missions, several governments, such as Rwanda and Tanzania, have committed themselves to further strengthening the national evaluation capacity. A similar pledge was made during the DaO lessons learned seminar among governments of pilot countries hosted by the Government of Mozambique in Maputo on 21-23 May 2008.

34. The evaluability assessments of DaO have generated numerous observations on how evaluation capacity in the different pilot countries could be strengthened. UNCTs may wish to formulate management responses to the reports and elaborate action plans for follow-up in close cooperation with the respective governments.

35. One of the key findings of the evaluability assessments has been that there is room for improvement in the conceptual design of the One Programme through, for example, the formulation of a vision statement; the strengthening of the programme logic of objectives in relation to the vision statement; individual joint programmes being articulated as related to the objectives; the definition of clear performance indicators for M&E; and the creation of performance monitoring systems and provisions for self-evaluation.

36. It will also be useful for DaO countries to collect all relevant information required as evidence for a process evaluation that is likely to be part of the independent evaluation of the DaO pilots in 2009-2010. There is a particular need to document the reduction of overhead and transaction costs in an empirical manner.

37. UNDGO/UNDOCO could enhance the evaluability of systemic support by strengthening the programme logic of the support function through a comprehensive documentation of issues that need to be addressed concerning the DaO and the formulation of clear goals and objectives as well as performance indicators for the support function. UNDGO/UNDOCO can also play a major role in the harmonization and simplification of rules and procedures among UN organizations that still hamper attempts to make the country-level interventions more rational and efficient.

Suggestions for the independent evaluation

38. The evaluation will need to refer to the UNEG Norms and Standards of Evaluation to ensure its independence.[15] The Norms state that "[t]o avoid conflict of interest and undue pressure, evaluators need to be independent, implying that members of an evaluation team must not have been directly responsible

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[12] Op. cit., 5.
[13] Ibid, paragraph 139.
[14] Ibid, paragraph 129.
[15] Op. cit., 9.

for the policy-setting, design, or overall management of the subject of evaluation, nor expect to be in the near future." The Norms also state that "[E]valuators must have no vested interest and have the full freedom to conduct impartially their evaluative work, without potential negative effects on their career development."[16]

39. A future substantive evaluation will face a major methodological challenge related to baselines and counterfactuals. The most obvious comparison would be between the situation created by the DaO approach and the situation that prevailed before DaO in the respective countries. A comparison between the situation resulting from the DaO with what might have happened without DaO may also be possible to a certain extent, but it may be perceived as more speculative. Since each country context is unique, a comparison between countries that have adopted the DaO approach with countries that have not is probably the most problematic and least feasible approach of all.

40. To observe noticeable changes in effectiveness will require a time-frame of several years. The DaO approach was launched in late 2006/early 2007 in all pilot countries (it was preceded by one year of the joint office experience in Cape Verde and Viet Nam). Most of the first year of the DaO was dedicated to new approaches in planning and programming and the creation of the necessary tools, such as the budgetary framework, a code of conduct, and resource mobilization, planning and programming. Even in countries where these steps have largely been accomplished—Albania, Rwanda, Tanzania and Viet Nam—actual implementation of the One Programme and subjacent joint programmes only started during the first half of 2008. It is therefore unlikely that a full substantive evaluation addressing relevance and effectiveness can take place before the period 2009-2010.

41. If the independent evaluation is conducted as early as 2009, it will have to focus more on the processes that are likely to lead to results, rather than the results themselves. This evaluability assessment has identified the following process indicators that are in line with the TCPR resolution of 2007 and practices that exist on the ground: a) national ownership and leadership in the DaO process in relation to the relevance of the unique role and contribution of the

UN system as distinct from other forms of external support; b) access for the pilot countries to the full range of mandates and resources of the UN system; c) creation of One Programme and its distinctive features as compared to the UNDAF and joint programmes; d) creation of One Budgetary Framework; e) strengthening of the RC system with the concept of One Leader; f) work towards the creation of One Office, including simplification and harmonization of business practices; and g) reduction of transaction and overhead costs for the UN system and for national and international partners.

42. Innovations in programming and business practices at the country level require reforms at Headquarters level, some of which can be executed by senior management of the UN organizations and some of which will require decision making by governing bodies. There is currently no clear and coherent identification of issues that need to be resolved at Headquarters level. Subsequently, there is no clear roadmap to required reforms of programme and business processes at a central level. A future process evaluation should assess whether progress has been made in this regard and will need to formulate appropriate recommendations.

43. In line with the HLCP's need for early information on the pilot initiatives, the stocktaking exercise and the evaluability studies provide feedback on progress made so far. However, other questions of interest to individual agencies have not been addressed, such as how the relationships between field offices and Headquarters are developing in light of DaO. The governing bodies of several agencies are requesting progress reports on the ongoing DaO initiative. The work programmes of several agencies already have provisions for relevant evaluative work with their field offices in some or all of the eight pilot countries for the 2008-2009 period. UNEG supports such work and will draw lessons that will be useful for the DaO initiative as a whole. The first agency to undertake such evaluative work will be UNESCO. It will make available its findings to UNEG for the benefit of all other interested agencies.

44. UNEG remains at the disposal of the CEB and HLCP as well as other stakeholders, including the pilot countries and member states, to ensure that the evaluation be independent, credible and useful.

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[16] See UNEG Norms, op. cit., 9, paragraphs 6.3 and 6.4.

A. INTRODUCTION

Background and context

45. During a meeting in Geneva on 20 April 2007, the United Nations CEB endorsed the call of the HLCP for an evaluation of the DaO pilot initiatives.[17] It also called upon UNEG to urgently establish parameters and processes for evaluating the pilot programmes and asked to be kept fully informed of progress.[18]

46. During the 14th Session of the HLCP on 20-21 September 2007, UNEG presented a three-stage process: an assessment of the evaluability of DaO by March 2008; a process evaluation of the pilot experience by September 2009; and an evaluation of the results and impacts of the pilot experience by September 2011. The HLCP reiterated full support for the evaluation and requested UNDG and UNEG members consider funding needs for the evaluation; UNEG review the timeline for the evaluation; and to ensure a professional product, consider the political factors that necessitated early results. The HLCP recognized the need to balance the requirements to produce credible evidence based on evaluative methods with the demand of governments and the UN system to have early access to information for decision making.[19]

47. The CEB endorsed the scope and process for the evaluation by UNEG during its Second Regular Session of 2007 on 26 October 2007, and encouraged UNDG and members to contribute to the funding of the evaluation.[20]

48. UNEG presented a progress report on the evaluability assessments to the 15th Session of the HLCP on 13-14 March 2008. HLCP expressed its appreciation for the work undertaken and looked forward to the outcome of the evaluability process, which would provide the basis for further work. It noted the professional and independent nature of UNEG and the need to strengthen its functioning over the long term. It encouraged the CEB Secretariat to continue to work with UNEG in developing an approach for the independent evaluation of DaO requested in the TCPR resolution of 2007[21] and to ensure that the UNEG mandate, membership and involvement in recent TCPR rounds would be well understood and supported both by UN system organizations and Member States.[22]

Scope and purpose of the evaluability assessments

49. An evaluability assessment describes and analyses the parameters that will make it possible to fully evaluate at a later stage both the results of the DaO pilot initiatives and the processes that led to the results. The parameters include the following: a) quality of the design for the achievement of results, that is, the existence of clear objectives and indicators to measure results at a later stage; b) initial appraisal of processes for the optimal involvement of relevant national and international stakeholders (including the governments of recipient countries, civil society, the private sector, UN organizations and external aid agencies); c) existence of adequate sources of information to assess the required processes and achievement of results and indicators; and d) national ownership and leadership in the evaluation process, that is, the identification of independent and credible evaluators in pilot countries who can be involved in the evaluation of process and results of the DaO pilots at a later stage.

50. The evaluability assessments synthesized in this study are stand-alone products, which need to be assessed against the original terms of reference. At this stage, they serve three main purposes: a) they respond to the HLCP and CEB needs for information and analysis; b) they provide provisional evaluative feedback to the governments of pilot countries, UNCTs, and global and regional support mechanisms coordinated by UNDGO/UNDOCO; and c) they define the basic parameters by which any future evaluation, whether commissioned by the General Assembly or by the CEB, can fully assess the processes and the outcomes of the DaO pilots in 2009-2010.

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[17] Pilot initiatives were conducted in eight programme countries: Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uruguay and Viet Nam.
[18] United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, 'First Regular Session 2007, 20 April 2007', document CEB/2007/1.
[19] 'Report of the 14th Session of the HLCP on 20-21 September 2007', document CEB/2007/7.
[20] United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, 'Second Regular Session 2007, 26 October 2007', document CEB/2007/2.
[21] Op. cit., 5, paragraph 139.
[22] 'Report of the 15th Session of the HLCP on 13-14 March 2008', document CEB/2008/4.

B. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EVALUABILITY ASSESSMENT

Evaluability assessment process

51. The concepts and approaches used in the evaluability assessments were tested in a country study conducted in Viet Nam in November 2007. The Viet Nam study team was composed of a UNEG head of evaluation and two consultants. On the basis of this experience, the UNEG Management Group decided in December 2007 that future assessments would require direct support from UNEG heads or senior staff in addition to the consultants. Annex 2 shows the schedule of country visits and the involvement of senior UNEG staff and consultants.

52. In January 2008, FAO hosted a seminar for staff and consultants conducting the studies in the pilot countries.[23] The purpose of the seminar was to develop a common understanding of the notion of evaluability, develop the required approach and methodology, and finalize the terms of reference and tools for the assessments (for example, checklists and questionnaires).

53. The country missions were led by senior staff of UNEG member agencies, who were DaO Management Group members, accompanied by consultants responsible for compiling and analysing the information. Draft reports prepared by the consultants were reviewed by country mission leaders and submitted for peer review to the UNEG DaO Management Group. Final drafts were shared with the RCs, who validated the reports in cooperation with governments and other UNCT members and provided comments. The mission leaders incorporated and prepared the final versions of the reports. At Headquarters level, regular consultations took place with UNDG, including its subsidiary working groups and UNDGO (recently renamed UNDOCO). This provided much of the information analysed in the section on the systemic support to the DaO pilots.

General approach, methodology and challenges

54. The independence and credibility of the DaO evaluation was ensured by strict adherence to UNEG Norms and Standards.[24] This requirement was observed to the greatest possible extent during the evaluability assessment. The exercise seeks to support pilot countries in evaluating their experiences and sharing lessons learned. The overall evaluation will provide accountability for processes and support intergovernmental and inter-agency decision making related to the reform of the UN system in view of making it more relevant, coherent and efficient for Member States. The evaluation process seeks to be highly consultative with national governments, governing bodies of the UN system and senior management of UN organizations and to regularly provide information to decision makers based on emerging evaluative evidence.

55. The evaluability assessments used several methods. Information from sources was validated and cross-checked to the greatest extent possible. During country visits, key documents were systematically consulted and analysed. The UNEG missions conducted individual, and in some cases, group interviews with a number of national and external stakeholders, such as senior representatives from central and line ministries, civil society, donors (both those involved in the DaO and those that are not), the RC and members of the UNCT. An attempt was made to capture the views of non-resident agencies through mini-surveys and telephone interviews. At the start of each mission, briefing sessions were organized with the RC, the UNCT and national stakeholders. At the end of each mission, preliminary findings and conclusions were shared with the same constituencies. Draft reports were circulated with these stakeholders for validation and feedback.

56. Evaluations usually require systemic coherence with clear benchmarks, that is, goals, objectives and indicators against which processes and outcomes can be assessed. Due to its particular context and history, there is no such overall systemic coherence in the process related to the DaO pilots. At the outset of the pilot experiences, it was acknowledged that *one size does not fit all* and that the pilot countries

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[23] A follow-up seminar for those who could not take part in the Rome seminar was hosted by UNODC in Vienna, Austria on 11 March 2008.
[24] Op. cit., 9.

were diverse both in terms of size and level of development. As lessons were to be learned from a range of country situations, it was not found useful to set rigid criteria for pilot countries. Strong government commitment and a well functioning UNCT were, however, indispensable in all cases.[25]

57. At the global and systemic level, there is an increasing awareness that the DaO pilots need to be assessed against the background of the General Assembly resolutions related to the TCPRs of 2001, 2004 and 2007. These resolutions reflect the intergovernmental consensus concerning relevance and coherence of the UN development system at the country level. This is methodologically important, as the DaO pilots referenced key recommendations of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence presented in a report on 9 November 2006.[26] It is important to note that the High-level Panel report did not reflect an intergovernmental consensus but only presented a vision that gave new impetus to the debate.

58. This situation poses particular challenges for identifying adequate benchmarks for the evaluation. It would be inappropriate, for example, to consider the 'four Ones' as clear benchmarks, all the more because it has become apparent during the informal consultations held in the General Assembly in 2007 that these concepts are by no means undisputed.[27] It is therefore more appropriate to refer to the TCPR resolutions of 2001 and 2004 as benchmarks for the evaluation.

59. The DaO pilots have attracted interest at the global level. Most UN organizations with a role in development have provided some form of support to the DaO pilots, either from their Headquarters, through regional structures or through interagency mechanisms (such as the Assistant Secretary-General's working group on DaO and Regional Directors Teams [RDTs]). The evaluability of this systemic support has not been assessed comprehensively. This report attempts to describe the main activities deployed for the DaO initiative by UNDGO/UNDOCO and makes a broad attempt to assess the evaluability of this support.

60. The DaO initiative is limited to operational activities for development as defined in the TCPR resolutions. Humanitarian action (with the exception of the transition from relief to development) is therefore not part of the DaO initiative. In some pilot countries (Mozambique and Pakistan), the UN system did conduct humanitarian activities, but this is not considered to be part of the DaO process. In a more general way, it should be mentioned that the DaO pilots only represent a small part of UN reform.

61. In conclusion, each of the pilot initiatives needs to be considered first and foremost in its national context. Global benchmarks are those traced in the TCPR resolutions of 2001 and 2004, with consideration of the new intergovernmental guidance in the TCPR resolution of 2007. An attempt was made to detect common threads both in terms of merits and challenges that may be useful in the broader debate of UN reform, especially regarding the role and contribution of the UN system to the countries concerned and the rationalization of its country presence. The evaluability of UNDGO/UNDOCO support is also given some attention.

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[25] See, for example, the letter addressed by the chair of the UNDG to the Prime Minister of Mozambique on 9 January 2007.
[26] Secretary-General's High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment, 'Delivering as One United Nations', New York, NY, November 2006.
[27] 'Report of the Co-Chairs to the President of the General Assembly on the Consultation Regarding System-Wide Coherence', September 2007.

C. BACKGROUND OF THE DaO PROCESS

TCPR 2004 and 2007: Improved functioning of the UN development system

62. The TCPR of operational activities for development of the UN system contained in General Assembly Resolutions 59/250 (2004) and 62/208 (2007) provides guidance to make the role and contribution of the UN system more coherent, effective and relevant at the country level. In the resolutions, the General Assembly emphasizes that the planning and programming frameworks of the UN system, including the UNDAF, need to be fully aligned with national development planning cycles whenever possible and that they should use and strengthen national capacities and mechanisms. The ownership, leadership and full participation of national authorities in preparing and developing these planning and programming documents are vital to guaranteeing that they respond to the national development plans and strategies.

63. The resolutions emphasize that programme countries should have access to and benefit from the full range of mandates and resources of the UN development system. The national governments should determine which resident and non-resident UN organizations could best respond to the specific needs and priorities of the individual country, including, in the case of non-resident agencies, through hosting arrangements with resident organizations and the use of advanced information and communication technology, including knowledge management.

64. In the resolutions, the General Assembly underscores that the RC system is owned by the UN development system as a whole and that it should be participatory, collegial and accountable. The central role of RCs is to coordinate operational activities for development at the country level to improve responses to national development priorities. The Administrator of the UNDP is requested to appoint country directors to run the core activities of the UNDP, including fund-raising, to ensure that RCs are fully available for their tasks.

65. The General Assembly calls upon the UN funds, programmes and specialized agencies to harmonize and simplify their rules and procedures to reduce administrative and procedural burdens on the organizations and national partners. Savings resulting from reductions in transaction and overhead costs should be used for development programmes in programme countries.

66. UN funds, programmes and specialized agencies are encouraged to lower their transactions costs and to increase use of national public and private systems for appropriate support services, such as procurement, security, information technology, telecommunications, travel and banking, planning, reporting and evaluation. Increased efforts are needed to rationalize the country presence through common premises, co-location, joint office models, and shared services and business units (where appropriate) to reduce UN overhead and transaction costs for national governments.

High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence

67. The DaO approach was recommended by the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment on 9 November 2006.[28] The Panel was mandated by the Secretary-General as part of the follow-up to the 2005 World Summit. The Panel recommended to the Secretary-General that the UN system should establish UNCTs with what they called the four Ones—*One Leader, One Programme, One Budgetary Framework*, and, where appropriate, *One Office*—in order to bring about real progress towards the MDGs and other Internationally Agreed Development Goals. UNCTs should also have an integrated capacity to provide a coherent approach to cross-cutting issues, including sustainable development, gender equality and human rights. To ensure that there is no potential for, or perception of, a conflict of interest, UNDP should establish an institutional firewall between the management of its programmatic role and the management of the RC system.

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[28] Secretary-General's High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment, 'Delivering as One United Nations', New York, NY, November 2006.

68. On 22 November 2006, the Secretary-General decided to move forward with some of the recommendations, focusing on the call to establish pilot country initiatives where the One UN approach would be tested. The rationale being that this recommendation built on the reform agenda set forth by the General Assembly in the TCPR resolutions of 2001 and 2004,[29] notably the joint office concept.[30]

69. On 3 April 2007, the new Secretary-General presented the report of the High-level Panel to the General Assembly.[31] In his comments, he noted that the exercise would test the principles advocated by the Panel in different countries. He mentioned a number of issues that needed to be considered, including the concept of national ownership, the authority and accountability of the RC, and the dual role of the UNDP as manager of the RC system and its programme role. There was also a need for clarification with regard to what would constitute an effective unified budgetary framework.

Initiatives related to DaO pilots

70. The Secretary-General tasked the UNDG to move forward and support the eight pilot countries. Guidance provided by the Chair of the UNDG and by UNDGO/UNDOCO to the governments of the pilot countries and the UNCTs was largely inspired by the High-level Panel Report and focused on the promotion of the four Ones.[32] There was no systematic reference to the TCPR resolutions of 2001 and 2004.

71. It must be emphasized that the High-level Panel Report was commissioned by the Secretary-General, not an intergovernmental forum. The recommendations of the report were subsequently not endorsed by the General Assembly. The report reiterated many provisions of the TCPR 2001 and 2004 (though not systematically referring to these resolutions), but also paraphrased and re-interpreted these provisions. This proved to be problematic in the intergovernmental debate in 2007, as there was no consensus on these new interpretations among Member States.

However, Member States did agree that these concepts should be tested in the pilot countries on a voluntary basis and that the evaluation of lessons learned from these experiences would inform future intergovernmental consultations.

72. During the 'Delivering as One' Informal Consultations, the co-Chairs on System-wide Coherence in a Joint Statement[33] emphasized that the work of the High-level Panel was rooted in the 2005 World Summit and other intergovernmental processes, such as the TCPR. The Summit Outcome Document, adopted unanimously by Heads of State and Government, sought to strengthen system-wide coherence through both policy and operational measures. With regard to operational activities, the Summit Outcome Document sought to implement reforms aimed at a more efficient UN country presence with a strengthened role for the senior resident official. The Summit also invited the Secretary-General to further strengthen the management and coordination of UN operational activities so that they would more effectively contribute to the achievement of Internationally Agreed Development Goals, including the MDGs, and make for 'more tightly managed entities' in the fields of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment.

73. In conclusion, the DaO initiative should eventually make the role and contribution of the UN system at the country level more relevant (that is, more responsive to needs and priorities of the countries), more effective (producing better outputs, outcomes and impact), and more efficient (reducing transaction and overhead costs for the UN system and for national and international partners).

Stocktaking the implementation of DaO in eight pilot countries in 2007

74. At the request of the Deputy Secretary-General, governments, UNCTs, UN organizations and UNDG undertook separate self-assessments and stocktaking exercises of the DaO pilots. The objective was to give member states and UN organizations

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[29] General Assembly Resolutions A/56/201 and A/59/250.
[30] 'Letter of the Secretary-General to the Chair of the UNDG', 22 November 2006.
[31] Report A/61/836, Recommendations contained in the report of the High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence.
[32] See, for example, the annex of the above-mentioned letter of the UNDG chair to the Prime Minister of Mozambique and the letters to RCs.
[33] Joint Statement by the UN General Assembly Co-Chairs on System-wide Coherence (Ireland and Tanzania) delivered by H.E. Ambassador Dr. Augustine Mahiga, Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania to the United Nations, New York, NY, at Informal Consultations of the General Assembly on 28 March 2008.

a better understanding of the new programming and management arrangements being explored, a view of the impact of the pilot initiatives on national ownership and leadership, and an opportunity to provide guidance on the way forward. The results of this process provided input into the informal inter-governmental discussion in the General Assembly on the recommendations of the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence.[34]

75. Governments of all eight pilot countries reiterated their commitment to the DaO process. They reported that, during the first year of implemen-tation, there had been an increase in national ownership and leadership and more alignment of activities of the UN development system with national policies and strategies. In several countries, joint steering committees had been created for the DaO initiative. Several governments emphasized that they now had a better understanding of the comparative advantage of the UN system. They also believed that the One Fund would lead to increased and un-earmarked funding. There was also a strong call for simplification and harmoniza-tion of rules and procedures at Headquarters level and improved M&E.

76. The UNCT stocktaking exercises mentioned the same positive achievements and expectations as the governments, but also emphasized some challenges: a) the dilemma between the need for greater inclu-siveness and a greater strategic focus; b) difficulties fitting the DaO into on-going programme cycles (such as government and UNDAF); c) confusion between joint programming and joint programmes; d) the need for consolidated monitoring and reporting systems; e) reduction of transaction costs and reform of business practices; f) the need for increased clarity on authority and accountability of RCs; g) clarification of the role of regional support; and h) the need for more proactive engagement and participation of Headquarters.

77. UNDG also conducted a stocktaking exercise among some of its members at Headquarters level.[35] The main achievements of the DaO during its first

year of implementation were perceived to be the following: a) better understanding of mandates and resources of specialized agencies and non-resident agencies; b) better reflection of economic sector priorities; c) more emphasis on common advocacy and policy advice; d) more recognition of different business models in UN organizations; e) more coordinated resource mobilization; and f) improved communication strategies. There were also several perceived challenges, notably support provided to the DaO by Headquarters and regional offices, absence of dispute resolution mechanisms, the need for more involvement of line ministries and civil society, and, in some cases, overcoming staff resistance to change.

Systemic support

78. The DaO pilot initiatives benefit from systemic support that was principally provided by the UNDGO/UNDOCO, the Secretariat, and the technical support unit of the UNDG.[36] UNDG is a forum through which 33 funds, programmes, spe-cialized agencies and UN Secretariat departments (28 members and 5 observers) that are active in development at the country level come together to agree on how the United Nations, in line with guid-ance received from the TCPR, can be more effective in country-level activities. The UNDG, which is chaired by the Administrator of the UNDP, helps coordinate country-level development operations in three ways: developing inter-organizational agree-ments at Headquarters level on how to approach substantive development topics at the operational level; providing new ideas and better ways to work together in country-level development operations through relevant working groups and task teams; and supporting the application of these new ways of working together at the country level in cooperation with RDTs.

79. UNDGO/UNDOCO works with member agencies to prepare issues, policies and guidelines for deci-sion by the UNDG and its Executive Committee (ExCom). UNDGO/UNDOCO is the administrative

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[34] See letter addressed by the chair of the UNDG to RCs of eight pilot countries on 29 October 2007. The Deputy Secretary-General sent her letter to the governments of the pilot countries on 2 November 2007.

[35] FAO, ILO, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHABITAT, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIFEM, WFP and WHO.

[36] At the time of the evaluability assessments, the structures under the UNDG were under review as part of an overall movement that would place UNDG as a third pillar of the CEB architecture. This should serve to reduce duplication and bring the policy and operational aspects of coordination closer together. The description that follows largely refers to the organizational structures that prevailed until April 2008.

unit that supports the RC system, including the process for selecting RCs and the allocation and monitoring of the Resident Coordination Support Funds. The UNDGO/UNDOCO works with the regional machinery of its members to build the capacity of, and provide oversight to, UNCTs in order to work better together and help countries achieve the MDGs. UNDGO/UNDOCO is administered and funded by the UNDP, with senior staff seconded from the ExCom agencies.

80. At the time of the evaluability assessments,[37] UNDG comprised a set of subsidiary bodies that dealt with specific dimensions of the UN development system: a) the ExCom, composed of the four funds and programmes that report directly to the Secretary-General (UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP); b) the Support Group, which contributed to the preparation and implementation of UNDG programme of work and decision making; c) the Management Group, which focused on improving the efficiency of the RC system and simplifying and harmonizing administrative and financial procedures, including common services and common premises; d) the Programme Group, which developed policies, guidelines and procedures to improve the quality and effectiveness of UNCTs, particularly in support of national efforts to achieve the MDGs; and e) the Country Programme Support Group, which monitored the implementation of UNDG programme policy, tools and procedures at the country and regional levels.

81. The Programme and Management Groups worked together to address the simplification and harmonization of programme procedures, which has a particular focus on DaO pilots. They were coordinated through the Programme and Management Coordination Group, which brought together senior staff of all UNDG agencies. The Coordination Group worked to ensure full exchange of information and coherent guidance to the DaO pilots. In addition, the Informal Assistant Secretary-General and Assistant Deputy General Committee provided a framework for experimentation for the One UN pilots. This was meant to allow for frank discussions of 'red-line' issues for each agency and to find agreement.

82. From the outset, the DaO process emphasized the voluntary and potentially diverse nature of the pilots, which would produce best practice models that would eventually feed into systemic guidance. Pilot countries could rely on overall programme and management guidance provided by UNDGO/UNDOCO, for example the Common Country Assessment/UNDAF Guidelines that were revised in 2007 as well as general guidance on human-rights based approaches and gender equality. For the specific innovations that would characterize the pilots, for example the four Ones, UNCTs and their national partners were given space to develop the design and implementation modalities of their respective initiatives. UNDGO/UNDOCO progressively captured best practices from the field through RC consultations, retreats and workshops; a series of support missions and web-based information exchange; and discussion fora. The RC offices in the pilot countries also reported information sharing among themselves.

83. One of the key ways in which the system supported the pilots was through technical missions to pilot countries (undertaken by specialized staff and consultants at Headquarters level) and workshops. In 2007, more than 40 support missions took place. A number of missions or workshops were conducted around the *One Programme, One Budgetary Framework/One Fund, One Leader* and *One Office*. UNDGO/UNDOCO also provided communication support to the DaO process, for example through the publication of the *Formula One* newsletter, of which five issues were produced in 2007.

84. With support from UNDGO/UNDOCO and a specialized consultancy firm, UNCTs have engaged in a process of *change management* that includes a vision for common results (rationale, baseline), technical solutions for business processes (management structure of the One Fund and accountability framework), and communication (broad stakeholder analysis, internal and communication plans).

85. The DaO pilots also benefit from the Quality Support and Assurance System at the regional level. Its main responsibility is to support UNCTs during their analytic work and UNDAF development

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[37] As of April 2008, the structures were streamlined. An Advisory Group and five standing Working Groups were established to assist member organizations with the development of effective and proven policies, instruments, tools and processes for country level operations. The five Working Groups are: Working Group on Country Office Business Operations Issues; Working Group on Joint Funding, Financial and Audit Issues; Working Group on Programming Issues; Working Group on Resident Coordinator Issues; and UNDG-ECHA Working Group on Transition. UNDGO was renamed UNDOCO.

process. Regional Quality Support and Assurance System Teams take the form of Peer Support Groups with representation from funds, programmes and specialized agencies. In May 2007, the chair of the UNDG recommended that the system be improved in the following ways: a) each region should ensure greater inter-agency coherence and capacity to strengthen UNCT support; b) regional inter-agency Quality Support and Assurance System groups should be accountable to RDTs for reporting back on UNCT progress; c) RDTs should reach out to non-ExCom agencies and encourage their participation in the Quality Support and Assurance System; d) RDT Secretariats should include attention to each region's Quality Support and Assurance System delivery and reporting; and e) linkages and communications between Headquarters-based working groups, RDTs and the Quality Support and Assurance System should be improved.[38]

86. Individual UN organizations also support their field staff. A good example is the UNICEF Achieving Strategic Knowledge (ASK) initiative, which supports UNICEF offices in their efforts to work more coherently with other UN organizations. This reference group consists of experts in programme guidance, operations, funding and budgeting, and communications and partnerships that can offer advice on UN coherence from respective areas of expertise.

87. There have also been various consultations involving DaO pilot countries, other Member States, UN funds, programmes, specialized agencies and other entities of the UN system as well as other stakeholders. A notable event was the high-level dialogue on system-wide coherence and the DaO initiative that was organized by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in Vienna, Austria on 4-5 March 2008. The Government of Mozambique hosted a seminar on DaO for representatives of pilot countries in Maputo, Mozambique on 21-23 May 2008.

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[38] Letter of Chair of UNDG to UNDG Regional Directors, 29 May 2007.

D. CONCLUSIONS OF THE EVALUABILITY ASSESSMENT OF THE EIGHT PILOTS AND OF THE SYSTEMIC SUPPORT

National ownership and leadership

88. The TCPR resolutions of 2004 and 2007[39] stress that national governments have the primary responsibility for their countries' development and for coordinating, on the basis of national strategies and priorities, all types of external assistance, including that provided by multilateral organizations, in order to effectively integrate such assistance into their development processes. The TCPR resolution of 2007 also underscores that there is no 'one size fits all' approach to development and that development assistance by the UN development system should be able to respond to the varying development needs of programme countries and should be aligned with their national development plans and strategies in accordance with their mandates.[40] These are benchmarks of paramount importance for the evaluation of the DaO pilots.

89. Governments in all the pilot countries had exercised a prominent role in the international debate on UN reform. Political leaders of three countries (Mozambique, Pakistan and Tanzania) had been members of the High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence in 2005-2006. All countries voluntarily submitted requests to the Secretary-General to be considered as pilots. The political commitment was renewed on several occasions, for example during the stocktaking exercise at the end of 2007 and during various high-level meetings and events. Cape Verde and Viet Nam had already started with joint offices combining the contributions of agencies of the ExCom as early as 2006.

90. In all pilot countries, the UNDAF and related programming processes are articulated as contributions to national policies and plans. For example, in Albania the UN contribution is aligned with the Integrated Planning System, notably the National Strategy for Development and Integration 2007-2013 and the Stabilization and Association Agreement of 2006 with the European Union. In Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda and Tanzania, the UNDAF is aligned with respective poverty reduction strategies. A clear alignment with national policies and strategies is also observed in Uruguay and Viet Nam.

91. All pilot countries demonstrate a long tradition of national ownership and leadership in the development process and in dealing with development partners. Even before the DaO process started in early 2007, the UN system had supported government efforts to coordinate external aid and to make best use of aid. The role and contribution of the UN system in this regard has, at best, intensified through the DaO process but cannot be attributed to it. Good examples in this regard are experiences in Mozambique, Rwanda and Tanzania.

92. The UN system also supports countries adhering to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (which includes all pilot countries except Uruguay) to meet the challenges related to mutual accountability and greater aid effectiveness, and to exercise national ownership and leadership in this context. National processes tend to be influenced by these challenges, especially in countries that rely heavily on budget support and other programme-based aid provided by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

93. While the UN system has a role to play in supporting aid effectiveness, its mandates and resources are essentially meant to serve the broader framework of strengthening national capacities for development effectiveness. The unique role and contribution of the UN system is to support countries in designing and implementing development policies and strategies and in achieving Internationally Agreed Development Goals, including the MDGs. The role of the UN system hence extends far beyond the principles and objectives of the Paris Declaration and may include issues such as humanitarian assistance, peace and security, and the environment.

94. There are indications in the pilot countries that the broad mandate of the UN system to provide comprehensive capacity development is not always

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[39] Resolution A/59/250 and TCPR Resolution A/RES/62/208.
[40] Op. cit., 5, paragraphs 4 and 6.

fully understood by both national and external development partners. In a future evaluation, it will be important to assess how the UN system strengthens national capacities that are required for development effectiveness. Part of this task is to see how the UN system stimulates dialogue between the government and development partners and exercises its role as a trusted partner of national and external institutions based on its neutrality and universality.

95. The contribution of the UN system to the strengthening of national capacities and to the empowerment of the government and other national institutions in dealing with development partners can be evaluated, if there is a clear understanding of mandates and benchmarks, notably those provided in the TCPR resolutions. The evidence will be found in programming documents (such as the UNDAF and One Programme Document), where there should be a clear reference to specific national policies and strategies as well as to the role and contribution of the UN system. There is also a need to document the specific nature of the role of the UN system in the aid environment in countries in which the national budget is very reliant on external aid.

Access for the pilot countries to mandates and resources of the UN system

96. The coherence agenda at the country level as suggested by the TCPR 2004 resolution[41] was initially interpreted as involving ExCom organizations and, in certain cases, other resident agencies. This resulted in the joint office model, mainly involving ExCom agencies, which was to be tested in selected countries. Joint offices were created in Cape Verde and in Viet Nam in early 2006. In both countries, the DaO initiative was rooted in the joint office model. However, in all other pilot countries, it was increasingly felt that both resident and non-resident organizations should be part of the DaO process.

97. The High-level Panel Report observed that in one third of programme countries, more than 10 UN organizations were active, and in almost one third of them, less than USD 2 million was spent by each agency. This created a strong rationale for consolidating all UN programme activities where the countries wished, as effective delivery would require a single budgetary framework. Although not a stated goal of the DaO initiative, efforts were made in all pilot countries to involve non-resident agencies in the process. The rationale was that the coherence agenda should be at the expense of the basic principle confirmed in the TCPR 2007 resolution[42] whereby programme countries should have access to and benefit from the full range of mandates and resources of the UN development system.

98. The UNDAF process, which had commenced in all pilot countries well before the DaO initiative, had already brought together both resident and non-resident agencies and produced an agreement on common outcomes in line with national policies and strategies. The new element of the DaO was the creation of a budgetary framework that made funding more predictable and made implementation of programmed activities more feasible. The funding would also largely be un-earmarked. This opened up new funding opportunities, especially for non-resident agencies that had traditionally been funded principally through global or regional schemes. The challenge for the One Programme was to maintain a strategic focus. This endeavour was not easy with a large number of participating UN organizations.

99. The TCPR resolution of 2007 stipulated that national governments should determine which UN organizations best respond to specific needs and priorities of the individual country. There is evidence from the DaO evaluability studies that some pilot countries made very clear choices in this regard. For example, in Albania, there are currently 11 UN organizations that participate in DaO, of which only three are non-resident.[43] In Tanzania, only three non-resident agencies are actively involved in the DaO.[44] Non-resident agencies may or may not participate in the DaO process. Some entertain relations with the respective governments in one way or another, for example with funding from global or regional sources, but they may not necessarily participate in the DaO process. The International Civil Aviation

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[41] Resolution A/59/250.
[42] Op. cit., 5.
[43] ILO, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIFEM and UNV are resident agencies, and FAO, UNEP and UNESCO are non-resident agencies.
[44] IAEA, OHCHR and UNEP.

Organization and the International Meteorological Organization are examples of non-resident agencies that provide some development assistance to most countries without necessarily being taken into account in the One Programme or UNDAF.

100. Some specialized agencies that actively participate in the DaO process may continue to deploy activities in support of national priorities outside DaO. An example is WHO, which is not principally a development agency but has a global mandate related to health that includes a role in development. While health can be an important component of DaO, there may be very specific health-related issues that WHO may wish to address in line with requests from the government and in line with its global mandates and resources. There is increasing awareness that operational activities outside DaO should continue to be possible. In other words, while DaO offers the important advantage of making the UN role and contribution more relevant and effective, it should not become a straitjacket that deprives the country of access to global and regional mandates and resources of the UN system.

101. Composition of the UNCT varies among pilot countries. In some countries, such as Mozambique, membership in the UNCT is reserved for agencies that have accredited international staff in the country and excludes non-resident agencies and agencies that employ national staff in the country. In others, membership is more inclusive and comprises both international and national staff representing agencies, even when not accredited as such by the government of the host country. In the case of Cape Verde, the UNCT often meets outside the country (in Dakar, Senegal) as most of its members are not resident in Praia, the capital of Cape Verde. In practice, there seems to be a dual model with a core UNCT comprising international agency representatives who are accredited with the government and have decision-making power and an expanded UNCT that includes other representatives, especially of non-resident agencies, who are involved in planning and programming but may have to refer back to their Headquarters for decisions.

102. With increasing national ownership and leadership, there are also challenges related to coherence on the national side. There is a strong need for institutional platforms that allow line ministries and decentralized levels of government to fully participate in the articulation of national needs and priorities, which is usually a process coordinated by ministries of planning and finance. Albania and Cape Verde are good examples in this regard. In some pilot countries, some line ministries felt insufficiently involved in DaO and expressed concern that the trend to centralize would sever their traditional links to specialized agencies, which had been appreciated since they offered alternatives to centralized aid modalities such as budget support and other programme-based approaches.

103. The UN development system has traditionally maintained strong links with civil society, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Some UN organizations have very specific mandates related to capacity development directed at institutions outside the government. For example, ILO is tripartite in nature with accountabilities not only to governments, but also to employers' organizations and trade unions. By and large, DaO has not addressed these dimensions. In several countries, consultations were held with civil society organizations, but these consultations did not result in contributions to the DaO process.

104. Participation of different parts of the UN system in the DaO initiative is an important process indicator in any future evaluation. Evaluation questions should be framed in terms of needs and priorities of the programme countries rather than with respect to interests of UN organizations. The evaluation should adopt a nuanced approach to benefits of a more united and coherent approach, while acknowledging possible disadvantages from the perspective of certain stakeholders, such as line ministries and civil society. Evaluation recommendations that are evidence based and well balanced may enhance the value of the DaO approach.

One Programme

105. The concept of the One Programme is an innovation introduced to the programming process of the UN system through the DaO initiative. A key question during the evaluability assessments was: what distinguishes this concept from the UNDAF, on the one hand, and from joint programmes, on the other?

106. The UNDAF is defined in the Common Country Assessment/UNDAF guidelines as "the strategic programme framework for the UN Country team, as it

describes the collective response of the UNCT to the priorities in the national development framework—priorities that may have been influenced by the UNCT's analytical contribution."[45] The UNDAF involves *joint programming*, which is basically the cooperation of agencies to define common outcomes in line with national needs and priorities. Joint programmes are more tightly defined and manage sets of activities under the UNDAF contained in a common work plan and related budget, involving two or more UN organizations and (sub) national partners.[46]

107. The One Programme is more ambitious than the UNDAF, as it aims at a higher degree of coherence and seeks to assemble the means that are required for delivery of outcomes. While the UNDAF is a programming framework that usually does not clearly indicate how its implementation will be funded, the One Programme is accompanied by a Budgetary Framework, which allows for targeted resource mobilization. The One Programme usually comprises several joint programmes, which are more thematically defined.

108. The One Programme could potentially encompass the totality of UNDAF and even go beyond the UNDAF. Integration has so far been achieved only in Rwanda, where the DaO initiative coincided with the beginning of the UNDAF cycle. In the other pilot countries, the UNDAF was ongoing when the DaO was designed, and individual agencies had commitments to the governments and governing bodies to implement their respective country programmes or country portfolios. In practical terms, DaO is added on to regular programme implementation, which increases rather than diminishes the workload. This phenomenon is compounded by the fact that the subjacent joint programmes require more complex implementation modalities.

109. In all cases, the evaluability assessment missions observed that the One Programmes demonstrated a satisfactory degree of strategic intent, since outcome areas were clearly articulated in relation to national policies and strategies. However, they also observed that this strategic intent was not necessarily more articulate than that of the UNDAF. In several cases, the rationale that had guided the design of joint programmes was not entirely clear and appeared to be more inspired by the willingness of certain partners to work together and circumstantial opportunities than clear programme logic.

110. In all pilots, there is an untapped opportunity to further strengthen the programme logic of the One Programme by formulating an overarching vision statement that would describe the unique contribution and comparative advantage of the UN system in the given country context. This vision statement should encompass the common goals and values of all UN organizations taking part in the DaO process. There should also be a statement concerning the objectives related to outcome areas (sometimes referred to as clusters) in line with national policies and strategies. Last but not least, objectives of joint programmes should be clearly aligned with objectives at the area of outcome areas. The programme logic could best be articulated through a results framework in line with basic principles of RBM.

111. The TCPR and UN organizations' mandates usually cover cross-cutting dimensions, such as gender, which should be clearly reflected in the vision statement and the objectives of outcome areas. Mandates of UN organizations usually share a common overall framework, such as the Millennium Declaration, the MDGs, the World Summit Outcomes and the TCPR. Their expertise and other resources are largely complementary. A good example is the area of gender, which is guided by intergovernmental consensus in a comprehensive and explicit manner,[47] to which different UN organizations can bring different contributions in terms of capacity development. This should be clearly reflected in the design of the One Programme and the joint programmes.

112. RBM guidance usually requires objectives and indicators to be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART). The evaluability assessments found major shortcomings in this regard in most programming and M&E documents. Objectives were formulated as activities.[48] In addition, in some cases, indicators were not ambitious

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[45] 'UNDG Common Country Assessment/UNDAF Guidelines', February 2007, paragraph 61.
[46] UNDG website, Joint Programme Overview, 1 April 2005.
[47] Op. cit., 5, paragraphs 56-66.
[48] Objectives are often phrased in terms of activities (for example contribute to …, enhance …, promote … etc.) rather than as descriptions of outcomes (e.g. enhanced capacity of … in …).

enough and lacked credibility.[49] The existence of adequate results frameworks and M&E systems is a necessary prerequisite for a future evaluation addressing relevance and effectiveness. A process evaluation will have to assess the extent to which results frameworks and M&E systems have been put in place.

One Budgetary Framework/One Fund

113. The One Budgetary Framework is understood as the total cost of the One Programme and comprises both funded (for example, contributions from participating UN organizations) and unfunded elements. It is composed of regular and other resources of participating UN organizations as well as the One Fund (also called Coherence Fund), which is an instrument to fund the unfunded part of the One Programme.

114. Although the duration of the One Programme is usually shorter than that of the UNDAF, funding requirements expressed through the Budgetary Framework usually exceed those of the UNDAF. In other words, DaO carries the promise of a substantial increase of financial resources that can be mobilized for UN activities in the country. This may explain, to a degree, why the DaO approach is attractive to pilot countries and to those UN organizations that do not have regular or other resources to contribute.

115. ExCom agencies, in particular, are in a position to have part of their regular and other resources included in the Budgetary Framework. These resources are then used to implement joint programmes and activities of joint interest typically conducted by the RC's office (for example, for projects like change management, information technology development, and development of an M&E system).

116. In most cases, resource mobilization from within the UN system does not exceed 50 percent of total funding requirements for the implementation of the One Programme. The funding gap expressed through the One Fund is then presented to donors. The governments of Spain (through the MDG Fund) and Norway have responded favourably to such requests. Other major donors include Canada, Finland, Ireland, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. It should be noted that the funding gap has been closed only in Tanzania.

117. Donor contributions to the Budgetary Framework will, in all cases, be registered as other or extra-budgetary resources in the UN system. The interesting question is to what extent they are un-earmarked, that is support the One Programme as a whole, and not only specific parts of it, such as the individual joint programmes. This would constitute real progress for the funding of the UN system at the country level. This dimension was not investigated in detail during the evaluability assessments but should be addressed in a future evaluation.

118. There are indications that disbursement of funds primarily happens at the level of joint programmes. For each joint programme, one of the participating UN organizations acts as a managing agent and uses funds provided by other UN entities or by donors through pass-through or pooling modalities. This poses particular challenges, as financial and administrative systems differ among UN organizations. In most cases, representatives of UN organizations in the field are not able to change the financial and administrative rules or apply them in a more flexible manner. There is a general consensus that this needs to be addressed as part of simplification and harmonization of UN rules and procedures at Headquarters level.

119. There is also a concern that smaller UN organizations are not sufficiently equipped and experienced to administer large and complex programmes. This poses major risks for disbursement of funds and, more importantly, for the delivery of the programmes and the achievement of results. Should the DaO approach fail to deliver results due to systemic bottlenecks, future fund-raising may be compromised.

120. For the sake of a future evaluation of the DaO approach, it is important to clearly document the degree of earmarking of funds that are mobilized through the Budgetary Framework (both other resources available to participating UN organizations and additional funding from donors). It is also important to clearly identify possible bottlenecks in the administration and disbursement of funds that exist for managing agents and other participating

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49 For example, the production of reports as an indicator for a programmatic result.

organizations and what reforms may be needed at Headquarters level. Lastly, there is a need to define minimum requirements for UN organizations to act as managing agents.

One Leader

121. The TCPR resolution of 2007[50] underscores that the RC system is owned by the UN development system as a whole and that it should be participatory, collegial and accountable. The resolution also recognizes the central role of RCs in coordinating UN operational activities at the country level and underscores that the RC, supported by the UNCT, should report to national authorities on progress made against results agreed in the UNDAF.

122. In all cases, the function of the RC is assumed by the Resident Representative of UNDP. Some incumbents are seconded to UNDP from other agencies. The High-level Panel Report for System-wide Coherence had called for a 'firewall' to be created between these functions to avoid possible conflicts of interest and confusion of roles. All pilot countries now have UNDP country directors to whom major responsibilities for the administration of UNDP, including fund-raising, programme and operational management, are delegated.

123. The evaluability assessments found that there is now a satisfactory delineation of responsibilities between the two functions. In case the incumbent of the post of RC is not in the country, the most senior member of the UNCT takes his or her place. It should be noted that the RC posts sometimes remain vacant for extended periods of time, most recently in Pakistan and Rwanda.

124. RCs are accountable not only to the government of the host country but also to the UN system. Their performance is appraised partly against agreed work plans and partly through a web-based 180 degree mutual self-assessment, in which RCs and UNCT members assess their own performance and that of other team members. The RC is accountable to the Regional Director of UNDP and to the RDT composed of senior representatives of funds and programmes and some specialized agencies at the regional level.

125. According to UNDG guidelines, RCs are responsible for UNCT results with leadership provided by the government and subject to reviews by regional directors. The RCs monitor and report on the performance of individual UNCT members against UNDAF goals, but currently, they have no authority over agency resources and staff. This severely limits their authority as One Leader.

126. The studies conducted in the pilot countries show that the RCs exercise authority in the UNCT mostly through informal rather than formal lines of supervision. In some countries, codes of conduct describe the basic rules of engagement for members of the UNCT. In some cases it is difficult to reach consensus on specific issues, as representatives of some agencies need to refer to their Headquarters for guidance on decision making, which may not be timely or adhere to a local consensus. At present, there is no satisfactory procedure for conflict resolution.

127. A special situation prevails in Cape Verde, where the RC is also the representative of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP as part of the joint office arrangement. While this arrangement was welcomed by the Government of Cape Verde, some of the ExCom agencies have expressed concern that their mandates are no longer fully visible and that there are shortcomings in the achievement of results in agency-specific areas of interest. The evaluability assessment conducted in Cape Verde specifically addressed these questions and concluded that, while results were being achieved, the visibility of agency mandates could possibly be enhanced through the appointment of assistant representatives or focal points, who would support the representational role of the RC at a technical level.

128. In a future evaluation, the codes of conduct among UNCT members and the performance assessments of RCs and UNCTs will constitute important yardsticks for evaluating RC leadership. To what extent the RC leadership is actually exercised could also be gauged through perception surveys of members of the UN system engaged with the country and with outside stakeholders, notably government and other national and international partners.

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[50] Op. cit., 5.

One Office

129. In the TCPR resolution of 2007,[51] the General Assembly encouraged UN organizations to increase their efforts to rationalize their country presence through common premises and co-location, and to expand common shared support services and business units in order to reduce overhead costs for the UN system and transaction costs for national governments. The resolution also encourages the UN system to increase use of national public and private systems for appropriate support systems, including procurement, security, information technology, telecommunications, travel, banking, planning, reporting and evaluation.[52]

130. The co-location of resident UN organizations in common premises has been achieved in only one pilot country (Cape Verde), where the One UN House was created well before the DaO started. In Mozambique, Rwanda and Viet Nam, locations for the One Office have been identified, and the mobilization of resources for constructing and equipping the buildings are about to begin. In most other capitals of the pilot countries, it is difficult to identify premises that can accommodate all resident agencies of the UN system. In some cases, it is also difficult to reach a consensus among UN organizations in this regard.

131. There has also been little progress in the development of common support services and shared business units. In most countries, operations management teams are still trying to identify which services could be pooled and simplified, notably in information technology, procurement, transportation and human resources. In Mozambique, a feasibility study for information technology and communications was conducted that established parameters for one-time investments and operational costs for existing and new services in this domain.

132. The use of national public and private systems for operational services is also relatively underdeveloped. Harmonized Cash Transfers to national partners is the most important modality in this regard. Harmonized Cash Transfers are more extensively practiced by ExCom organizations, and use by other agencies is being explored. Harmonized Cash Transfers base cash transfers on the upfront

assessment of risks rather than *ex-post facto* verification of expenditure. The modality involves capacity assessments at the macro (national public financial management systems) and micro levels (management systems, practices and controls of implementing partners). The use of Harmonized Cash Transfers is usually accompanied by capacity development provided by UN organizations.

133. UN operations at the country level are governed by the rules and regulations of the respective UN organizations, which are still rather diverse. A common message from all pilot countries is that the development of common services and business units as well as the use of national systems requires a certain degree of autonomy and flexibility by UNCTs in pilot countries, which is not granted by the Headquarters of any of the participating UN organizations. There is also a common call from the field to simplify and harmonize business models, practices and procedures at Headquarters level.

134. To make this dimension of the DaO more evaluable, it is important to document pilot experiences and demonstrate what rules and procedures would need to be simplified and harmonized at Headquarters levels so that the challenges can be documented more comprehensively. This could, in turn, provide inter-agency coordination mechanisms and governing bodies the information needed to make operational reform on the ground.

One Communication

135. Several UNCTs recognized the importance of adequate communication strategies to successfully implement the DaO initiative, and 'One Communication' was added to the original four Ones. Good communication is essential among UN organizations and national and international partners (including donors and governing bodies). In some countries, DaO newsletters are published and dedicated websites are updated on a regular basis. There are also attempts to enhance staff capacity to communicate about DaO to broader audiences.

136. The question is whether the communication strategies should be limited to being tools for the promotion of UN reform. A more ambitious agenda is pursued in Tanzania, where the communication

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[51] Op. cit., 5.
[52] Ibid, paragraphs 119 and 120.

strategy also addresses advocacy with the public and private sector on causes in line with UN system mandates, including through UN Youth Clubs. This approach also entails communication among national partners, including the media and other civil society institutions, which should be champions of UN-supported causes. If such approaches are adopted in the pilot countries on a wider scale, a future evaluation could perhaps assess achievement of processes and results in this area.

Reduction of overhead and transaction costs and re-investment of savings

137. The main rationale guiding the simplification and harmonization of business practices is to reduce overhead and transaction costs for both the UN system and for the governments of programme countries. In the TCPR 2007 resolution,[53] member states asked the UN development system to further standardize and harmonize the concept, practice and cost classification related to transaction costs and cost recovery. Savings resulting from reductions in transaction and overhead costs should be used for development programmes.[54]

138. National partners, especially central ministries of foreign affairs, planning and finance, consistently perceived that their cost in dealing with the UN system had decreased with DaO, noting the reduced number of meetings with individual agencies and more harmonized reporting requirements. This perception was shared by most donors. In contrast, the UNCTs indicated that their workload had increased considerably, because DaO was additional to regular programming and because DaO involved more inter-agency meetings and a high number of missions. This was partly attributed to the DaO being a new approach, thus the costs should be considered a short-term investment and development costs rather than long-term structural and recurring costs.

139. The evaluability assessments in the pilot countries could not capture what was understood by 'overhead' and 'transaction' costs. Among UNCTs (and also at Headquarters level) there was little awareness of the definitions decided by the CEB High-level Committee on Management in 2005.[55]

140. The High-level Committee on Management agreed on the following definitions: *Direct Costs* are incurred for and can be traced to an organization's activities, projects or programmes in fulfilment of its mandate; *Fixed Indirect Costs* are incurred by the organization, regardless of the scope and level of its activities and cannot be traced unequivocally to specific activities, projects or programmes; *Variable Indirect Costs*, usually referred to as *Programme Support Costs*, are incurred by the organization as a function and in support of its activities, projects and programmes, and cannot be traced unequivocally to specific activities, projects or programmes.

141. The reduction of overhead and transaction costs sought through the DaO initiative probably refers to *direct* and *variable indirect costs*, but this is not stated in explicit terms.

142. Evaluating the reduction of overhead and transaction costs will require evidence beyond anecdotal perceptions. The evaluability assessments found that the processes of rationalizing the country presence and simplifying and harmonizing business practices did not usually involve collecting good baseline data concerning costs incurred before and as a result of the innovations. This lack of evidence will severely handicap an evaluation of this aspect of the reform process.

143. It would also be helpful if there were benchmarks for 'acceptable' levels of overhead and transaction costs. One way would be to determine a benchmark of the ratio between operational costs and programme spending and provide a yardstick as to what percentage would be an acceptable level of operational cost (probably direct and variable indirect cost as mentioned above) as compared to total programme spending. A distinction may have to be made between small and large programmes.

144. That it is currently difficult to demonstrate reduction of overhead and transaction costs explains why there is no evidence as to how savings on operational cost could be used in programme spending. It should also be clarified whether regulations permit transforming unspent operational resources (for example, on staffing), the proceeds from the sale of assets (for example, means of transport), or savings on recurrent expenditure into programme

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[53] Op. cit., 5.
[54] Ibid, paragraphs 112-122.
[55] Document CEB/2005/HLCM/R.22, 29 September 2005.

spending. A future evaluation should assess the feasibility of this provision of the TCPR under present rules and regulations.

145. Conceptual clarity and the establishment of benchmarks will probably have to be pursued at Headquarters level and included in guidance to the field. The inter-agency (and possibly inter-governmental) consultations that will have to be conducted in this regard will probably require some time. This will make it necessary to adopt a pragmatic approach at the country level.

146. Regarding the overhead cost of the UN development system, it would be useful to collect evidence of good practices such as reductions in cost and possibly the generation of savings. Such case studies could be in areas such as procurement, transport, travel, banking, information technology and safety and security. It would be beneficial to document costs incurred by individual agencies before the pooling of resources and services and by the UNCT after such reforms. Such documentation of savings would go beyond mere anecdotal evidence.

147. Regarding reducing costs for national (government, civil society) and external partners (donors), conducting regular perception surveys would improve upon current anecdotal evidence. The surveys should be designed in an objective manner. It should not be assumed that DaO has resulted in a reduction of transaction costs for all stakeholders. The reduction of transaction costs for one party may result in an increase of costs for another. For example, line ministries or non-governmental organizations may find it harder to access the One Fund or benefit from a joint programme than simply dealing with an individual UN organization.

148. The team that will conduct the future independent evaluation of the DaO should comprise the required technical expertise to assess the dimension of transaction costs and savings in a qualified manner, both at the conceptual and at implementation levels.

Assessment of the evaluability of the systemic support

149. Systemic support provided by UNDG, its subsidiary bodies and its Secretariat UNDGO/UNDOCO has not been guided by a comprehensive conceptual framework at the central level beyond provisions of the TCPR resolutions of 2001, 2004 and 2007, and

inspiration derived from the vision developed in the High-level Panel Report on System-wide Coherence. Throughout the DaO process, the emphasis has been on piloting new approaches in the field with a view to abiding by the principles of national ownership and leadership and the dictum that one size does not fit all.

150. During the evaluability assessments at the country level, RCs and UNCTs consistently emphasized that DaO has largely been a *journey without maps*, and that they all faced similar challenges related to more or less centralized decision making in several UN organizations, the rigidity of rules and regulations, and the slow process of inter-agency simplifications and harmonization of business practices at Headquarters levels. The commonalities among the pilots came to the forefront through intense networking at different levels among UNCTs and with UNDGO/UNDOCO.

151. Systemic support involved a great number of support missions, the organization of meetings and workshops, and the development of web-based guidance mechanisms. It addressed some of the challenges satisfactorily, for example those related to the establishment of the One Budgetary Framework/One Fund, the code of conduct for UNCTs, change management and specific issues such as information technology. Other issues remain outstanding, such as guidance for the formulation of the One Programme, the development of M&E systems and mechanisms for conflict resolution. A coherent conceptual framework with clear goals and objectives and performance indicators that would make it possible to evaluate the systemic support is still lacking.

152. Most importantly, the design and implementation of joint programmes, the creation of common services, and increased use of national systems for operational activities are made difficult by the diverse business models and practices among UN organizations and the lack of simplified and harmonized rules and procedures at Headquarters. The lessons learned in the pilot countries need to be communicated in a more systematic and comprehensive manner to decision and policy makers at Headquarters.

153. Given that DaO pilots are highly dependent on rules and procedures defined at Headquarters and require consistent guidance, a future evaluation of the pilots will have to include a strong Headquarters

component. To make the systemic support more evaluable, UNDG, its subsidiary bodies, as well as UNDGO/UNDOCO should develop a more systematic inventory of challenges, document good practices at the country level, and articulate the outstanding issues that require inter-agency and possibly intergovernmental decision making. This process should be coordinated with reporting requirements to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly as stipulated in the TCPR of 2007[56] and possible reporting requirements of governing bodies of specialized agencies.

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[56] Op. cit., 5.

E. THE WAY FORWARD

Suggestions for the self-evaluation of DaO by pilot countries

154. A key purpose of the evaluability assessment process was to comply with the mandate set out in the 2007 TCPR resolution,[57] which notes the voluntary efforts to improve coherence, coordination and harmonization in the UN development system, including at the request of some country pilot programmes. The resolution encourages the Secretary-General to support pilot countries in evaluating and exchanging their experiences with the support of the UNEG.[58]

155. The suggested self-evaluation by pilot countries also complies with another provision in the 2007 TCPR resolution concerning evaluation of operational activities for development. The resolution emphasizes that programme countries should have greater ownership and leadership in evaluating all forms of assistance, including that provided by the UN development system. The UN system needs to intensify its efforts to strengthen evaluation capacities in programme countries.[59]

156. During the evaluability assessments at the country level, an effort was made to identify national institutions and individuals that could constitute important resources for evaluation in the pilot countries. As a result of the evaluability missions, several governments, such as Rwanda and Tanzania, have committed themselves to further strengthening the national evaluation capacity. A similar pledge was made during the DaO lessons learned seminar among governments of pilot countries hosted by the Government of Mozambique in Maputo on 21-23 May 2008.

157. The evaluability assessments of DaO have generated numerous observations on how evaluation capacity in the different pilot countries could be strengthened. UNCTs may wish to formulate management responses to the reports and elaborate action plans for follow-up in close cooperation with the respective governments.

158. One of the key findings of the evaluability assessments was that the conceptual design of the One Programme could be improved by formulating a vision statement, strengthening the programme objectives in relation to the vision statement, articulating the relation between individual joint programmes and the objectives, defining clear performance indicators for M&E, and creating performance monitoring systems and provisions for self-evaluation.

159. It will also be useful for DaO countries to collect all relevant information required as evidence for a process evaluation that is likely to be part of the independent evaluation of the DaO pilots in 2009-2010. There is a particular need to document the reduction of overhead and transaction costs in an empirical manner.

160. UNDGO/UNDOCO could enhance the evaluability of systemic support by strengthening the programme logic of the support function through a comprehensive documentation of issues that need to be addressed concerning the DaO and the formulation of clear goals and objectives as well as performance indicators for the support function. UNDGO/UNDOCO can also play a major role in the harmonization and simplification of rules and procedures among UN organizations that still hamper attempts to make the country-level interventions more rational and efficient.

Suggestions for the independent evaluation

161. The evaluation will need to refer to the UNEG Norms and Standards of Evaluation to ensure its independence.[60] The Norms state that "[t]o avoid conflict of interest and undue pressure, evaluators need to be independent, implying that members of an evaluation team must not have been directly responsible for the policy-setting, design, or overall management of the subject of evaluation, nor expect to be in the near future." The Norms also state that "[E]valuators must have no vested interest and have the full freedom to conduct impartially their evaluative work, without potential negative effects on their career development."[61]

162. A future substantive evaluation will face a major methodological challenge related to baselines and counterfactuals. The most obvious comparison

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[57] Op. cit., 5.
[58] Ibid, paragraph 139.
[59] Ibid, paragraph 129.
[60] Op. cit. 9.
[61] See UNEG Norms, paragraph 6.3 and 6.4.

would be between the situation created by the DaO approach and the situation that prevailed before DaO in the respective countries. A comparison between the situation resulting from the DaO with what might have happened without DaO may also be possible to a certain extent, but it may be perceived as more speculative. Since each country context is unique, a comparison between countries that have adopted the DaO approach with countries that have not is probably the most problematic and least feasible approach of all.

163. To observe noticeable changes in effectiveness will require a time-frame of several years. The DaO approach was launched in late 2006/early 2007 in all pilot countries (it was preceded by one year of the joint office experience in Cape Verde and Viet Nam). Most of the first year of the DaO was dedicated to new approaches in planning and programming and the creation of the necessary tools, such as the budgetary framework, a code of conduct, and resource mobilization, planning and programming. Even in countries where these steps have largely been accomplished—Albania, Rwanda, Tanzania and Viet Nam—actual implementation of the One Programme and subjacent joint programmes only started during the first half of 2008. It is therefore unlikely that a full substantive evaluation addressing relevance and effectiveness can take place before the period 2009-2010.

164. If the independent evaluation is conducted as early as 2009, it will have to focus more on the processes that are likely to lead to results, rather than the results themselves. This evaluability assessment has identified the following process indicators that are in line with the TCPR resolution of 2007 and practices that exist on the ground. The suggested process indicators are: a) national ownership and leadership in the DaO process in relation to the relevance of the unique role and contribution of the UN system as distinct from other forms of external support; b) access for the pilot countries to the full range of mandates and resources of the UN system; c) creation of One Programme and its distinctive features as compared to the UNDAF and

joint programmes; d) creation of One Budgetary Framework; e) strengthening of the RC system with the concept of One Leader; f) work towards the creation of One Office, including simplification and harmonization of business practices; and g) reduction of transaction and overhead costs for the UN system and for national and international partners.

165. Innovations in programming and business practices at the country level require reforms at Headquarters level, some of which can be executed by senior management of the UN organizations and some of which will require decision making by governing bodies. There is currently no clear and coherent identification of issues that need to be resolved at Headquarters level. Subsequently, there is no clear roadmap to required reforms of programme and business processes at a central level. A future process evaluation should assess whether progress has been made in this regard and will need to formulate appropriate recommendations.

166. In line with the HLCP's need for early information on the pilot initiatives, the stocktaking exercise and the evaluability studies provide feedback on progress made so far. However, other questions of interest to individual agencies have not been addressed, such as how the relationships between field offices and Headquarters are developing in light of DaO. The governing bodies of several agencies are requesting progress reports on the ongoing DaO initiative. The work programmes of several agencies already have provisions for relevant evaluative work with their field offices in some or all of the eight pilot countries for the 2008-2009 period. UNEG supports such work and will draw lessons that will be useful for the DaO initiative as a whole. The first agency to undertake such evaluative work will be UNESCO. It will make available its findings to UNEG for the benefit of all other interested agencies.

167. UNEG remains at the disposal of the CEB and HLCP as well as other stakeholders, including the pilot countries and member states, to ensure that the evaluation be independent, credible and useful.

ANNEX 1
TERMS OF REFERENCE

UNEG EVALUATION OF DaO UN PILOTS

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR EVALUABILITY STUDY IN EIGHT DaO PILOT COUNTRIES

Background

1. In November 2006, the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence published the report 'Delivering as One'. It put forward a comprehensive set of recommendations including the establishment of One UN pilot initiatives at the country level, with One Leader, One Programme, One Budget, and where appropriate, One Office. The recommendations were largely grounded in General Assembly resolution 59/250 adopted in 2004, which provided guidance for joint offices and a rationalization of UN country presence.

2. The recommendations to establish pilots at the country level were met with great interest in the UN system, and by the end of December 2006, eight governments had expressed interest in joining this initiative. By February 2007, eight countries had asked the UNDP Administrator in his capacity of Chair of the UNDG to support their pilot initiatives: Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uruguay and Viet Nam.

3. Following discussions by the High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) on 20-21 March 2007, the Chief Executives Board, in its meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, on 20 April 2007, called on UNEG to undertake an evaluation of the pilots that would focus on design and progress, to be followed at a later date by an evaluation of results and impact.[1]

4. To this end, UNEG established a management group to oversee the design and implementation of the evaluation, co-chaired by the heads of the evaluation services of UNICEF and FAO.[2] A comprehensive process of consultations was initiated that resulted in the basic design of the evaluation. Main elements of the design were, as a first step, an evaluability study to be reported in March 2008 covering country and UN systemic mechanisms put in place for implementing the reforms. A second step would be a process evaluation of the pilot experience to be accomplished by September 2009. The last step would be an evaluation of the results and impacts of the pilot experience, for delivery to the HLCP by September 2011.

5. At its meeting on 20-21 September 2007, the HLCP endorsed the overall evaluation in its report to the Chief Executives Board as well as the first step, an assessment of the evaluability of the Delivering as One Initiative by March 2008. This study would assess the process to date, plans, targets and tools. The study would provide lessons and independent advice to country teams to improve the quality of their planning. UNEG agreed that "the evaluability study to be completed in March 2008 would be substantive and would examine both the scope of the plans drawn up by country teams and criteria such as those indicated by members of the HLCP (including, inclusivity, diversity, openness of the process and how the single programme corresponded to national priorities)." This same meeting stressed the need for timely feedback from evaluation for management decision making on the future of Delivering as One.

6. The evaluability studies to be conducted by UNEG will benefit from a separate initiative launched by the Deputy Secretary-General to request governments of the eight pilot countries to provide additional information on the anticipated benefits and impact on national ownership so far. These assessments by governments will be complemented by a 'stocktaking' exercise to be conducted by the chair of the UNDG with UNCTs and organizations overseeing the pilots.

7. The new resolution of the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review adopted by the General Assembly on 18 December 2007 encourages the Secretary-General to support programme country pilots countries to evaluate and exchange their experiences with the support of UNEG. The emphasis is hence on UN system support to the evaluation by the programme countries themselves. In addition, the resolution calls for an independent evaluation of

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[1] Exact phrasing "called upon UNEG to urgently establish the substantive parameters and process for the evaluation of pilots, and requested to be kept fully informed of progress."

[2] A DaO evaluation interim manager /coordinator was appointed as from 1 January 2008 who is a senior staff member of the Evaluation Office of UNICEF.

lessons learned from these efforts for consideration of Member States, without prejudice to a future inter-governmental decision.

8. The self-assessments of the DaO pilots by the governments of the eight countries are now fully mandated by the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review and provide an important frame of reference for the UNEG evaluability studies. On the one hand, the UNEG evaluation process will closely follow these self-assessments and possible exchanges of experiences among DaO pilot countries. On the other hand, emerging findings of the UNEG evaluability studies can be brought to the attention of DaO pilot countries and contribute to the self-assessments.

Evaluation of the DaO Programme and pilots (2007-2011)

9. The main elements of the evaluation design include the following:

a) An evaluability study to be carried out at the country and UN systemic levels, that is, a technical assessment of design of the pilots and mechanisms put in place for implementing the reforms (mission reports are to be made available as soon as possible and the synthesis report is due in March 2008)[3];

b) In 2009, a synthesis of the self-assessments done by the pilots during 2008 and a UN systemic process evaluation of the pilot initiative for delivery to the HLCP (the synthesis report is due in September 2009 and will contribute to the preparation of the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review[4] of 2010);

c) An overall evaluation of the results and impacts of the pilot experience, for submission to the HLCP (due in September 2010 / 2011).

First step: Conduct of evaluability studies (January-March 2008)

10. The evaluability study of the Delivering as One of each of the pilots and as a whole is a technical assessment of the basic parameters that will make it possible to fully evaluate at a later stage both the results of the programmes and of the pilots, and of

the processes that will lead to these results. These parameters comprise:

a) Quality of the design for the achievement of results, that is, the existence of clear objectives and indicators to measure results at a later stage;

b) Initial appraisal of processes for the optimal involvement of relevant national and international stakeholders (including the governments of recipient countries; civil society; the private sector; UN funds, programmes and specialized agencies; and external aid agencies);

c) Existence of adequate sources of information to assess the achievement of results and indicators as well as of the required processes;

d) National ownership and leadership in the evaluation process, identification of independent and credible evaluators in pilot countries who can be involved in the evaluation of process and results of the Delivering as One pilots at a later stage.

11. The purposes and objectives of the evaluability study include the following:

a) Support governments and other stakeholders in the pilot countries as well UNCTs and the UN development system in identifying strengths and weaknesses in the design of their respective Delivering as One initiatives to inform immediate corrective measures, monitor progress and enable self-assessments;

b) Allow governments, other stakeholders as well as the UNCT and the UN development system to receive immediate feedback on processes for the involvement of relevant and international stakeholders;

c) Allow stakeholders to establish baselines and progress measurement during the implementation of the pilots for the assessment of results achievement;

d) Allow governments, other stakeholders, and the UN development system as well as UNEG to identify national evaluators in pilot countries;

e) Allow UNEG to compile information from all eight pilot countries and to synthesize information as

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[3] Due to a delay in the start-up of the DaO evaluation process and constraints to the planning of country visits, the overall study is not likely to be completed before the end of April 2008.

[4] The Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review was undertaken by the Economic & Social Committee of the United Nations.

part of a comprehensive evaluability study that will facilitate the planning of subsequent stages of the overall evaluation.

Conduct of evaluability study field missions to pilot countries (January-March 2008)

12. The field missions to pilot countries will take place within a very short timeframe (January-March 2008). Due to time constraints, some will have to take place in parallel.

13. The field missions to pilot countries will be consultative of the national government, other national and external stakeholders, all members of the UNCT and, where possible, NRAs and funding agencies.

14. The mission will begin its work with a series of briefings on the UNEG evaluation and will hold wind-up sessions to share its main findings and conclusions with the main stakeholders in line with purposes and objectives described above.

15. The reports of the missions will be provided to the UNEG coordinator within 10 days of the completion of the country visit (period to be adjusted where country visits are organized back-to-back). The reports will be structured around the parameters of the evaluability study described above. UNEG will share the reports with concerned stakeholders as soon as possible.

16. Requests from UNCTs to address weaknesses and shortcomings in the design and process of the Delivering as One will be shared with appropriate support mechanisms, for example UNDGO.

Conduct of the evaluability study of the UN system support to Delivering as One (January-March 2008)

17. Measures taken by the UN organizations to support the Delivering as One initiative will be mapped. The evaluations done by UN organizations in order to distill lessons and best practices will be reviewed. The information gathered will enable UNEG to prepare the evaluation design of the process evaluation to be conducted during 2008-2009 on the readiness of the whole UN system to support the Delivering as One Initiative.

18. The report to be submitted in March 2008 will cover the adequacy of the scope of the plans drawn by the UNCTs and the UN system as a whole. It will include the criteria indicated by HLCP (for example, response to national needs and priorities, inclusiveness, diversity and openness of the process.)

Annex 1.a Mission checklist and coverage of the reports of the field missions

A. Basic facts—history, context and scope of the DaO pilot

a) What was the pre-pilot situation with respect to CCA, UNDAF and the RC system?

b) When and how was the DaO pilot conceptualized and how has it been implemented? Which national stakeholders are involved in the process (government, civil society, private sector)?

c) What are the priorities of the government concerning DaO?

d) What has changed since the pilot started? What has been the progress in the implementation of the 'Ones'?

e) What organizations are members of the UNCT? What is the role of NRAs?

f) What is the size of the UN programme, its main characteristics and its relative importance to the country (taking into account ODA, South-South cooperation, etc.)?

B. Assessment of the substantive design of the DaO pilot (4-5 pages)

a) What is the vision of the government and other national partners concerning DaO and what are specific expectations?

b) To what extent does the UN system respond to specific needs and priorities of the country? How 'tailor-made' is the UN contribution?

c) What is the relationship of the DaO pilot with national development plans and strategies (including poverty reduction strategy papers, sector-wide approaches, and national plans related to internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs)?

d) To what extent is there a strategic intent for the totality of the contribution of the UN development system?

e) What is the relationship of the DaO pilot with other forms of external aid (e.g., budget support)?

f) How 'SMART' (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound) are the objectives and indicators of the DaO pilot?

g) How adequate is the M&E system?

h) What other parameters need to be taken into consideration to assess the design of the DaO pilot?

C. Initial assessment of the DaO pilot processes and implementation (4-5 pages)

a) To the extent that there is a formal agreement between the government and the UN development system concerning the objectives, the plan, and at what level in government decisions are being taken, what are the scope and main features of that agreement?

b) What is the process in place at the national level to plan and develop the pilot concerning, for example, interaction between various parts and levels of government and the UN system, interaction of the UN system with other national stakeholders (civil society, private sector), and interaction between the UN system and other external aid agencies?

c) How does the UN system interact with other forms of external aid (OECD-DAC and South/South)? How is the UN system perceived by other partners?

d) How are needs and priorities of the countries reflected? What needs to be responded to by NRAs of the UN development system?

e) How is joint programming conducted (CCA/UNDAF)? What is the importance of joint programmes?

f) What support has there been to the process from UNDG, UNDGO and from UN regional teams and Headquarters?

g) What has been the progress in the implementation of the Ones (One Programme, One Leader, One Budgetary Framework, One Office)?

h) To what extent do the support systems (for example, financial and administrative procedures, human resources, information technology, procurement) support the DaO?

i) How can the cost of the DaO pilot be assessed? How is the cost perceived by different stakeholders?

j) What are the basic parameters needed to guide an ulterior evaluation of process?

D. Assessment of the adequacy of sources of information

a) What are the key documents that guide the DaO pilot (government policies and strategies, UN programme documents, budgetary frameworks, documents of individual UN organizations, etc.)?

b) What national and international stakeholders need to be interviewed for a full-fledged process evaluation?

c) What other methods (apart from document review and interviews) should be considered to allow for greater triangulation and objectivity of information (e.g., field visits, surveys)?

Note: The mission will also contact national institutions and individuals that are specialized in evaluation and that can potentially play a role in subsequent stages of the evaluation process.

Annex 1.b Views of stakeholders on the start-up process

The mission will meet with representatives of government, the UN system and other major stakeholders, including donors and seek their views on the following.

Objectives and strategic intent of the One UN pilots and the coordinated or joint programme:

a) Are all agencies and the government well aware of the objectives and strategic intent?

b) Do all agencies and the government agree on what the objectives of the pilot are?

c) If not, what are the divergent views?

d) Do all partners fully subscribe to the objectives?

With respect to plan(s) for achieving the objectives of the pilot, the coordinated or joint programme, budget and relationship to the government and UN priorities:

a) Are all partners fully aware of the content and the implications?

b) Do all partners subscribe to the plans, budgets, etc.?

c) If any, what are the divergences of view?

One Leader:

a) How is this working in practice?

Participation and process:

a) What is the level of participation as viewed by each of the stakeholders, for their own participation and for the participation of others?

b) What is the level of satisfaction of each of the stakeholders with the system in place for development of concepts and plans and for decision making?

Support:

a) What is the level of satisfaction with the central UN system guidance, support with tools and methods, and monitoring and reporting requirements?

b) Individual agencies of the UN system?

c) How do concerned government departments view their roles in the pilot?

ANNEX 2
SCHEDULE OF MISSIONS FOR EVALUABILITY ASSESSMENTS

COUNTRY	DATES	UNEG MEMBERS INVOLVED
ALBANIA	30 January – 08 February 2008	UNCTAD
CAPE VERDE	15-25 April 2008	UNICEF UNODC
MOZAMBIQUE	23 January – 01 February 2008	ILO UNICEF
PAKISTAN	01-11 April 2008	UNESCO WHO
RWANDA	20-29 February 2008	UN-HABITAT UNICEF
TANZANIA	27 February – 07 March 2008	UNEP UNICEF
URUGUAY	25-29 February 2008	ILO UNIFEM
VIET NAM	29 October – 02 November 2007	UNICEF

ANNEX 3
SYNOPSIS OF THE EVALUABILITY ASSESSMENTS OF THE EIGHT PILOT INITIATIVES

This annex contains summaries of the evaluability assessments conducted in the eight pilot countries between November 2007 and May 2008. The description of the DaO initiative at the country level and the analysis refer to the situation that prevailed at the time of the country visits (see exact schedule of country visits in Annex 2).

DaO is a fast moving process in all pilot countries. New developments have taken place since the time of these visits, including improvements in the design of the One Programme and the establishment or improvement of M&E systems.

To the best of the authors' ability, these developments are captured in editorial footnotes. However, they could not be the subject of a new analysis.

A. ALBANIA

1. *National ownership and leadership:* The formulation of the One UN Programme in Albania has been largely driven by the government's intent to align and coordinate all external assistance in the country. Strong mechanisms have been developed for programme priority identification, agency involvement and fund allocation, such as the Joint Executive Committee composed of government and UN representatives. The One UN Programme has been finalized with considerable consultations with national stakeholders, including relevant line ministries, provincial government departments, and government-recognized organizations representing civil society. The resulting programmatic content of the One UN Programme can hence be considered as reflecting national priorities and needs.

2. *One Programme:* The One UN Programme, building on the UNDAF 2006-2010, has five priority outcome areas: more transparent and accountable governance; greater inclusive participation in public

policy and decision making; increased and more equitable access to quality basic services; regional development to reduce regional disparities; and environmentally sustainable development. The two main cross-cutting areas are gender equality and development of national capacity. An additional outcome area, environmentally sustainable development, was added in line with the government's priority needs. The One UN Programme responds to the highest priorities of the Government of Albania as reflected in the National Strategy for Development and Integration 2007-2013.[1]

3. The Delivering as One pilot initiative in Albania has been inclusive, as it involved nonresident agencies in the formulation of the One UN Programme. Two joint programmes are led by non-resident agencies (UNESCO and UNEP) and one non-resident agency (UNIFEM) has become resident. There are mechanisms in place to further the participation of various specialized and non-resident agencies.

4. *One Budgetary Framework/One Fund:* The One UN Budgetary Framework has been prepared and agency resources have been costed under each result area for each agency. On an annualized basis, the One UN Programme represents approximately USD 18.7 million. This accounts for almost 80 percent of average UN delivered funds per year in Albania during 2004-2006. The One UN Coherence Fund has also been established and funding has started to arrive. Detailed fund allocation criteria for the One UN Coherence Fund have been drafted and are presently under consideration of all participating agencies and the government.[2] There is still a funding gap remaining in the Coherence Fund to be filled. A fund-raising strategy is also under preparation.

5. *One Leader:* Despite much progress on the ground, the institutionalization of the One Leader principle remains a challenge in the DaO pilot initiative in Albania. The enhanced role of the RC in shaping and negotiating the One UN Programme on behalf of the UN system has been recognized and broadly accepted by all participating agencies and national partners.[3] However, this is seen as a result of the effective leadership skills of the current RC rather than a result of a clear delineation of institutional

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[1] The National Strategy for Development and Integration is to be formally adopted by February 2008.
[2] Editorial note: It should be mentioned that fund allocation criteria were approved by agencies, following this evaluability study.
[3] Stocktaking report of December 2007.

authority, which is yet to be formalized. Some critical agreements, such as the Terms of Reference for the RC and the code of conduct between the RC and UNCT, need to be formalized for the proper functioning of the DaO pilot under One Leader.[4] Continued and, if necessary intensified, support and guidance from Headquarters and UNDGO/UNDOCO are critical for the success of this endeavour.

6. *One UN House, common services and the reduction of transaction costs:* Although the One UN House initiative faced a setback for a reason outside the control of UNCT (the building offered was structurally unsuitable), the One House project was not considered urgent due to the proximity of UN offices in Tirana. More concrete progress has been made on common services. An Operations Management Team drawn from the staff of seven agencies has prepared an action plan for establishing Long-Term Agreements on behalf of UN organizations for nine common services. According to the plan, awards of long-term contracts shall be completed before May 2008. However, the full potential for common services could not be exploited due to incompatibilities among the procedures and systems in use across various UN organizations, which were prescribed by agency Headquarters and could not be altered at the country level. Contracts administration, human resources, and information technology software were identified as three 'big ticket' areas, where harmonized procedures could bring about greater savings if all UN organizations in the country could follow common procedures.

7. There is no formal system in place to capture the investment and transaction costs of implementing the DaO pilot initiative. There is a general agreement among UNCT members that, in the short term, the pilot has increased transaction costs within the system, mainly due to the increased and overlapping reporting requirements, such as for the One UN Programme and for individual agency programmes. Transaction costs in dealing with the government and other stakeholders are expected to decline. In this regard, proper documentation of the baseline and the trends, for example on the number of meetings with the government, would be needed for any objective assessment.

8. *National resources to support an evaluation:* Albania faces challenges in its national statistics and data collection systems. Several actors—donors, implementing partners and other civil society stakeholders—expressed concern that the national data from line ministries and the national statistics body may be inadequate to serve as indicators for measuring outcomes and development impacts. There are no formal networks of national M&E experts in Albania, though some sector-level expertise exists that could be used for specific evaluations with proper guidance.

9. *Overall evaluability assessment:* The DaO pilot initiative in Albania is making satisfactory progress on designing the four Ones. However, for the DaO pilot to be fully operational, some process elements need to be in place (see below). Once these elements are in place, the baseline situation for implementation of the pilot could be considered established and hence the process fully evaluable. Preferably, this should be accomplished by June 2008 in order to allow for one full year of implementation before process evaluation. It is also necessary to establish indicators for measuring the progress achieved and to monitor them thereon. The mission's assessments of the evaluability of results of the One UN Programme are as follows:

a) The strategic intent is clear but should be better articulated in a mission statement that can be easily referred to by all stakeholders to gauge the eventual strategic impact of the DaO pilot initiative. The value added of the UN system, particularly its comparative advantage compared to the work of the European Commission, has not been clearly articulated in terms of the following: demonstrated record of accomplishment leading to credibility in priority areas; recognized technical expertise; system and agency capacity; and geographical presence. Hence, an exercise to establish such comparative advantage in all relevant areas of the UN system would be required to make the pilot fully evaluable in this aspect.

b) The approach of enlisting participation of various agencies has been one of strategic focus. The increased inclusiveness, though not perfect, provides an opportunity to mobilize the diverse expertise within the UN system, and there are

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[4] Editorial note: Draft guidelines for these agreements have recently been received by RC-UNCT.

mechanisms to further the participation of various specialized and non-resident agencies. The evaluability in this respect is hence established, assuming that the processes of future reviews and consultations would be properly documented. For individual outcome areas and their components, the indicators are not yet completed and the evaluability in this regard can only be fully established once these have been formalized.[5]

c) The results evaluation should pay particular attention to the performance and impact of joint programmes in Albania, as they exemplify the benefits of the DaO pilot initiative at the programme level. The frameworks for mutual accountability and code of conduct for the RC and UNCT are yet to be formalized. These would also need to include the principles and procedures for implementation of the joint programmes. Therefore, the evaluability of joint programmes cannot be fully established except for outcome indicators at this stage.[6]

d) The One UN Programme M&E system, while considered indispensable due to the increased importance of joint programmes and the eventual alignment with the government's M&E system, is perceived as an additional reporting requirement. The results evaluation should examine the effect of multiple M&E frameworks imposed by agency internal requirements on the effective monitoring of the joint programmes.

e) The evaluability of development impact of the One UN Programme depends, to a good extent, on the availability and reliability of national data on development indicators. The programme is not yet fully evaluable in this respect, given the reported deficiencies in the national data system.

10. Overall, the DaO pilot initiative in Albania has created a framework and a mindset that enables the UN system to apply its various expertise in assisting the Government of Albania in achieving its development and integration objectives.

B. CAPE VERDE

1. *National ownership and leadership:* Cape Verde was one of two countries where the joint office model as described in the General Assembly 2004 TCPR resolution[7] was to be implemented.[8] The Office of the United Nations Funds and Programmes in Cape Verde, or the 'Joint Office', was officially launched in January 2006. Under this modality strongly favoured by the Government of Cape Verde, the four ExCom agencies (UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP) have been working as a Joint Office with One Common Country Programme Action Plan, One Budget (one set of business practices), One Representative, and sharing One Office.

2. In November 2006, the Government of Cape Verde reiterated its commitment to continue with UN reform by asking to become one of the eight pilot countries for implementing the Delivering as One UN concept.[9] The rationale behind the government's request to be a DaO pilot was the desire to have full access to the mandates, resources and expertise of all agencies of the UN system, including specialized agencies and other entities that are non resident in Cape Verde. Cape Verde's interest in attracting non-resident agencies was also linked to its graduation to the status of middle–income country.

3. The government's stocktaking report indicates its support and appreciation for the Joint Office. The mission's interviews with government national partners reveal strong satisfaction levels. Specifically, the majority of interviewees expressed how much easier it is to interface with only one representative for the four agencies. Some government national partners noted that procedures have become more flexible in accessing expertise from the United Nations when needed and formulating coherent annual work plans. Finally, the Joint Office has enabled the government to articulate needs and facilitate access to financial resources, as they understand better the operations of the UN funds and programmes.

4. *The Joint Office:* In addition to the high satisfaction levels of the government, the government has a proactive role in ensuring that the joint office model

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[5] Editorial note: Following this evaluability study, the revision of outcome areas and their components, as well as indicators and the means of their verification, linked to government systems and strategies, was completed in May 2008. Process indicators are expected to be finalized in September 2008.

[6] Editorial note: The code of conduct, termed 'Working Principles in Albania', was finalized in June and endorsed in July 2008.

[7] Resolution 59/250.

[8] The other country was the Maldives, where the initiative did not materialize due to the Indian Ocean Tsunami in December 2004.

[9] Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and Communities, 'Government Report Results of First Year of Delivering as One UN in Cape Verde', 2007, page 2.

continues to evolve. Given the clear leadership and ownership of the Government of Cape Verde—represented mainly by the central government but with participation of line ministries and of civil society—the inclusiveness in the joint office process is clearly visible.

5. The RC is formally accredited as Representative of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP in addition to his or her function as RC. The former RC actively represented all four ExCom agencies at official meetings and during occasions where a specific agency's mandate was promoted. National partners even noted an increased coherence in key messages distributed by the UN system, highlighted the stronger visibility of agency mandates, and confirmed that there were satisfactory results in various areas.

6. In a debate on the Memorandum of Understanding among ExCom agencies, on which there is no agreement,[10] the suggestion was made that the RC would be seconded in his or her task of representing the individual agencies by Assistant Representatives or Focal Points within the Joint Office, who would be selected among senior national staff of the Joint Office. The evaluability assessment mission endorses this recommendation. These officers could also play a major role in improving reporting on results as expected by ExCom agencies at regional and Headquarters levels and make technical and other resources of the different agencies available to Cape Verde.

7. Reporting on programmatic results was somewhat deficient, which resulted in insufficient communication to regional and global offices of ExCom agencies. This is partly linked to the incompatibility of the software ATLAS[11] with certain programme results, some staff's lack of familiarity with ATLAS, and lack of access to ATLAS in regional offices and Headquarters of ExCom agencies apart from UNDP. A solution may also be that, in addition to ATLAS and the Joint Office Annual Report, the national staff must provide other reports, but this would increase an already heavy workload.

8. Concern was expressed about how financial disbursements from the ExCom agencies were repeatedly late, resulting in numerous adverse effects. Specifically, the lack of predictability and punctuality of funding flows was noted by most government representatives and confirmed by Joint Office staff members. Late disbursements have placed a strain on the government's ability to perform (demanding a high workload in a short time period), caused some activities to be partially or completely disrupted, and sometimes led to smaller budgetary amounts than expected (and thus shorter project durations) due to the fact that programme budgets are estimated in U.S. dollars, which are devaluing consistently.

9. There are outstanding legal issues related to the Memorandum of Understanding of the Joint Office: a) an agreement of funding modalities and timing; and b) confirmation of the legality of national staff contracts, which affects employment benefits and staff perception and opportunities. The unclear legal status of the UN funds and programmes and unsigned Memorandum of Understanding raise concerns among the national staff about career prospects, learning opportunities, access to staff association networks, and most importantly, the legality of their labour contracts. While all have legal UNDP contracts, the mission underscores the need to ensure high quality human resource management in the Joint Office. This context has implications on staff ownership of DaO and therefore the evaluations scheduled in 2009-2010 and 2011.

10. The necessary support from RDT and the global level include solving issues such as conclusion of the Memorandum of Understanding, timely disbursements, technical support, and access to intranet and technical resources. The onus of improvement is at levels above the Joint Office. A clearly outlined form of institutionalized collaboration and regular internal communication from the RDT and Headquarters is warranted. As more attempts are made to involve non-resident and specialized agencies to support the DaO, the need to establish formal, institutional links and contact is impending.

11. *One Programme:* At present, two major documents exist for the UN system's programming in Cape Verde:

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[10] 'Memorandum of Understanding on the Establishment and Implementation of a Common Operating Platform in Cape Verde or 'Office of the UN Funds and Programmes in Cape Verde' for the WFP, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, and the United Nations Children's Fund', draft dated 29 January 2008, Article 3, Paragraph 1. Revised version based on comments from UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF and 'The Status–Memorandum of Understanding of Common Operating Platform in Cape Verde', Version, 29 January 2008.
[11] ATLAS is the UNDP enterprise resource planning and financial software system.

UNDAF 2006-2010 and the Joint Office Country Programme Action Plan for the same period. At a March 2007 meeting, the UNCT revisited UNDAF and concluded that it still remained valid, although it needed strengthening to better reflect government priorities and what support the UN system could offer. Also, the fact that most of the non-resident agencies were not part of the UNDAF needed to be addressed through the One Programme.

12. The One Programme encompasses the most strategic aspects that the UN system can contribute to the Government of Cape Verde's priorities for 2008-2010, which are related to its graduation from a Least Developed Country in January 2008 and goal to achieve the MDGs by 2015. The areas of response identified in the UNDAF include demo-cratic governance, poverty reduction, promotion of environmental sustainability, development of human capital and social welfare. Horizontal issues include gender, human rights, MDGs, capacity development, the fight against HIV/AIDS and communication for development.

13. The UNDAF was signed in July 2005 by six agencies—the four ExCom agencies, FAO and WHO. A total of 19 UN organizations[12] have expressed interest in participating in the One Programme. These 19 organizations and the Government of Cape Verde are involved in drafting 10 sub-pro-grammes (also called thematic clusters) of the One Programme. Each cluster consists of a number of projects and has a lead agency, coordinating the implementation and results-orientation of the related sub-programme, and supporting agencies.

14. The One Programme with its thematic pillars and sub-programmes reflects strategic thinking, respon-sive programming, and alignment with national priorities. The One Programme is responding to the request by the government to support Cape Verde in its transition phase from a Least Developed Country to a Middle Income Country, taking into account five key vulnerabilities identified by the gov-ernment in the following areas: security; economic and finance; health; cultural demographical; and social, ecological, agricultural and geographical.

15. *One Budgetary Framework/One Fund:* As the One Programme was still a draft at the time of the mission, there was only a draft estimate of the One Budgetary Framework and the One Fund. So far, there is no Terms of Reference for the One Fund (Coherence Fund), however, a fund acquisition strategy, 'resource mobilization strategy,'[13] has been drafted.

16. Currently, the One Budgetary Framework shows a total of USD 59.93 million,[14] with a pledged amount of USD 24.87 million. This leaves a funding gap of USD 30.10 million, or 54.81 percent.[15] The budget of the One Programme 2008-2010 is thus slightly higher than the budget of the UNDAF 2006-2010 (USD 50.22 million), while covering only 60 percent of the time period.

17. As it is planned to raise a significant part of funds through the One Fund, a transparent monitoring and reporting system should be put in place. Furthermore, linking disbursement to performance indicators appears crucial for future successful mobi-lization of donor funds.

18. *One Leader:* Currently, the RC is also Resident Representative of the four ExCom agencies in Cape Verde. The 'One Window' approach is appreciated, particularly by the central ministries, as it allows for fast dialogue with the UN system on strategic issues. However, some partners in line ministries felt that the role of the RC was assumed to an extent that well established contacts with the agencies at the operational and technical level had been cut off as a result of the One Window approach.

19. The One UN Steering Committee will be co-chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the UN RC. The membership of the One UN Steering Committee will be limited to eight representa-tives—three from the Government of Cape Verde central ministries, three from the UN organizations, one from the National Association of Cape Verdian Municipalities, and one from civil society.

20. The line ministries are not represented in the Steering Committee. The Joint Office, UNIDO and WHO have proposed creating technical sub-com-mittees according to the sub-programmes of the One Programme, in which the line ministries will be

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[12] FAO, ILO, IOM, ITU, UNAIDS, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNFPA, UNEP, UNESCO, UN-HABITAT, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNIFEM, UNOCHA, UNODC, WFP and WHO.
[13] 'One Programme Strategy for Resource Mobilization 2007-2010', draft for discussion, 24 September 2007.
[14] This amount does not yet include the budget for outcome 3 of the thematic axis human capital and social protection due to unavailability of data.
[15] 'One Budgetary Framework Cape Verde', document provided by Joint Office, 25 April 2008.

represented. Whereas the Steering Committee keeps a political and strategic role, the thematic groups should be of *ad hoc* nature, on the initiative either of the government or of the UN system. The responsibility for the participation should be at the level of directors of the concerned ministries. The General Director for Planning and International Cooperation would be in charge for the organization of those meetings on the government side.

21. For the implementation phase of DaO, the inclusiveness of agencies will depend greatly on the mechanism defined, both for finalizing the formulation of the projects contributing to the achievement of the outputs of each of the 10 thematic clusters and for their implementation. In this regard, the role of the 'lead agencies' of these projects to fostering participation of the 'associated' agencies will be significant.

22. *One UN House, common services and the reduction of transaction costs:* The One Office, (a common UN House for resident agencies), had been set up well before the creation of the Joint Office.

23. A major challenge for the One Office is how to align the different business systems— financial reporting, monitoring and administrative systems—of the UN organizations. Interviewees stated that there is still no harmonization in several procedures—such as budget framework, management and financial reporting, monitoring systems—or they do not have open access. The ATLAS system (used by UNDP and UNFPA) is currently used as a common business and financial reporting system. Although training has been conducted, there is need for follow-up training.

24. The Headquarters level plays an important role in the successful implementation of the One Office and DaO process at the country level. Harmonization of procedures at Headquarters level is an indicator for true commitment to the DaO approach of the UN system.[16]

25. It has been assumed that the shift to the Joint Office (One Office/One UN House) will automatically translate into reduced operational cost. However, little

data has been made available to prove this assumption. The assessment team has tried to identify the main building blocks of operational cost in the case of Cape Verde.

26. The first and most obvious block is salaries for international staff. By cutting the four international positions of country directors of the ExCom agencies, the majority of existing international positions were abolished when the Joint Office was created. This led to a reduction of international staff expenditures from 2005 to 2006 of USD 493,693[17] or 61 percent. However, the financial resources saved by this transaction cannot be allocated by the Joint Office for other purposes, such as programming.[18] The international staff positions are not removed from the UN system but have been most likely shifted to similar positions in the region.

27. In real terms, the general operational expenditures have decreased between 2005 and 2006 by USD 33,784 or 7 percent. Overall expenditures have decreased by 30 percent between 2005 and 2006.[19] As criteria for a future evaluation, the overhead cost (equal to operational cost in relation to programme cost) should be introduced as an indicator for efficiency.

28. At the time of the mission, no concrete analysis of transaction costs related to expanding the joint office approach to the level of DaO in Cape Verde was available. Thus it is not possible to anticipate what impact the DaO process will have on future expenditures in Cape Verde. High investment cost might occur in the beginning. However, costs might decrease once the system with joint programming, joint reporting, and joint M&E is fully established. These developments should be recorded to allow for an evidence-based analysis.

29. *One Communication strategy:* Currently, the Joint Office has a website (www.un.cv), written primarily in French, where the aims of the Joint Office and the basic components of Delivering as One are posted. Other products for dissemination (such as calendars) have also been developed. The challenges stakeholders mentioned include maintaining the visibility

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[16] As the Foreign Minister of Cape Verde phrased it, "the counter may have changed but not the storage rooms."

[17] From USD 809,100 in 2005 to USD 315,407 in 2006. In 2007, expenditures for national and international staff have again increased. This might be partly explained by the USD exchange rate. Source: Management Budget and Expenditures for the years 2005 and 2006, Joint Office Cape Verde, and verbal information for 2007.

[18] It is one of the expectations of the Government of Cape Verde regarding the Joint Office that expenditures saved by the process can be reallocated to the programming budget.

[19] Management Budget and Expenditures for the years 2005 and 2006, Joint Office Cape Verde, and verbal information for 2007.

of the mandates of each ExCom organization and generating financial contributions to support the communication strategy's broader aims, such as advocacy and social mobilization.

30. Communication should be given special attention in DaO, and a joint strategy on 'Communicating as One' should be developed. Without effective and strategic communication, both internal and external, progress and results of DaO will remain invisible.

31. *National resources to support an evaluation:* Results- and impact-oriented M&E systems are not commonly used in Cape Verde. The national human resources currently available for independent process and impact evaluations appear limited. The need for M&E training and capacity building has been expressed by almost all interviewed partners, as well at the government and joint office level.

32. The National Institute of Statistics is equipped to undertake surveys and analysis at a more aggregated level and for respective indicator development and/or verification. Within the Ministry of Finance, the Millennium Challenge Account[20] has recently started to establish an M&E system for the Account. No statement can be made about the quality of the system or its implementation.

33. *Overall evaluability assessment:* While there is consensus around an overall strategic intent of the Country Programme Action Plan and One Programme, this intent lacks an ideological foundation around which UN organizations could converge. The UNCT will need to develop a clear vision statement and strategy regarding the intent of the overall design and clearer criteria for the clusters. In this context, efforts in mainstreaming cross-cutting issues should be analysed as well. The following observations were made:

a) A RBM and M&E system with SMART indicators and outcomes is urgently needed. These will facilitate a substantive and high-quality programme implementation and evaluation process in 2009-2010. In addition, a coherent logic underlying the four thematic pillars is required. Without an M&E system and baselines, indicators and means of verification in place, it will be difficult for the process evaluation team at midterm to carry out their work.

b) An aspect often neglected is setting aside funds for the design, implementation and running of an M&E system for the DaO. Funds could be pledged, for example, through the transformation fund, as introducing M&E as good practice is part of change management. The latter could be included into budgets attached to outputs in the output and resources matrix as a percentage—3 to 5 percent of the respective programme budget is typically recommended.

c) The M&E system should be in line with national systems. A small working group on M&E should be established with the Government of Cape Verde, in particular with the entity in charge in the Ministry of Finance and the Institute for Statistics, to work jointly on the design. Agencies that have specialized M&E experience or are involved in the implementation of the joint projects should be involved. It is important that this approach has a buy-in from Headquarters of the involved agencies, as it is likely that increased effort and human resources will be required.

d) To put the M&E committee proposed in the One Programme Document in action, Terms of Reference, concrete milestones in development of intervention logic, and a monitoring system according to state-of-the-art practice are required.

e) A code of conduct document that sets out the role and responsibility of the RC *vis-á-vis* an enlarged UNCT and One Programme should be considered. The composition of the UNCT should also be reviewed. The core UNCT should comprise heads of UN organizations, both resident and non-resident, with decision-making power. In this core UNCT, the RC should continue to formally represent the ExCom agencies. An expanded UNCT, should, however, also comprise Assistant Representatives or Focal Points of the Joint Office for the discussion of technical matters.

f) The current non-resident agency Coordination Analyst is a national staff post classification. This may be insufficient to fulfil the role of negotiating technical and financial assistance between senior officials from the government and non-resident agencies. Given this challenge, the role of the non-resident agency Coordinator Analyst

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[20] The Millennium Challenge Account has allocated USD 110 million for a five-year compact for Cape Verde.

should be clarified and more prominent under the One Programme implementation process. Since the proportion of non-resident agency activities is expected to increase under the One Programme, there is also a greater need to institutionalize contact.

34. An economist or financial analyst with in-depth knowledge of the UN system should be involved with the evaluation team in 2009-2010. Indicators and evaluation criteria, such as ratio overhead cost to programme cost (management budget in relation to programme budget), should be introduced for the process evaluation of DaO.

C. MOZAMBIQUE

1. *National ownership and leadership:* The President and the Prime Minister of the Republic of Mozambique have expressed strong interest in and commitment to the success of the DaO initiative.[21] The Prime Minister is also a strong advocate for sharing experiences among all DaO pilot countries. An official government stocktaking report conducted in December 2007 confirmed that the design of the One UN Programme is in line with the government's defined priorities (PARPA II).[22] The official document summarizes preliminary outputs and outcomes of the One Programme, including the finalization of the Delivering as One Operational Plan of the UN System in Mozambique 2007-2009, the development of 11 joint programmes, a feasibility assessment of common premises, and a joint communications strategy.

2. The Government of Mozambique has created a Steering Committee for UNDAF, which is also responsible for advancing and overseeing the DaO pilot. It is composed of three central ministries: Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Finance, and Planning and Development. Line ministries and civil society organizations are only involved in *ad hoc* Steering Committees around the 11 joint programmes. The evaluability assessment mission that took place at the end of January 2008 observed that the institutional framework created for the UNDAF

and the DaO pilot was not sufficiently strong to translate the high-level commitment to the DaO initiative on the ground.

3. *One Programme:* DaO was initiated after the UNDAF 2007-2009 had been agreed upon. At the inception of DaO in January 2007, it was infeasible to adapt the entire UNDAF into One Programme. Since its creation, an impressive amount of work has gone into designing and making operational the DaO. The decisions and operational plans under each aim are well documented, which has aided in the assessment of its evaluability. The DaO in Mozambique is embodied by 11 joint programmes, 3 of which had been signed by the time of the mission in January 2008. More than 50 percent of the total funding requirement for the joint programmes had been met. The One Programme with its 11 joint programmes is considered 'transitional', until the next UNDAF is designed, which is not expected to commence before 2010 or 2011. The One Programme (as part of UNDAF) supports the government's strategies to reduce poverty and has four areas of strategic focus linking the joint programmes: policy and advocacy, normative and technical support, capacity development, and strengthening civil society partnerships. The coverage of the One Programme reflects roughly 25 percent of the UNDAF projections.

4. *One Budgetary Framework/One Fund:* Nearly all financial contributions have been consolidated, including core and un-earmarked funds (regular or other resources) for the UNDAF, including the joint programmes, as well as for change management in the One UN Budgetary Framework. The One Budgetary Framework provides an overview of total programme resource availability for the UNDAF, disaggregated by UN organization and UNDAF pillar.

5. In addition, a One Fund has been created for the funding of the 11 joint programmes and for change management. The One Fund includes resources for joint programmes and the budget for change management; information and communications technology; finance; procurement and administration; human resources; protocol; communicating as one;

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[21] The Prime Minister of Mozambique, Her Excellency Luisa Dias Diogo, served as the Co-Chair of the High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance, and the Environment. Letter to the UN Secretary-General, 13 November 2006.

[22] PARPA stands for *Plano de Acção para a Redução de Pobreza Absolute* or Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty.

common premises; the RC Office staff; and related activities such as retreats and meetings. The operational plan reflecting the One Fund had not been signed at the time of the mission (January 2008).[23]

6. The Terms of Reference for both budget instruments were formulated subsequent to a joint UN mission comprised of resource mobilization experts from several agencies.[24] The One Fund is currently administered by UNDP. It is expected that this arrangement will continue in the future. The Letter of Agreements and Memorandum of Understanding forms have been tailored to support fund administration. The administrative agent fee on incoming transfers amounts to 1 percent and the cost recovery fee is 7 percent. This arrangement may make the Fund unsustainable in the future, as the administrative cost is likely to exceed that rate. The transaction costs for the One Fund's administration should be monitored closely, so that cost analyses are accurate and available for future evaluation efforts.

7. A Joint Resource Mobilization Strategy has been developed to guide the UNCT to strategically leverage and raise funds for both the UNDAF and One Programme. It outlines the underlying principles for establishing and maintaining donor relations to support the Budgetary Framework and the One Fund, including actions required to secure emergency funding.

8. *One Leader:* The Terms of Reference and Core Management Principles for the UNCT have been developed, within which the scope, role, and functions of the RC and his or her relationship to the UNCT are explicitly defined.[25] The UN system in Mozambique comprises of eight resident agencies[26] with international in-country presence and a UNAIDS Secretariat. Twelve other agencies cover Mozambique either with the presence of national officers or from other countries, regional offices, or Headquarters.[27] In total, there are 23 agencies, including 9 resident and 14 non-resident (with variable physical presence).

9. Membership on the UNCT is restricted to international head representatives of UN organizations accredited in Mozambique. An additional eight UN organizations are invited every three months to participate in meetings as part of an extended version of the core UNCT. Specialized agencies and non-resident agencies that support Mozambique from their Headquarters, regional offices and/or through national officers, are explicitly excluded from UNCT membership. A sub-set of the UNCT responds to emergencies, and they form part of the Humanitarian Country Team.

10. The UNCT adopted a 'cabinet' model, where the RC and UNCT act as the equivalent of Prime Minister and UNCT members act as Ministers. The cabinet model creates a two-tier participation in the DaO initiative within the UN system, which excludes many UN organizations from major decision making that essentially takes place in the UNCT. The semantics of the 'One Leader' and the 'Prime Minister' may give rise to confusion with the leadership role of the government.

11. *One UN House, common services and the reduction of transaction costs:* A feasibility study was conducted assessing the viability of, and the conditions for, building a UN House for all UN organizations based in Maputo. Nine agencies and two additional entities are currently spread out over 11 different locations.[28] Calculations for total annual expenses for all agencies are estimated at USD 1,470,296.[29] Three sites were considered for UN House construction. The residential compound proposed by WFP appears to be most suitable. There is overall agreement about the benefits of a UN House, but some concerns about financial costs still exist, particularly if the UN organization presently has free or subsidized office rent (provided by the Government of Mozambique). Construction on the UN House will not commence before 2009 or 2010 and much of the more substantive changes envisioned are linked to its completion.

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[23] Spanish Funds have been pledged to contribute to the One Fund for USD 4 million but cannot be spent until the Government of Mozambique signs the Operational Plan.

[24] The mission took place in April 2007 and included representatives from the following agencies: UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIDO, and WFP.

[25] The Core Management Principles are equivalent to Code of Conduct for the UNCT.

[26] FAO, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, and WHO.

[27] IFAD, ILO, UNDESA, UNEP, UNIDO, UNIFEM, UN-HABITAT, UNHCHR, UNOCHA, UNODC, UNCDF and UNV. It is recognized that UNIDO has international representation, although considered a non-resident agency. The following agencies have National Officers: ILO, IFAD, UNCDF, UN-HABITAT, UNIDO, UNV and UNIFEM.

[28] This figure includes the Secretariat for UNAIDS, Resident Coordinator's Office, and the Field Security Office.

[29] The figure includes rent, security, electricity, water, telephone, Internet, maintenance, and fleet.

12. The Operational Management Team of the UNCT has begun to promote common services by aiming first for 'low hanging fruits', including common vehicle plates, medical services and security services outsourced to one sole provider, the establishment of a staff association, a common travel agency and banking system, one roster of translators/interpreters, standardized rates for consultants, and synchronized pay periods. The changes made so far have not required funding but have brought only marginal improvements in efficiencies, costs savings from which have been put back into programming. All agencies have also initiated the adoption of a Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers to Implementing Partners as well as electronic bank transfers.

13. A feasibility study for information and communications technology was conducted "to achieve maximum impact in cost reduction, harmonization of procedures, simplification of processes, and increased effectiveness and efficiency of ICT overall."[30] The study establishes the parameters for expected one-time investments and operational costs for existing and new common services, such as a radio-room, information technology networks and data connectivity.[31] A proposal was developed from the feasibility study that outlines a common budget, cost sharing parameters and estimated savings. Longer range planning is suggested that focuses on allocating resources purposively to fulfil all future resource requirements (in management, processes, technology, structures and instruments).

14. Through five working groups,[32] the Operational Management Team tracks current annual expenses and incurred and projected investment costs. Since the changes made thus far have not borne any costs, investment and transaction cost analyses have not yet been launched. However, when funding becomes available to harmonize finance, human resources, information and communications technology, and procurement systems, it will be expected that all costs associated with instituting the change (investment costs) and maintaining the current systems until the new system is fully integrated (transaction costs) are documented and accounted for. In addition, rough estimates of the benefits of using the new system (savings) should be calculated. These main elements should facilitate some cost-savings analyses in future evaluation efforts, though the form and time-frame of larger scale institutional change is not yet articulated and much of what is under consideration remains contingent on factors outside of UNCT control.

15. *One Communication strategy:* The Communication Working Group completed its Terms of Reference. It primarily communicates the vision and results of DaO through a newsletter and other communication products. Creating a platform through which to strategically communicate changes and achievements is innovative, but greater emphasis should be placed on promoting exchange among UN organizations,[33] between the United Nations and donors, and between the United Nations and national partners in specific areas that would allow for a more meaningful process evaluation in the future. There is no evidence for capacity development of the UN system with national partners concerning communication strategies related to the DaO. There is room for improvement as to how national ownership and leadership in the DaO initiative is reflected in the One UN communication strategy.

16. *National resources to support an evaluation:* The mission identified a consulting firm capable of undertaking the future process evaluation and one evaluation consultant referred by the National Statistics Institute. However, more options will be needed.

17. *Overall evaluability assessment:* The DaO pilot in Mozambique has taken a pragmatic approach, given its introduction mid-course during an ongoing UNDAF. There is compelling evidence of the high level of effort and degree of commitment among UN staff supporting the DaO initiative. The mission's findings on the evaluability of the DaO include the following:

    a) There is room for improvement in the overall programme design of the DaO. Beyond the four

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[30] Information and Communications Technology Support to Delivering as One UN Initiative Mozambique: Draft Implementation Plan.
[31] This study considered emergency related requirements.
[32] Working groups focus on the following themes: finance, human resources, information and communications technology, procurement, and protocol (added later).
[33] Additional Town Hall meetings developed for UN organization exchange would broaden support for and understanding of DaO.

focus areas related to the national planning priorities that it shares with the UNDAF, the One Programme does not have a common focus and cohesive design. It lacks a cohesive vision statement expressing a common purpose, substance and approach of the UN contribution based on its comparative advantage. The strategic focus areas have been operationalized as approval criteria for joint programme designs, which will be the only units of account that will be fully evaluable. It is difficult to understand the rationale for the selection of the 11 joint programmes. In a possible future evaluation, it would have to be demonstrated to what extent these joint programmes are more relevant and more efficient than projects and programmes implemented outside the One UN Programme. There are not yet benchmarks for such an evaluation.

b) A concept note outlines the basic provisions related to the M&E of the UN system reform, which includes core success factors against which to measure administrative and operational change management. An annex details core success factors defined along the four Ones, plus One (Communication), and six methods have been identified to address when and how often data will be collected to measure the degree to which the One UN Programme is performing efficiently. The core success factors selected reflect the basic parameters against which to monitor and evaluate change management. The current draft document draws heavily on UN internal aspects and sets measurement largely based on the perceptions of UNCT members as to how well processes are working. The framework, which is still under development, does not yet include monitoring indicators addressing longer term targets and specific process milestones to be achieved over designated time-frames, nor does it anticipate the need for more objective, trend-oriented data to capture how changes are taking shape across the various UN organizations. Given the importance of improving processes for external government and civil society partners, M&E indicators capturing these dimensions deserve inclusion.

c) This approach is juxtaposed against the M&E frameworks set up within each of the 11 joint programmes, which draw from the Country Programme Action Plans performance frameworks but rebundle indicators and performance targets according to joint programme designs. Currently, each joint programme is designated to undergo an independent evaluation, each of which is to be shaped according to the line ministries involved in it. As such, they are designated as 'sectoral evaluations'. It is not clear how the rebundling of joint programme results frameworks will be determined for future evaluations. Annual progress reviews of joint programmes are to be encompassed in the broader UNDAF annual reviews. These overlapping M&E frameworks and plans need further rationalization to arrive at a consolidated approach that focuses the results for which the DaO can be held accountable. Finally, with less than half of joint programmes approved by the government as of January 2008, and approximately half of the total resources in place for implementation, the basis upon which to gauge progress and results remains unclear. There is also a need to balance the inordinate amount of data that can assist in determining if and how the DaO is more relevant and efficient as compared to the prior situation.

d) There has been significant progress in realizing the four dimensions of DaO—One Programme, One Budget, One Office, and One Leader. In fact, a fifth dimension, Communicating as One, has also been created. But the absence of specific end targets, with time-frames and interim progress markers, could limit the scope and usefulness of a process evaluation in 2009. The RC Office should fill this gap and incorporate various contingencies to address risk factors. In addition, the existing draft indicators for monitoring progress should draw on both objective and subjective parameters and include an external dimension to capture process effects on others outside UN Mozambique. The initial stages of business practices—such as human resources, resource mobilization, communication and information technology—also deserve documentation, and data should be compiled to provide trend analysis over the three-year period.

e) To address capacity and awareness issues, there is the need to articulate a more deliberate strategy and outcome for strengthening and institutionalizing national ownership and leadership. One

component of this may be a more formal DaO Steering Committee that better links to line ministries and civil society organizations, and regularly communicates with donors. Although the DaO processes have taken to heart the goal of inclusiveness, and all UN organizations are able to participate in many of the discussions and decisions, there may be a need to revisit institutional arrangements and consider options for a more expanded UNCT that can regularize more means of incorporating the contributions of specialized agencies and non-resident agencies.

18. In Mozambique, forthcoming evaluation efforts will have to consider the fact that the country is particularly prone to natural disasters, especially floods and drought. The UN system plays a major role in disaster risk reduction and emergency response. These dimensions will have to be considered in a forthcoming evaluation of the DaO.

D. PAKISTAN

1. *National ownership and leadership:* The Government of Pakistan has demonstrated significant leadership and commitment to proactively engage in the DaO pilot process. National ownership of the UN pilot is primarily and formally embodied in the High-level Committee on UN Reform, chaired by the Minister for Economic Affairs and Statistics, which provides overall guidance to the pilot process in terms of policy, programme design, resource mobilization and M&E. The Economic Affairs Division has engaged in the process on a regular basis through interaction with the RC Office.

2. Line ministries have demonstrated differing levels of knowledge and engagement in the process, presumably due to the pending establishment of the Joint Programme Steering Committees as instruments for close interaction between UN organizations and the Government of Pakistan. Most line ministries maintain the same level of individual agency contact as prior to the launch of the pilot. The reform is not seen as changing the mandates of the UN organizations, but it is expected that the joint programmes will be useful in capitalizing on the strength of each agency, rendering delivery modalities more efficient and increasing business volume. It is furthermore the expectation that government strength in various sectors would be amalgamated with the UN

reform through forging a stronger partnership. In addition, the Government of Pakistan would expect the UN reform to be a role model for harmonization efforts in line with Paris Declaration principles.

3. *One Programme:* The strategic intent of the pilot is to "deliver as one so as to better support human development," using the High-level Panel Report as an anchoring document for pursuing the four Ones (One Programme, One Leader, One Budgetary Framework and One Fund, with the occasional addition of a fifth One, One Business Practice and Common Office). The One Programme is the central pillar of the reform, with the others supporting the formulation and implementation of the One Programme to allow the UN system to practice its role as adviser, convener, advocate and provider of technical services in line with a number of international conventions.

4. The One Programme, which is undergoing finalization, will be made up of five joint programmes being developed along five specific thematic areas and four cross-cutting themes. The five thematic areas include: education; health and population; disaster risk management; agriculture, rural development and poverty; and environment. The four cross-cutting issues include civil society participation, gender, human rights, and refugees.

5. The strategic decision to create joint programmes was influenced by expectations that joint programming and activities would be the relevant instruments for achieving development effectiveness, and 'Delivering as One', while also being relevant for efficient resource mobilization. Furthermore, joint programming was already a *modus operandi* for UN organizations and other organizations in Pakistan, exemplified in the 2005 Kashmir earthquake and 2007 floods responses and in assisting the government in hosting the world's largest refugee caseload.

6. The strategic development of the joint programmes has fallen behind schedule. The joint programmes were expected to be launched in mid-March 2008. Delays were due to time needed to come to agreement on Terms of Reference for the UNCT and joint programme management structure and changes in staff in the Government of Pakistan. None of the five joint programme documents have been finalized and optimistic forecasts for their completion

are three to six months from April 2008. Work is progressing to refine the objectives, indicators and outputs. The draft logframes are being vetted with provincial actors in order to agree upon geographic locations for implementation of the programmes. This process is expected to take at least two months. On the positive side, this timing may match well with the Government of Pakistan's readiness, given the new government formation process.

7. The approaches for addressing the cross-cutting issues, formerly vague to many, were clarified through the development of guidance, method-ology and checklists that allowed the issues to be discussed among agencies. The development of the gender theme, for example, included six workshops for UN staff and partners facilitated by the gender adviser of the RC Office. Attention has been paid to the lessons and good practices gathered as well as the coordination structures put into place in the response and recovery programmes assisting people affected by the Kashmir earthquake of 2005 and the Balochistan floods and cyclone disaster of 2007.

8. *One Budgetary Framework/One Fund:* Progress on consensus regarding the One Fund has been significant, and a signed agreement is expected to be reached in the near future. The One Fund, called the One MDG Fund,[34] will be managed by UNDP as the Administrative Agent. A major sticking point seems to be the commitment of agencies to pool 60 percent (reduced from an earlier target of 80 percent) of their funds. However, there are indications that for some agencies, some 'stand alone' programmes will also be managed jointly and include UN partners. A Terms of Reference has been produced for the One Budgetary Framework and a consultant will address part of it in the near future. Harmonized Approaches to Cash Transfers are not a priority as a UN reform tool in Pakistan.

9. *One Leader:* The RC position has been vacant for five months. This has highlighted issues in the percep-tion of the One Leader's role in the DaO. The new RC will take up his position in late April 2008. The One Leader concept has been interpreted as collec-tive leadership with consensual decision making by the UNCT. This approach has been further strength-ened under the acting RC. An issue for discussion has been whether the One Leader requires greater institutionalized authority to override agencies that stall decisions or face roadblocks from Headquarters. Some advocate for increased authority but others feel that too much RC authority will not serve the DaO, as consensus and gaining genuine agreement through team work, dialogue and compromise is critical to the sustainability of the arrangement

10. *One UN House, common services and the reduction of transaction cost:* The Operational Management Team is establishing a One Business Practice and is analysing both commonalities and constraints to achieving this objectives. The Terms of Reference for One UN Governing Structure are still under discus-sion. Progress has been realized, notably in some areas where Headquarters support is evident, such as in information technology and the pioneering by Pakistan of the One Common Directory. Little prog-ress has been made on the One Premise, although the Government of Pakistan has designated land for this purpose. Consensus has not yet been reached among agencies as to whether or not One Premise should be pursued, given the security situation in the country.

11. *One Communication strategy:* Communications has not been recognized as a dedicated 'One' in Pakistan. The UN Communications Group has devel-oped a strategy and a communications tool kit and has implemented many initiatives. Before-and-after surveys involving internal UN staff (The Impact of the Communications Interventions on UN Reform with the Internal UN Staff) were implemented with regard to the change management activities. They found that progress was made in imbedding the core concept of the UN reform.

12. *National resources to support an evaluation:* The evaluability assessment team was not in the position to identify specific evaluation groups or institutions in Pakistan that could be recommended for working with for future evaluations of the DaO in Pakistan. However, there are numerous qualified consultants who can be recruited to form a team. The gov-ernment and the UN M&E Network composed of focal persons from UN organizations should work together to consider individual consultants as well as university groups and other sources with evalua-tion expertise. It is important to identify the national evaluators as soon as possible.

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[34] Some agencies felt that the MDG Fund would not conceptually comprise their mandates.

13. *Overall evaluability assessment:* The UNCT has made major progress in developing the One UN in Pakistan. There is compelling evidence of the high level of effort and degree of commitment among UN staff in supporting the DaO as well as among government, civil society representatives, and donors who are following the progress of the pilot. The following comments can be made concerning the evaluability of the pilot:

a) The strategic intent as expressed in the vision statement "to deliver as one so as to support human development" is largely understood and shared among the government, development partners and UNCT stakeholders. There are, however, several interpretations of this rather general statement. Revisiting the vision statement could take place in relation to the finalization of the One Programme and the M&E documents.

b) The DaO draws on the work that went into the UNDAF and its relationship with the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper I, Vision 2030 and the Medium Term Development Framework. Commendable efforts have been put into making situations and SWOT (**s**trengths, **w**eaknesses, **o**pportunities, and **t**hreats) analyses and updating the relevance of the UNDAF framework in view of changing national priorities. A flexible mechanism for adjustment is required as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper II is being finalized and to ensure that the UN system stays oriented towards national needs in the context of the development cooperation environment, including commitment to the Paris Declaration principles.

c) The degree to which various components of the DaO are aligned with national priorities and systems will inform future evaluations' inquiries into relevance, effectiveness and coherence. Part of the challenge in this respect is linked to the need for greater government participation in planning, especially to engage provincial and district level government in coordination of joint programme activities. Effort could also be put into engaging a larger group of relevant civil society organizations, including the private sector.

d) A systematic mechanism for addressing the respective joint programming issues does not seem to have been established. Thus, endorsement of the design has mainly been at the thematic level and has not comprised detailed joint programme substance and design issues and participation of actors. A mechanism for taking joint programming activities to the higher One Programme level remains a challenge. The approaches for addressing the cross-cutting issues were clarified through development of guidance and methodology. The M&E framework is still in draft and will require strengthening of outcomes and indicators. The UNCT should pay particular attention to designating clear lines of responsibility for the monitoring of outcome level indicators. Complementarities between existing national, provincial and district-level monitoring systems will need to be identified to avoid duplication of efforts.

14. Adequate documentation exists to support the strategic development and to follow the discussions that have resulted in consensus building regarding the four Ones. However, a number of core documents are not yet finalized and the joint programmes are not likely to be finalized for at least several months. The One Leader is not yet in place and the development of his role will also likely take some months. The One Fund is established, but the One Budgetary Framework is still under construction as is the One Premise. Given all this work and the need to negotiate among 20 organizations, an evaluability update needs to occur in approximately six months, or whenever the RC Office is ready. This may take place in the form of a document review and some key informant interviews.

E. RWANDA

1. *National ownership and leadership:* The DaO initiative has high-level government ownership, support and commitment. The One UN Steering Committee, which plays a key role in guiding the overall design and implementation of DaO in Rwanda, is chaired by the Minister of Finance and Economic Planning. The Committee also includes representatives of three other key ministries, three development partner representatives (two bilaterals and one multilateral), two UNDG ExCom representatives, two UN specialized agency representatives, and the UN RC. The members of the Steering Committee represent their institutions at a high level and are responsible for communicating and sharing information with their respective stakeholder

groups. It was not clear to the mission how civil society, including non-governmental organizations, private sector and media are represented.

2. The UNDAF 2008-2012 is based on Rwanda's second Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (2008-2012) and Rwanda's long-term development vision as set out in Vision 2020. The UNCT engaged in a participatory planning process under one planning framework to operationalize UNDAF into a Common Operational Document. Both UNDAF and the Common Operational Document provide an integrated UN response to national needs and priorities. The second Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper is organized around 10 focus areas: decentralization, citizen participation and accountability; justice, reconciliation, law and order; private sector; health, population, HIV/AIDS and nutrition; education; lands, environment, forestry and mining; social protection; agriculture, animal resources and employment promotion; infrastructures; and security. Under UNDAF and the Common Operational Document, the 10 focus areas are further organized into five strategic thematic areas: governance; population, HIV/AIDS, and health; education; environment; and sustainable growth and social protection. It is clear that both the UNDAF and the Common Operational Document are aligned with national priorities and planning at the results level.

3. *One Programme:* The preparation of the DaO pilot coincided with the preparation of the second UNDAF for 2008-2012. This provided the necessary programmatic coherence for the implementation of the One Programme model. The second UNDAF is based on and aligned with the second Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. The Rwanda pilot synchronizes the new UNDAF programming cycle with the national poverty reduction strategy, thus providing an enabling environment for programmatic coherence. The UNDAF is operationalized through the Common Operational Document, also called the One Programme.[35] DaO in Rwanda does not mean a merging of UN organizations into a single entity. Instead, UN organizations work closely and jointly to achieve the four Ones.

4. There are 26 UN organizations involved in the pilot. These include 10 resident agencies (FAO, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNECA ,UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIFEM, WFP and WHO); 4 agencies represented by UNDP (UNCDF, UN-HABITAT, UNIDO and UNV); 8 non-resident agencies (IFAD, ILO, UNEP, UNESCO, UNCTAD, ITC, OHCHR and ITU); and 4 UN entities that are not part of DaO, but are part of the UNCT (IMF, World Bank, ICTR and MONUC).

5. Progress has been made to support the DaO concept with a strategic framework. The development of the UNDAF and Common Operational Document to drive the DaO pilot has been completed. The prioritization of UNDAF was agreed upon by the UNCT, the Government of Rwanda and other development partners. The documents have been signed off by the government and UNCT, and are ready for implementation. Joint programming is reinforced through common monitoring and reporting mechanisms coordinated by UNDAF theme groups and linked to resource allocation. Gender is a pronounced cross-cutting theme in the One Programme. Partners perceive implementation of DaO as a great improvement in programme-based planning that helps minimize duplication and fragmentation of UN activities.

6. Implementation of DaO is beginning. The Consolidated Annual Work Plans are being finalized and allocation of resources to UN organizations from the One Fund is to be done in March 2008. A skills mapping exercise to look at capacity needs to implement the One Programme is expected to start soon. A change management workshop will be held in April 2008.

7. *One Budgetary Framework/One Fund:* While the Government of Rwanda promotes budget support as the preferred aid modality, it accepts the agreed budgetary framework for primarily project aid, which should be strategic and less fragmented than in the past. The One Budgetary Framework and the One Fund in Rwanda are linked to the One Programme and are operational. The current budget amounts to an estimated USD 487.60 million for the five-year period, including USD 155.74 for core resources, USD 177.40 for vertical funds[36] and USD 155.46 to be mobilized for the One Fund. Approximately 50 percent of funds required for 2008 have been mobilized. As of end February 2008, funds have been received from Norway (approximately USD 3.6 million for three years), Spain (USD 4 million

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[35] Common Operational Document and One Programme are used as synonyms.
[36] For example thematic trust funds, National Commitees.

a year until 2010), and the U.K. Department for International Development (USD 15 million for 2008-2012). The Netherlands, Sweden and Canadian International Development Agency have shown a concrete interest in contributing to the One Fund.

8. When compared to earlier disbursements of the UN system in Rwanda, the total budget has almost doubled (from approximately USD 50 million in 2006 to USD 98 million per year). Some agencies, including UN-HABITAT and UNIDO, have considerably increased their budgets compared to real disbursement in earlier years and are seeking a relatively large percentage of total resources from the One Fund (approximately 70 percent of their individual budgets). UN-HABITAT argues that implementation of its recent UN-HABITAT Medium Term Strategic Institutional Plan, approved by its Governing Council in April 2007, calls for more focus on country-level programming and that this has had implications on the new programming and budgets. In terms of corrective measures, the planned skills mapping exercise will help in allocation of resources of the One Fund based on performance.

9. Financing is one of the sensitive issues addressed by the DaO pilot process in Rwanda. According to the Common Operational Document, the UNCT works together to mobilize resources for the One Fund under the leadership of the RC, whereby strong preference is given to un-earmarked contributions. There are risks associated with this modality. First, if the UN system is not able to mobilize sufficient resources to meet the funding gap, agencies may not see the benefit of working through the common framework and may resort to independent resource mobilization, thereby undermining the coherence of the One Programme. Second, although the Common Operational Document includes detailed guidelines on the process, frequency and criteria for the allocation of resources of the One Fund, if not strictly applied, donors may lose faith in the common system and revert to the traditional funding mechanisms.

10. The first allocation of funds from the One Fund is expected to take place in March 2008. Participating agencies have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with UNDP as administrative agent to manage the One Fund. It is not clear whether UNDP has the human resources necessary to do so

in terms of volume and level of responsibility, given a budget of approximately USD 155 million.

11. *One Leader:* The UNCT in Rwanda has made progress in the design and implementation of the One Leader concept. The former RC was recognized by all heads of agencies as the team leader. He had the authority to negotiate the One Programme with the Government of Rwanda. Regarding a clear accountability framework and effective oversight mechanisms, the Code of Conduct elaborates clearly the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of the RC and members of the UNCT. UNDP has recently established a firewall between its role as manager of the RC system and its country programme by appointing a UNDP Country Director.

12. Presently, the oversight of DaO in Rwanda is the One UN Steering Committee. Among other things, the Steering Committee ensures that stakeholders arrive at a common understanding of the One UN concept and agree on a road map for its implementation. It also serves as a forum for considering the issues that may impede the implementation of DaO.

13. Regarding strengthened capacity, the RC Office presently has four staff members, two coordination officers, one communication officer and one human rights officer. A senior policy adviser, an M&E specialist and a coordination officer for Operations Management are to be recruited shortly. The funding of RC Office staff, infrastructure and activities typically relies heavily on external sources and is regarded as unsustainable in the long term.

14. *One UN House, common services and the reduction of transaction costs:* Prior to the DaO pilot, the Operations Management Team and the UNCT took important steps to establish some common services. A plan for a joint office in Rwanda was launched in 2006. With the DaO initiative, the UNCT has reconfirmed its commitment to move towards common services in order to promote a more unified presence at the country level, reduce costs, and build closer ties among UN staff. The plan also includes building new premises in Kigali for all UN organizations. The One Office is anticipated in the long term to lower transaction costs by harmonizing procedures and facilitating integration.

15. The Operations Management Team is responsible for the One Office aspect of DaO. The Team is also responsible for implementing the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers to government

partners, and exploring possibilities for extending Harmonized Cash Transfer modalities to non-UNDG ExCom members. In terms of the One House, the Government of Rwanda, at the request of the UNCT, has allocated a plot of land to build a One UN House that would accommodate most of the UN organizations working in Rwanda under one roof. The UNDG Working Group on Common Premises has suggested that a feasibility study be undertaken in this regard.

16. The common services aspect of DaO is well documented. However, the mission was not able to assess gains, as the design process is ongoing. Human resource management systems, reporting systems and information technology platforms are still agency specific. Progress has been made, however there are still barriers. More progress could be made if some corporate inter-agency commitments, agreements and support are reached at the Headquarters level. This is especially true in the areas of standardizing and harmonizing information technology, financial and accounting procedures, human resources management and procurement.

17. *One Communication strategy:* In addition to the four Ones, a Communication Strategy has been developed to promote awareness and understanding of the reform process both internally and externally as well as ensuring that the UN speaks with 'One Voice' on key policy issues. The UN Communication Group had a workshop in September 2007 to decide on the contents of the strategy with the aim of assisting in prioritization, building synergies and guiding in every-day communication. The strategy was finalized in October 2007.

18. There is a need for more communication, especially to partners such as the media, who need to educate the public about DaO but are still unclear on the concept. Donors and governing bodies are another important target group for communicating country-level experiences. The UN Communications Group should strike a balance between explaining DaO and the substance of the UN work in the country. As time progresses, it will become increasingly important to focus communication on what the UN delivers.

19. *National resources to support an evaluation:* The Government of Rwanda has recognized the need to establish national evaluation systems to promote understanding of evaluations, create an evaluation

culture and use evaluations to manage for results. The systems will also facilitate learning from experience to inform future programmes. Additionally, effective evaluation systems will promote accountability, transparency and good governance.

20. *Overall evaluability assessment:* UNCT has come a long way in designing a One Programme based on national priorities and comparative advantages of the UN organizations. UNCT has shown a high level of commitment to the DaO and functions under the slogan of 'UNity in Diversity', although not equally committed to by all UNCT members. Concerning the evaluability of the DaO in Rwanda, the mission came to the following conclusions:

a) The government, UNCT and development partners are clear and in consensus about the strategic intent of DaO, although the levels of commitment vary. The strategic intent is supported by a logical strategic framework. The UNDAF and Common Operational Document are aligned with national priorities, in particular the second Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and Vision 2020. The One Programme and the national poverty reduction strategy cover the same period, 2008-2012. However, some agencies have a two-year programming cycle, which complicates alignment of their programming with the five-year DaO programming cycle.

b) There has been an attempt to make the One Programme strategic, focused and results-oriented with clear outcomes. However, there is an array of activity indicators that will not assess the degree to which the intended outcomes will be achieved. There are several technical weaknesses that need to be addressed—including the use of good performance indicators, baselines and targets, data collection methods and the need for M&E systems—in order for meaningful evaluation of the DaO pilot at a later stage.

c) Several measures need to be taken at the country level: refining UNDAF, Common Operational Document and Country Action Plans for formulating SMART outcomes, indicators, baselines, targets, and strengthening M&E capacities and systems; providing further support to the government in achieving its development goals; and building national capacity in M&E aimed at strengthening accountability.

d) Other issues that need reflection include the following: creating a mechanism to ensure that the process remains demand driven *vis-à-vis* national needs; how to determine the 'right' agencies for participating and how 'inclusiveness' is to be handled; processes related to empowering the One Leader and the need for consensus seeking; how transaction costs will be reduced; and how the One UN is contributing to the implementation of the Paris Declaration principles.

21. Headquarters of UN organizations need to revisit delegation of authority to their respective country offices. Development partners should provide adequate and predictable funding for the pilot. Strengths and weaknesses of the pilot should be adequately documented.

F.   TANZANIA

1. *National ownership and leadership:* Tanzania requested to be a pilot country through the then Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, who is now the UN Deputy Secretary-General. The Government of Tanzania, particularly through the Ministry of Finance, the RC Office counterpart, values the opportunity to lead the process towards a One UN in Tanzania. Government staff expect the DaO benefits to include reduction in time spent in meetings, elimination of duplication, optimum use of funds for the benefit of the citizens, and enhanced use of government systems in line with Paris Declaration and Joint Assistance Strategy principles.

2. Some line ministries place great value on their traditional links with specialized agencies, which should not be lost when developing the One UN. They also emphasized that they would like to maintain direct access to UN resources for project activities that may not be considered priorities by central ministries in the national budget (including General Budget Support) or sector-wide approaches.

3. *One Programme:* The One Programme was created within the UNDAF and covers approximately 37 percent of the UNDAF projections. The One UN Programme was officially launched on 10 October 2007 and is a two-year (2007-2008) initiative aimed at delivering results in line with the UN system's comparative advantage. The Programme reflects the move 'upstream' to policy advisory services building on experience gained through community-based work. The Programme will also pay attention to the UN capacity development role in the area of disaster preparedness and the transitional issues to development that derive from continued support for humanitarian issues. The UNCT has agreed that humanitarian interventions *per se* will not be included in this first One UN Programme.

4. The One Programme covers six programmatic areas drawn from UNDAF 2007-2010, which are addressed through seven joint programmes.[37] The specific areas of interventions were chosen to facilitate the development and implementation of joint programmes. The joint programmes are the means by which joint work plans, joint budgets, common results, clear division of labour and shared accountability can be defined. As such, they require close collaboration between the participating agencies throughout the entire programming cycle.

5. Beyond 2008, the One Programme will expand to include a larger frame of joint programmatic activities and individual agency interventions that build on the achieved results of the first phase and the ongoing reprioritization of UN activities in the field. The vision is that, over time, the One Programme will replace the need for an UNDAF and individual agency country plans.

6. *One Budgetary Framework/One Fund:* The One Budgetary Framework was presented to the Joint Steering Committee in September 2007, covering the first 18-month implementation phase (from July 2007 to December 2008). The Budgetary Framework presents the total UN investment in Tanzania divided into UNDAF and non-UNDAF budgets.

7. In October 2007, all UN organizations signed the One Fund Memorandum of Understanding,[38] Letter of Agreement and the Terms of Reference, thus

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[37] Joint Programme 1 Wealth creation, employment and economic empowerment (ILO, UNDP, FAO, UNIDO, WFP, IFAD and UN-HABITAT); Joint Programme 2 Reduction of maternal and newborn mortality (UNFPA, WHO and UNICEF); Joint Programme 3 Support to national response to HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNDP); Joint Programme 4 Capacity strengthening for development management (UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA); Joint Programme 5 Capacity building support to Zanzibar (UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNESCO, WHO, FAO); Joint Programme 6.1 Managing transition from humanitarian assistance to sustainable development in northwestern Tanzania (UNHCR, UNESCO, UNDP, UNICEF, UNEP); Joint Programme 6.2 Strengthening national disaster preparedness and response capacity (WFP, UNICEF, UNDP, FAO).

[38] The Memorandum of Understanding was signed also by UNEP (a non-resident agency).

putting the One Fund in place. The Memorandum of Understanding establishes the role of the Managing Agent, appointed by each joint programme Working Group. The Managing Agent assumes full programmatic accountability for the results of the joint programme and is central in the management of resources: those that it executes directly, those that are transferred to national partners, those that are channelled to them through the Managing Agent, those that are allocated to participating UN organizations for their execution through technical assistance, and those that are disbursed to participating UN organizations upon instruction of the Managing Agents. Furthermore it was agreed that Managing Agents and participating UN organizations shall be entitled to deduct their indirect costs on contributions received in accordance with a 7 percent overhead formula.

8. The total funding requirement of the One Programme is estimated to be USD 74 million (37 percent of UNDAF funding requirements): USD 71.3 million for the implementation of the joint programmes; USD 2 million for the Joint Work Plan in the areas of operations and change management in order to harmonize operational processes, procedures and systems among the various UN organizations; and USD 700,000 for the One UN Communication Strategy. While USD 44 million is already available from the existing funding arrangements, USD 30 million needs to be covered by the One UN Fund.

9. Resource mobilization has been successful. The funding gap of USD 30 million has been fully covered by resources provided by Canada, Finland, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain and the United Kingdom. The first allocation of resources from the One Fund has been agreed upon by the UN Country Management Team.[39]

10. *One Leader:* The RC is the One Leader, responsible for ensuring implementation of the One Programme, and ensuring effective and coherent dialogue with partners and the wider public. Significant progress has been made in the past year to support the capacity of the RC to adapt to the increased workload and responsibilities. A Senior Adviser, an Operations Adviser and a Communication Adviser have been recruited, and a Non-Resident Agency Coordination

Analyst was appointed in October 2007. Following a request from UN resident agencies for a firewall between the RC function and the function of the Resident Representative of UNDP, a UNDP Country Director was appointed and a delegation of authority signed.

11. The RC provides strategic guidance to the One Programme and is accountable for overall management and utilization of the One Fund. The RC shares annual consolidated financial and narrative progress reports with the participating UN organizations, the Joint Steering Committee and the donors. The RC liaises with the Ministry of Finance at the level of the Deputy Permanent Secretary. The role of the RC is accepted by stakeholders and the strong leadership currently provided has been a significant asset to the DaO. Since UN Country Management Team members are not obligated to comply with the DaO, the RC's influence is seen as critical for motivating and providing leadership to the group.

12. A Code of Conduct was developed for the UN Country Management Team and approved in January 2008. The Code reinforces the RC's role as the main interlocutor for all common matters with the government. Country Representatives of the individual agencies will continue to collaborate with the government in line with their mandates through the sector ministries and other stakeholders.

13. *One UN House, common services and the reduction of transaction costs:* The Operational Management Team is moving expeditiously to create the One Office in Zanzibar and in the northwestern regions and rationalize finances, procurement and information technology by the end of 2008. The occupation of the government-designated joint office in Zanzibar was delayed while finding solutions to overcome some agencies' reticence to move. These concerns have now been addressed through discussions, and the One Office in Zanzibar will soon become reality. The experience of establishing the Zanzibar office is expected to inform exploration of options for the One Office on the mainland.

14. Tanzania is starting to pilot the concept of functional clustering. The focus is on moving towards co-location of resource centres, sharing procurement practices, and creating emergency coordination groups. Discussions on common

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[39] The UN Country Management Team is a local variation of the UNCT.

information technology solutions, human resources exchanges, and increased use of joint contracting for security, travel and printing are ongoing. The RC Office is under significant pressure from donors and the government who have high expectations regarding enhancing efficiency and increasing use of government systems.

15. It is difficult to measure increases in efficiency. Savings may be measured in monetary costs, but the transaction costs in terms of staff time and extra transport may increase. Opportunity costs of RC Office staff time spent on the DaO are difficult to assess. For example, the one premises for common services will result in savings. The transaction costs to reduce these amounts are being covered internally by the UN, but they should be subtracted against the savings.

16. The objectives for reducing costs suffer from a lack of adequate understanding of 'cost' in the UN system. There is a need to demonstrate what areas could benefit from economies of scale and what areas could produce monetary savings by pooling resources and services. The RC Office may require special assistance for cost accounting. A Task Force has been working to define the parameters for calculating transaction costs, which will facilitate reporting.

17. *One Communication strategy:* The UN Communications Group has improved communications through advocacy messages to the public and private sector and outreach to media. Emphasis has been on partnerships with Tanzanian entities, including training the media about UN technical services so that it is better equipped to report on them. Tanzanians seem motivated to be involved, for example, the UN Youth Clubs are very active.

18. The Communications Group has conducted surveys including an extensive Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice Survey and is working on putting the results into practical application. Emphasis needs to be placed on UN staff skills to enable them to portray the UN to the media. This will require more targeted briefings.

19. Government staff, particularly in regions and districts, also require more orientation. It is critical to the success of the DaO that the government has the capacity to take responsibility for disseminating messages to its staff and the public regarding UN reform and services and measuring the behaviour changes at all levels.

20. *National resources to support an evaluation:* The government, in consultation with the UN RBM Task Force, has agreed to consider several national groups or individuals as resources for future evaluation. Possible groups include the Economic and Social Research Foundation, the Economic Research Bureau, ESRI Training and Education (a global group), the newly formed National Evaluation Association, and independent national consultants who were formerly with the Independent Monitoring Group.

21. *Overall evaluability assessment:* The UN Country Management Team, under the leadership of the RC and supported by the RC Office, has made headway in realizing the One UN in Tanzania. There is a high level of effort and degree of commitment among UN staff in supporting the DaO as well as among government and civil society representatives. The basic management structures and mechanisms have been put in place and steps taken to further build capacity to 'Deliver as One' in implementing the five Ones. As far as the evaluability of the pilot is concerned, the mission came to the following conclusions:

a) The strategic intent is largely understood and shared among the government, development partners, and UN Country Management Team stakeholders, although the groups and individuals tend to accentuate different aspects of the reform process. However, a common vision statement and a cohesive programme logic that would distinguish the One Programme from a framework (the UNDAF) is lacking. The vision statement should describe the unique contribution of the UN system to national capacity development and in the context of other forms of external assistance. The vision statement should provide the common logic to which the joint programmes would be linked. The programme logic would make the One Programme more evaluable than the UNDAF.

b) The vision statement and the programme logic should, to the greatest possible extent, be shared by all UN organizations working in the country. However, this does not mean that all activities conducted by those UN organizations need be included in the One Programme (or the UNDAF). As much as the synergy among contributions of different UN organizations in a One Programme

and subjacent joint programmes can enhance their relevance and effectiveness, the DaO approach should not become a straightjacket, which would deprive the country of a variety of interventions that may not be considered a priority by the government as a whole, but which still reflect needs in specific sectors or at decentralized levels. A strength of the UN system has been that it operates, to an extent, outside central planning mechanisms and General Budget Support. This comparative advantage should not be lost in the DaO process. Such views were conveyed by several members of the UN Country Management Team and were not perceived to contradict the DaO approach.

c) The DaO pilot in Tanzania is taking a practical approach given the approval of the UNDAF and the Country Programme Action Plans just prior to the initiation of the pilot. The considerable work that went into the UNDAF and the Joint Assistance Strategy of Tanzania allow for strong connections between UN comparative advantages and national priorities. The degree to which various components of the DaO are aligned with national priorities and systems will inform future evaluations' inquiries into relevance, effectiveness and coherence. Part of the challenge in this respect is linked to the need for greater capacity at government levels to participate in the planning and execution of programmes. Capacity building needs are likely to increase as national development frameworks require more alignment of activities with outcomes and as the General Budget Support share of Official Development Assistance increases. Capacity assessment of various actors, including non-state actors, is needed to inform capacity building efforts.

d) The overall M&E framework, comprising 60 indicators, combines the Paris Declaration indicator targets with common services and change management targets. While useful for a future process evaluation, it requires some work to bring the indicators in line with basic principles of RBM (for example, a formulation that would make them SMART—specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound). While compiling some information that may be useful in a future process evaluation, the system falls short of a credible M&E framework and a sufficient contribution to the evaluability of the DaO pilot. As they are only process indicators, they do not capture the full range of factors and effects that may be of importance in the experience, including positive and negative side-effects. Being phrased as 'success criteria', their usefulness as objective criteria, as their secondary purpose, is public relations.

e) The joint programme M&E plans provide more substantive objectives and indicators allowing for an assessment of relevance and effectiveness. However, the formulation of these indicators is not sufficiently SMART. The number of indicators should be limited to avoid the need for a tremendous amount of resources and effort in data collection. During its review, the RBM Task Force should select only key indicators to measure performance of the joint programme outcomes and results, and the indicators should be pitched at the outcome level.

22. More work needs to be done to align operational systems with planning and budget cycles at the national level. Some work has already been done in this respect, but poses challenges, as the national budget year runs from 1 July-30 June. In preparing the next UNDAF and One Programme, consideration should be given to improving alignment with national priorities based on assessment of the national capacity and capacity building needs as well as the full spectrum of comparative advantages of the UN Country Management Team members, whilst bearing in mind the normative role of the UN system. Consideration should also be given to further defining working modalities and including agencies that are not currently participating in the One Programme.

G. URUGUAY

1. *National ownership and leadership:* The process as a DaO pilot has been steered by two state agencies—the Planning and Budget Office of the Presidency of the Republic and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs—and the UN RC as the leader of the UNCT. The One UN Programme for 2007-2010 was signed by the Government of Uruguay and the UN system on 19 October 2007. The government has demonstrated strong ownership and leadership, in

particular in defining nine additional outputs, and is prepared to increase its leadership role. A One UN Programme Steering Committee met for the first time in December 2007, composed of the RC, participating UN organizations and the Government of Uruguay through the Planning and Budget Office.

2. A mechanism for participation of civil society was established during round-table discussions of the MDGs in 2005. This mechanism was not set forth in the course of the One UN Programme due to a decision by the government and the UNCT to first define the key elements of the One UN Programme then later establish a participatory process. The civil society organizations perceive their involvement in the overall design of the One UN Programme so far as rather limited. A meeting took place at the end of 2007, mainly geared to inform civil society about the One UN experience and progress. Based on interviews during the mission, there is no formalized dialogue or forum for participation of civil society for the One UN process.

3. *One Programme:* The One UN Programme Document in Uruguay was signed in October 2007. The process is still in the formulation stage as far as the nine new outputs are concerned, and preliminary procedures are in place.[40] A draft work plan for the RC Office was shared, but no work plan for the One UN Programme was made available. The identified next steps include the following: definition of lead, implementing and associated UN organizations in the implementation phase; fine-tuning the joint work on the nine outputs; and agreeing on a strategic approach to close the funding gap.

4. Regarding the implementation of the One UN Programme, concerns were raised by some UNCT members, particularly regarding the joint outputs (in particular the nine new outputs) under the One UN Programme, which do not necessarily reflect the priorities of the individual UN organizations.

5. Even though the number of non-resident agencies to join the One UN Programme has increased significantly in comparison to the UNDAF, their participation in the formulation process could be strengthened, and the distribution of programmes to lead and associated agencies in the implementation phase should be more participatory. The mechanism for establishing the role of the lead,

the involvement of implementing and associated UN organizations in the 9 outputs and 35 modules during formulation and implementation, and the alignment of agency interests with joint programming should be discussed in more detail.

6. *One Budgetary Framework/One Fund:* A One Coherence Fund and a Transformation Fund have been established, the former channelling the funds through UN Headquarters by the 'UN pass–through' modality. In this modality, the financial management is executed at the country level. Spain and Norway have contributed to the One Coherence Fund (for all eight DaO pilots) and the Netherlands has contributed to the Transformation Fund, intended to strengthen country-level coordination.

7. Overhead costs are still subject to discussion between the UN system and the Government of Uruguay. The government expressed interest in administering contributions, with the UN mainly seen in a technical counselling capacity. This is directly related to the centralized procedures of the UN system, thus the solution will not be found at the country level, but at the UN central level.

8. An Output and Resources Table is part of the One UN Programme Document. Approximately 60 percent of the funding gap (which corresponds to USD 10 million) will have to be pledged to put additional joint projects in motion. In this context donors have asked the RC Office to fully assume its responsibilities related to its accountabilities. The willingness of UN organizations to contribute their resources to close the funding gap would be an indicator of UNCT ownership of the DaO process.

9. *One Leader:* The current RC is appreciated by the UNCT in the role he has played in the One UN process. However, the One Leader pillar of the DaO appears to be the most controversial. A concept note setting out the role of the RC has not been endorsed by the UNCT, but it is expected that a consensus will be found. The roles of RC and UNDP Country Director, earlier assumed by the same person, have been separated to build a firewall. Nevertheless, the fact that the RC is at the same time UN Resident Representative and thus in hierarchical superiority to the Country Directors of UNDP and UNFPA was flagged as a potential conflict of interest.

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[40] Editorial note: At the time of elaboration of the synthesis report, most of the joint projects to contribute to these outputs have been formulated.

10. ***One UN House, common services and the reduction of transaction costs:*** The creation of one common infrastructure for the UN in the country might be the least pressing in Uruguay. Montevideo is a small city with light traffic and short distances. A working group of operations divisions of various UN organizations has carried out a stocktaking exercise for main services and products purchased. An analysis is in progress related to cost reduction potential. There are perceived benefits of working in the same premises, as underpinned by the new agencies that moved to share the office with UNDP and the RC Office (UNFPA, UNIFEM and UNOPS). Other agencies emphasized increased rental cost, compared to very low rent in some of the existing contracts.

11. A major challenge for the One Office and for DaO is the harmonization of management practices. There is little or no harmonization of procedures for budget frameworks, management and financial reporting, and monitoring systems. Furthermore, while some UN organizations can make decisions at the country level, others have to make decisions at the regional or Headquarters level, which slows down processes.

12. ***Overall evaluability assessment:*** DaO in Uruguay is at an early stage, with the One UN Programme Document signed only four months before the mission. It is in the process of finalizing the formulation of the nine new outputs and their components, starting with the stocktaking exercise for the M&E system and discussions about implementation. The evaluability assessment mission came to the following conclusions:

    a) The design of the One UN Programme shows articulation with the UNDAF and is aligned with the three main strategic areas defined by the Government of Uruguay and the national priorities of the UNDAF. The strategic intent of the One UN Programme is found in the One UN Programme Documents, that is the UN system's support of the formulation and implementation of Uruguay's public policies. This intent is shared by the representatives of the government and the RC Office met during the mission. The Government of Uruguay perceives the One UN Programme as an opportunity for the UN system to use its expertise in tackling the challenges identified as outcomes in the One UN Programme. No evidence was found, however, that this understanding of strategic intent was shared by all the UNCT members and by civil society. Discussing open points before the UNCT signs the concept note on DaO as a statement on strategic intent of DaO in Uruguay is recommended.

    b) Even though the One UN Programme has defined some outputs on gender equality and human rights, there is little information about how the three cross-cutting themes of UNDAF and the One UN Programme—human rights, gender equality and local development—are to be integrated in the implementation of the One UN Programme. To improve the effectiveness of the One UN Programme and to comply with the TCPR resolution 2007, it is strongly recommended that these cross-cutting priorities are mainstreamed in the current formulation of the nine joint outputs and related projects, expertise from specialized agencies and civil society organizations is fostered, and specific benchmarks are introduced for future M&E.

    c) Civil society should be involved in formulating the 9 outputs and their 35 modules, and formal mechanisms of consultation and dialogue should be established. This would not only enhance national ownership, but also elicit specific expertise from the organizations and fulfil the mandate of the United Nations.

    d) The One Programme design has multiple levels and is rather complex: it currently has 4 UNDAF challenges, 3 levels of interventions established in the One UN Programme, 4 outcomes, and 63 outputs. Of the latter, 9 outputs have 35 components. There is a need to simplify and improve coherence between these levels, especially the outputs and projects, in order to improve the quality of the design and be able to establish the contribution of projects and outputs to outcomes and goals.

    e) The current design of the One UN Programme does not clearly follow a results-orientation, that is, some of the UNDAF outputs and outcomes measuring the process of programme implementation are not SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound). This will make it difficult for UNCT and the government to assess progress towards outcomes and to evaluate the impact of the One UN Programme.

f) Work on the M&E system for the One UN Programme began in the fourth quarter of 2007, but it has not been fully developed. A first step has been taken, gathering information about existing systems and indicators at the agency level. The DaO pilot in Uruguay will only be able to demonstrate results if the design of the One UN Programme is results-oriented, that is, if there are adequate monitoring systems in place that can measure results at the output, outcome and impact level. The quality and reliability of baseline data to measure results and outcomes determine the availability and quality of monitoring results. A small but high-profile working group on M&E should be established to work jointly on the design. Ideally this group would include agencies that specialize in M&E or are involved in the implementation of the joint projects. The development of an M&E system is a resource demanding exercise. All available knowledge and expertise within resident and non-resident UN organizations at the country, regional and Headquarters level should be combined. There is also a funding requirement for setting up the system. How the design of the system will be financed should be decided and sufficient resources should be set aside. Cost of running the M&E system, once established, can be allocated within the budget of the One UN Programme.

13. It is also strongly recommended that the UNCT invest in evaluation capacity-building within each of the agencies of the UN system in Uruguay. It is important to first build on existing expertise within the UNCT—resident and non-resident—at the national, regional and global level. It is important to develop an evaluation capacity-building strategy with the support of UNEG. The One UN Programme evaluation parameters should also establish a partnership with the Government of Uruguay and civil society organizations where appropriate.

H. VIET NAM

Note: Viet Nam's evaluability assessment was the first to be conducted among the eight pilots in November 2007. Based on this experience, the Terms of Reference of the evaluability

assessments were significantly revised in January 2008, laying out the format that has been used for this synthesis report. The evaluability assessment of the DaO experience therefore does not address all dimensions that were included in the common format as of January 2008. Moreover, a number of observations made in the study on Viet Nam in November 2007 no longer applied at the time of finalizing the synthesis report in August 2008. Major new developments are addressed in editorial footnotes.

1. *National ownership and leadership:* UN reform in Viet Nam, which predated the DaO initiative, had its origins in the March 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Hanoi Core Statement on Aid Effectiveness of July 2005, bringing together the government and its development partners. In September 2005, the RC and the UNICEF Representative presented a visionary perspective on reform in Viet Nam. The One UN Initiative effectively started in February 2006 with a road map calling for One Management, One Plan, One Budget, One Set of Management Practices, and One UN House. This was part of UN reform from the start in Viet Nam, and was incorporated in the Agreed Principles and Instruments signed in May 2006 by the Prime Minister. The Government of Viet Nam has demonstrated strong national ownership and leadership in the DaO process.

2. *One Programme:* The UNEG evaluability assessment mission, which visited Viet Nam in November 2007, found that the operationalization of reform was encountering major challenges now that eight new agencies were joining the initiative. While there was clarity of intent among the three ExCom agencies (UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF) and the three agencies (UNIFEM, UNAIDS and UNV) that subsequently joined the initiative in 2006, what prevented the UN system in Viet Nam from agreeing on important issues was the lack of a common vision among all 14 agencies of what the end product of the reform would look like.[41] Intensive discussions were taking place in order to agree on a common vision, a prerequisite for further progress.

3. Stakeholders in Viet Nam do not perceive the conceptual design of the original One Plan 2006-2010[42] (a legally binding document) to have made a great difference in *what* the six originally participating agencies do in Viet Nam, since it just

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[41] The UNCT revised the Agreed Principles, Objectives and Instruments to achieve One UN in Viet Nam of May 2006, allowing for greater clarity of intent among the 14 agencies that would sign One Plan 2.

[42] One Plan, Common Action Plan, 2006-2010, July 2007.

combines the Country Programme Action Plans and Country Programme Documents that had been approved by the Boards of the three ExCom agencies. Currently, the UNCT is working on a second version of the One Plan to integrate the programmes, results and resources of the newly joining eight agencies.[43] In doing so, the second version of the One Plan is not expected to become more strategic or more focused on system-wide priority areas and comparative advantages of the United Nations in view of Viet Nam's rapid development. To measure development impact, the One Plan M&E Working Group has drafted a comprehensive M&E Framework.

4.   The UNCT has designed (and begun implementing) several joint programmes, such as the Joint Programme on AIDS and on the Avian Influenza,[44] the Joint Programme on Kon Tum[45] and the Joint Programme on Gender.

5.   *One Budgetary Framework/One Fund:* The One Budget, linked to the One Plan, was established for the six original agencies in June 2007. The corresponding One Plan Fund, the vehicle for new resources pooled by donors at the country level to support the unfunded portions of the One Plan, was also finalized in June 2007. Several donors[46] have signed the Letter of Agreement and transferred their contributions to it, covering the unfunded resource requirements for implementing the One Plan during the first 18 months. At the time of the evaluability mission, both the One Budget and the One Plan Fund were being revised to include the funding needs of the incoming agencies during the subsequent One Plan.[47]

6.   *One Leader:* It is too early to say how the One Leader concept works in practice, as the formal agreement was not in place at the time of the mission.[48] However, it was expected to be working by early 2008 thereby providing sufficient experience to be able to evaluate

the difference this element of DaO makes. UNDP in Viet Nam has established an institutional firewall between the management of its programmatic role and management of the RC system, including a physical separation of the two. The redesign of the UNDP organizational structure and the implementation of the firewall in Viet Nam could provide for a meaningful evaluation in 2008/2009.

7.   *One UN House, common services and the reduction of transaction costs:* There are currently 15 UN organizations in 10 different locations in Hanoi. UNDP, UNIDO, UNV and UNODC share common premises,[49] as do UNFPA and UN-HABITAT and UNICEF and part of WHO. Plans are underway to establish joint premises housing all UN organizations resident in Viet Nam in the current UN Apartment Building. Agreement on the potential benefit of a UN House is widespread. However, financial feasibility concerns exist, especially for those UNCT members currently housed in free (government subsidized) or low-rent offices. Innovative funding arrangements are needed, and additional external support from donors and the government will be essential. The concept of a One UN House has been enriched by an additional objective—to make it an eco-friendly office premise as part of the overall drive towards 'greening' the United Nations. The RC Office is currently recruiting a UN House Project Manager to supervise the design, budgeting and refurbishment and construction phases. The estimated costs, which need to be monitored in terms of investment and transaction costs, range between USD 7 million and USD 8 million. The UN House is scheduled to be completed in 2009. Several donors are ready to contribute substantial funding towards the realization of the One UN House but are unwilling to transfer these funds if a 7 percent overhead charge is applied.[50]

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[43] Integration of eight additional UNCT organizations was achieved with the signature of the One Plan 2 in June 2008.

[44] Government-UN Joint Programme to Fight Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza, 2005-2010.

[45] Addressing Disparities in the Ethnic Minority and Mountainous Regions, Kon Tum Joint Programme, 2007-2010.

[46] Editorial note: Norway, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Luxemburg, Ireland, Canada, and New Zealand have since committed a total of USD 23.2 million.

[47] Editorial note: This was completed with the signature of One Plan 2 in June 2008

[48] Editorial note: The UNCT signed a local Memorandum of Understanding on the One Leader in April 2008. This Memorandum of Understanding represents the agreement of the UNCT to strengthen the authority, responsibility and accountability of the RC in Viet Nam. A six-month review by the UNCT is planned in October 2008.

[49] Editorial note: As of February 2008, UNIFEM also shares these premises.

[50] Editorial note: Since the evaluability mission, out of the total construction costs of USD 8 million, more than 50 percent has been mobilized in donor resources. The cost recovery charge has been reduced to 4 percent only. The remainder will be shared on a pro-rata basis. In addition, the government will contribute by providing the UN House as rent free accommodation for all. The concept design has been completed and the UN House Manager is in position.

8. Whereas the One Programme defines *what* the UNCT in Viet Nam is delivering, the One Plan Management Plan defines *how* it delivers the One Plan coherently and efficiently, and is important to understanding how the United Nations will manage resources in future. The drafting of the One Plan Management Plan has been a long and difficult process, starting with the original six agencies and recently trying to link up to the newly joining eight agencies, with the understanding that they should adhere to a (yet to be defined) 'minimum compliance package'. However, since the incoming agencies are not a homogenous group in terms of their understanding of the One UN Initiative, their expectations, constraints, support from Headquarters, and degree of flexibility, their involvement has inevitably delayed the finalization of the document.[51]

9. *Overall evaluability assessment:* Progress with the DaO initiative in Viet Nam was impressive. The process was well documented and many of the parameters required for a meaningful evaluation of process and results were in place. Findings concerning the evaluability of the DaO include the following:

   a) An important aspect of reform was change management. This applies to both the attitudes of the people engaged in reform on the ground and also whether Headquarters of the different organizations were sufficiently willing to change or allow the countries the necessary space for piloting.[52] Those engaged in UN reform on the ground did not give themselves sufficient space for piloting and did not receive adequate support from Headquarters. In terms of evaluability, it would be useful to record events related to the reform process.

   b) There were high investment costs for DaO, though ideally there would be a future pay-off when the new management practices are in place, resulting in lower and sustainable transactions costs. The subject of efficiency gains was not prominently present in the documentation reviewed or in the design of the M&E system. It was suggested that the M&E system should keep track of the investment costs. Regarding targets, it would be opportune to try to quantify future savings in overhead and administration, based on a cost-benefit study as was being done for the One UN House. Developing a suitable methodology for measuring benefits would be a useful area for support from UNDG.

   c) Regarding the M&E system for monitoring progress in terms of programmatic impact and the reform process itself, there was progress with an M&E framework. The plan should be completed with more comprehensive benchmarks, targets, indicators and timelines for the five Ones.[53] Two overarching issues should be mentioned upfront: first, the overall objectives of UN reform in Viet Nam; and second, the matter of efficiency and cost savings.

10. The findings of the evaluability mission were well received in Viet Nam and recommendations concerning change management and the M&E system are already being implemented.[54]

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[51] Editorial note: The One Plan Management Plan was agreed by the UNCT in April 2008. The document outlines how the UN organizations participating in the One UN Initiative will organize themselves in the most effective way so as to successfully implement the One Plan 2006-2010 and other key elements of the One UN Initiative. Most notably, it looks at the capacities needed to implement the One Plan, the institutional arrangements to be put in place for a more effective and more coherent United Nations (for example, *Programme Coordination Groups* introduce dual accountability, in which members of teams are accountable to both the individual Organization and a Programme Coordination Group), the establishment of key baselines to measure progress, harmonization of business practices and expansion of common services. Given the change management nature of the overall reform, the One Plan Management Plan will serve as a 'rolling' Management Plan that will be regularly updated as key components are designed and implemented.

[52] Editorial note: Given the change management nature of the overall reform, the One Plan Management Plan will serve as a 'rolling' Management Plan that will be regularly updated as key components are designed and implemented.

[53] Editorial note: The UNCT agreed on process benchmarks in December 2007. In June 2008, these were superseded by the Results Framework for the Reform Process agreed among UNCT, Government of Viet Nam and donors. The Tripartite National Task Force agreed to report on these benchmarks every six months, starting December 2008.

[54] E-mail message from the RC addressed to UNEG, 19 February 2008.