



2023 Report of the Secretary-General on the Implementation of General Assembly resolution 75/233 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system

Informal summary of key findings and recommendation

1. In line with the mandates contained in General Assembly resolutions 75/233 and 72/279, the report provides an update on the system-wide implementation of General Assembly guidance on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) and the repositioning of the United Nations development system. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 76/4, the report also details progress in implementing the review of the resident coordinator system. Findings are grounded in data from surveys by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. These canvassed programme country governments, United Nations headquarters entities and resident coordinators and, contributor governments and United Nations country teams.
2. Amidst setbacks and reversals at the halfway point to the target date of 2030 for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the report addresses how the United Nations development system supported countries in strengthening transformative policies and programmes to accelerate progress towards the SDGs. The report also examines progress made in delivering on the pledge of leaving no one behind, including United Nations development system support to youth, women and girls, and persons with disabilities.
3. The report analyses the development system offer to boost financing for development, catalyze partnerships and harness science, technology, and innovation to scale up implementation of the SDGs. It pays special attention to the support provided to least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, and small island developing States, as well as middle-income countries. It identifies high, and rising, levels of satisfaction among Member States with the alignment of the United Nations development system with national needs and priorities.
4. Overall, all data points to the same direction: **the investments made in the repositioning of the UN development system are delivering results.** It is what gives hope that the United Nations can be a strong partner as governments work to rescue the Sustainable Development Goals. With the world facing complex and intersecting crises, it is now important to keep this momentum. The United Nations development system will exert every effort to make this transformation a reality.
5. **The leadership by resident coordinators is pivotal to the success of collective efforts.** Over 88 per cent of host governments reported that resident coordinators provide effective leadership in respect of strategic support for national plans and priorities. Ninety-three per cent of host Governments reported that United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks are now closely aligned with country development needs and priorities.



6. **Thanks to the repositioning of the United Nations development system, there is now enhanced cooperation and coherence among development efforts, humanitarian action and peacebuilding.** Between 90 and 95 per cent of host countries see United Nations entities as working in close collaboration across humanitarian, development and peacebuilding activities. Resident coordinators offered a similar assessment of collaboration across humanitarian and development initiatives as well as development and peacebuilding actions while collaboration on humanitarian and peacebuilding interventions is weaker although a positive trend is observed. The assessment of United Nations country teams is less favourable, which may signal increased appetite for greater collaboration at a time the world faces multiple crises. While positive trends continue to be observed in cross-pillar collaboration around analysis, planning, and monitoring, further progress is needed on assessing the impact of interventions and ensuring appropriate financing. Efforts are therefore ongoing by the Chair of the UNSDG working with United Nations Principals in identifying ways to strengthen support in this field, including through a review of the working modalities of the Joint Steering Committee for humanitarian and development cooperation. Joint work by intergovernmental bodies such as the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, also remains essential to strengthening coherence across pillars.
7. **The support provided by the UN on Integrated National Financing Frameworks has room to improve.** Demand from host governments for United Nations assistance to develop these frameworks has increased from 83 per cent to 90 per cent from 2021 to 2022. Eighty-two per cent of host country Governments agreed that the UN adequately provides support for these frameworks. The development system approach must work at two levels: (i) it should provide immediate breathing room and support to countries devastated by the crises of the past several years, by working within the existing international financial architecture, including through the SDG Stimulus; and (ii), it should work with Member States to take concrete steps towards meaningful, long-term reform of that architecture.
8. **The United Nations development system is improving its offer on science, technology and innovation (STI) and digital technologies to advance the implementation for the 2030 Agenda.** Eighty-two per cent of host Governments report that they have received support to leverage STI, and 89 per cent of Governments agreed that United Nations country teams supported countries in improving digital inclusion. As envisioned under Our Common Agenda, the Office of the Envoy on Technology is coordinating consultations with stakeholders towards a Global Digital Compact which will provide a solid framework to scale up support, increase synergies and strengthen our integrated offer on digital transformation.
9. **The UN development system is consistently reported as the preferred partner for integrated, evidence-based policy advice.** Host countries are reporting increasing levels of satisfaction with the United Nations development system offer. Countries in special situations are reporting particularly favorably. All least developed and landlocked developing countries report that development system activities are closely aligned with their needs and priorities. Ninety-five per cent of African countries perceive likewise.
10. **The United Nations development system has worked at every level- from the global to the local – to continue supporting countries to leverage robust partnerships with development partners, including international financial institutions and the private sector, to achieve the scale and pace of progress required to meet the 2030 Agenda.** Ninety-seven per cent of host governments agreed that country teams engage meaningfully with international financial institutions, an increase from 90 per cent in 2021. Despite these improvements, only 38 per cent of country teams reported having a formal relationship with international financial institutions and 31 per cent reported joint initiatives with these

institutions in 2022, a decrease of 11 per cent since 2021. Eighty-nine per cent of host country Governments agreed that the United Nations provides adequate support to financing for the SDGs.

11. **All Regional Collaborative Platforms (RCPs) have gradually demonstrated their potential in driving greater integration and expertise in support of United Nations country teams, but there is room for improvement.** The proportion of resident coordinators who report that the RCPs have supported the country team in terms of SDG monitoring and reporting increased from 41 per cent in 2021 to 54 per cent in 2022. Only a small majority of resident coordinators assess that their country team has benefitted from the technical expertise (57%) and normative and policy expertise (48%) from the Regional Collaborative Platforms. More action will be required from all members of the Regional Collaborative Platforms to continue to identify entry points for the regional level to collectively connect global instruments and advocacy with country-level reality by enabling and supporting transformative action.
12. **Among host country Governments, 92 percent appreciated the value of resident coordinators in leveraging partnerships to achieve the SDGs.** A notable three quarters of United Nations development entities have integrated South-South and triangular cooperation in their global strategic plans and corporate reporting, an important recognition of the value of sharing knowledge on the strides that many developing countries have made in advancing the SDGs.
13. **Global initiatives and strategies are driving concrete and effective actions at the country-level.** For example, the United Nations Food Systems Coordination Hub was established in 2022; 117 countries have developed national pathways to sustainable food systems. The Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions is now beginning to support Member States in the design, financing, and implementation of integrated national employment and social protection policies to generate virtuous cycles of revenue generation and long-term human development outcomes. The United Nations country teams, and resident coordinators provided critical support in the lead up to the 2022 Transforming Education Summit, which resulted in a shared vision for the future of education, including National Statements of Commitments announced by 133 Member States.
14. **Member States identified poverty and health as the two areas where they expect to require the most assistance from the UN development system over the next two years.** There was almost universal recognition in 2022, that the revamped United Nations development system has assisted Governments in assessing the situation of the poorest (96 per cent, compared to 90 per cent in 2021). By the end of 2022, the Joint SDG Fund had already enabled an additional 147 million people to gain temporary and permanent social protection coverage, covering 39 countries and territories. Almost all host Governments (98 per cent) continued to express satisfaction with how resident coordinators ensured a coherent United Nations response to the pandemic.
15. **More progress is needed in the efforts to mainstream climate-and environment-responsive approaches into programmes and strategic plans, including in cooperation frameworks.** Sixty-nine per cent of country teams, a decrease from 75 per cent in 2021, agreed that environmental considerations have been mainstreamed into programming and policy advice. Part of the challenge may lie in the starting point for cooperation frameworks – common country analyses. An internal UNEP review of a sample of 28 common country analyses and 20 cooperation frameworks found mainstreaming of environmental issues in common country analyses was weak, which contributed to limited uptake of these issues in cooperation frameworks. Part of the solution is ensuring that all experts are at the table. This means inclusive country teams that have full participation and that agree coherent, integrated approaches.



16. **United Nations development system-wide efforts are anchored in the principles of human rights, gender equality and leaving no one behind.** Governments ranked **gender equality** as among the top six most important areas receiving significant UN support over the past two years; 92 per cent of programme countries requested such support in 2022. The system has increased its focus on **youth**, with 25 out of 27 entities having policies to step up work for and with young people. The United Nations development system has also stepped up its collective offer to **people on the move**, with 75 per cent of UN country teams supporting Governments in formulating policies to address structural inequalities facing migrants, 63 per cent for refugees and asylum seekers, and, to a lesser extent, 37 per cent for internally displaced persons. Addressing the record numbers of internally displaced persons is an urgent priority, and Member States are encouraged to continue to support the Action Agenda on Internal Displacement in order to find solutions to displacement, better prevent future displacement crises from emerging, and ensure more effective protection and assistance. **Indigenous peoples** continue to be among the groups with which United Nations country teams are least engaged. In the past four years, only 23 per cent of UN country teams supported Governments in formulating policies or programmes to address structural inequalities facing indigenous peoples. Progress on **disability inclusion** must move at greater pace through a coordinated and cross-functional approach. UN development system entities and country teams are not yet achieving 70 per cent of all benchmarks set by the UN Disability Inclusion Strategy.
17. **There has been a robust recent increase in resources for operational activities in countries in special situations.** Spending on operational activities in small island developing States has seen the largest growth rate of any group of countries. Furthermore, all least developed countries and landlocked developing countries, and almost all small island developing States (94 per cent) and African countries (95 per cent) positively assess the relevance of the UN development system and its alignment with national needs and priorities.
18. **The UN development system continues to provide targeted support to middle income countries (MICs) considering their varying development needs.** MICs rated the adequacy of this support highly. This was particularly the case with regards to evidence-based policy advice tailored to their needs and priorities (97 per cent) and leveraging partnerships in support of national development priorities (95 per cent). Similar to other country groups, there is room for improvement on support for integrated national financing frameworks with 84 per cent of MICs agreeing that support in this area is adequate.
19. **The collective efforts of Member States and UNSDG entities to reform the business operations of the United Nations development system have achieved important results.** The latest estimates identify realized efficiency gains of 405 million USD, a 47 per cent increase from 2021 efficiencies (275 million USD). The improvements in business operations have primarily been achieved in four areas: business operations strategies, establishing common premises, global shared services and Common Back Offices.
20. **Progress on meeting the commitments of the Funding Compact remains mixed.** Core funding has increased, and development system accountability measures have been enhanced, including reporting on results. Yet, progress has been slow on a number of important commitments. Less than half of UN country teams have conducted a gender scorecard exercise in the past four years. The capitalization of the Joint SDG Fund, however, has declined by 75 per cent, and more generally, the development system remains highly dependent on a handful of government donors for most of its funding.

21. **The 85 million USD funding gap of the resident coordinator system presents a particular concern.** The resident coordinator system is the anchor on which the wider system sits as it strengthens its support to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Closing this gap is an absolute priority for the United Nations development system to function at full strength. Member States are recommended to reconsider the alternative funding models put forward in the review of the resident coordinator system in 2021, with an increased component of assessed funding.
22. **A commitment to broadening sources of funding for the UN development system has stalled.** In 2021, the top five contributors of funding for development activities accounted for nearly half, or 48 per cent, of total funding received from Governments (compared to 46 per cent in 2017), and the top 10 accounted for 65 per cent of the total (66 per cent in 2017).
23. **A positive trend continues in the funding of inter-agency pooled funds, but certain flagship global pooled funds remain underfunded.** Total contributions to development-related inter-agency funds grew to \$1.6 billion in 2021, which accounts for 12.3 per cent of all non-core funding for development activities, exceeding the Funding Compact target of 10 per cent. This is a noteworthy result as such pooled funding brings entities together to deliver collective results. However, some critical cross-pillar global funds continue to be underfunded, most notably, the Joint SDG Fund and the Peacebuilding Fund.
24. **Funding from programme country governments for development activities increased by 14 per cent from 2020 to 2021, including a 20 per cent increase in core contributions.** This is especially commendable given that many host countries were facing the full brunt of effects from multiple and overlapping crises at this time.

25. The **QCPR monitoring framework** presents user-friendly evidence on progress along five overall goals covering 24 sets of topics with concrete “asks” that are tracked with targets and indicators. The structure of the framework is annexed below, and the completed [QCPR monitoring and reporting framework](#) is posted online on the QCPR website.



STRUCTURE: QCPR MONITORING FRAMEWORK (2021-24)

"WHO" & "WHERE"	"ON WHAT" [thematic]	"HOW" [Management & Functioning]	FUNDING [Accountability, Transparency & Efficiencies]	GOVERNANCE [Coordination, Coherence & Effectiveness]
<p>Tailored v. ilole of system approaches \with strong national O'Wllership and leadership enable the UNDS to effectively address the full range of development challenges of our time, ensuring that no one is le. & behind and promoting human rights and gender equality</p>	<p>Coherent, integrated policy advice by the UN development system protects the planet, strengthens capacities and instinrtions and catalyses partnerships towards accelerating SO C implementation</p>	<p>UNDS progressi\ely moves towards integrated action (OP86) though full support by all entities to the reinvigorated Resident Coordinator system (OP88), a new generation of UN country teams with tailored country presence based on the UNSustainable Development Cooperation Framework (OP95), harmonized instruments and common business operations (OP107)</p>	<p>Enhanced accountability, transparency and efficiencies and a focnson collective results incentivize more sttStaina.ble and better-quality funding, in line, 1rith the Funding Compact</p>	<p>System-wide coordination, coherence, and effectiveness of operational activities for development including on strategic planning, implementation, reporting and evaluation is facilitate-d by improved UNDS governance and oversight (OP70)</p>
<p>1.1 TAILORED DEMAND DRIVEN APPROACH Alignment of UNDS operational activities for development "ith national plans, .strategies and priorities reflect:sa tailored, demand-driven approach and strong national ownership and leadership (OP2, 4)</p>	<p>2.1 POVERTY (INCL SOOAL PROTECTION & HEALTH) Support to countries in implementing social protection systems and universal health coverage accelerates progress on poverty eradication (OPS, 25-27)</p>	<p>3.1 Cf's & CPDs Cooperation Frameworks (CFs) a.re developed \-ith the full participation of national governments, and consultation with relevant stakeholders (OP72), and entity-specific CPDs derived from the CF agreed priorities (OP 71, 72, 73, 74, 76)</p>	<p>4.1 FUNDING COMPACT Full and effective implementation of the Funding Compact (OPS4, 65)</p>	<p>S.1 ALIGNMENT WITH THE QCPR UNDS entities alignment with and full implementation of the QCPR, including integrated and coherent planning, reporting and evaluation at entity (Strategic Plans) and country (CF.s) levels supports accelerated SDG implementation, follow-up and review (OP 19-21, 77-81, 83, 116)</p>
<p>1.2 CAPACI'IY TO ADAPT & RESPOND Strengthened RBM with a focus on longer-term outcomes, common methodologies for planning and reporting on agency-specific, interagency and joint activities (OP6, 17, 108) enhances the UNDS' scapacity to adapt and respond to evolving development challenges and ommities OP6</p> <p>1.3 COUNTRIES IN SPECIAL SITUATION A tailored v. ilole of system response (OP16) anchored in the SOG.s, relevant programme of actions (OPI0-11), and greater cooperation across humanitarian, development and peacebuilding action enables moving beyond short-term assistance to longer-term development gains (OP16, 36) especially in the most vulnerable cotmtries (OPI0, 40-44, 49, 89, 101)</p>	<p>2.2 DRR Stustainable.. inclusive, and resilient recovery and better preparation for future shocks a. remain streamlined in UNDS pl.uming, programnung and implementation instruments and activities (OP27, 37)</p> <p>2.3 WMATE, ENVIRONMENT, BIODIVERSI'IY A climate- and environment-responsive approach, including biodiversity and ecosystem-based approaches, i.s mainstreamed into UNDS policies, strategic pla.n.s. programme planning and delivery (OP29, 30, 37)</p>	<p>3.2 MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY The Management and Accountability Framework is fully implemented, including a clear dual reporting model of accountability (OP75, 77, 88)</p> <p>3.3 RCS SYSTEM Resident Coordinator system improves effectiveness and efficiency of operational activities for development at the country level (OP87, 92- 93, 97-99)</p>	<p>4.2 QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF FUNDING TO THE UNDS [OP 46, 51-53, 56, 59]</p> <p>4.3 SOURCES OF FUNDING [OPS6, 60-61]</p>	<p>5.2 FULL UNDS OFFER The UNDS addresses the needs and priorities of host Governments through integrated and coordinated action, vi. thin and among countries and at regional and global levels (OPS, 86, OP114)</p> <p>5.3 REGIONAL DIMENSION Enhanced transparency, accountability, coordination and resttltts-based management at the regional level strengthens contributions and ensures that UN' s regional.t.5 sets a rein line "ith the needs and priorities of each region (OP78, 103)</p>



"WHO" & "WHERE"	"ON WHAT" [thematic]	"HOW" [Management & Functioning]	FUNDING [Accountability, Transparency & Efficiencies]	GOVERNANCE [Coordination, Coherence & Effectiveness]
<p>1.4 LNOB, HUMAN RIGHTS and GEWE Reaching the furthest behind first including persons with disabilities, human rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are integrated across UNDS entities' strategies, plans, programmes and operations (OP12-15, OP28, 39)</p>	<p>2.4 CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT Capacities (OP22, 109) and cooperation strengthened in STIs and international cooperation (OP31); data collection and analysis (OP32); development planning, monitoring & evaluation (OP31-32), education (OP38), digital inclusion (OP27b, 100, and digital technologies for sustainable development and volunteerism (OP45)</p>	<p>3.4 UNCT CONFIGURATION Measures implemented to align staff capacities and UNCT configuration with the cross-sectoral requirements of the 2030 Agenda, (OP91, 94) and the specific challenges and needs of programme countries (OP 94, 95)</p>	<p>4.4 TRANSPARENCY & LINKING FUNDING TO RESULTS Enhanced transparency and quality of data on UN OAD funding, cost recovery, and better linkages between resources and results incentivizes contributions from donor countries and other contributors (OP 50, 56a, 56b, 57,) and partnerships with other relevant stakeholders (OP69)</p>	<p>5.4 SYSTEM-WIDE REPORTING Ensure quality of system-wide reporting on UN operational activities for development's funding performance and programme results and on the activities of the Development Coordination Office and enables better oversight and guidance of the UNDS by Member States [OP 82, 84, 85, 104, 114, 117-120]</p>
		<p>3.5 BUSINESS OPERATIONS Agency-specific programming instruments, business practices, processes are harmonized and common business operations are put in place optimizing impact and reducing transaction costs (OP105-107)</p>	<p>4.5 POOLED & JOINT FUNDING Enhanced design, transparency and accountability of and participation in inter-agency pooled funding mechanisms incentivizes pooled funding approaches at the country level and common resource mobilization (OP 96, 55, 63, 67, 68)</p>	
		<p>3.6 HUMAN RESOURCES Gender balance and geographic representation measures are institutionalized at the global, regional and country levels (OP90, 112) and workplaces are free from discrimination and exploitation, including sexual exploitation and abuse, violence and sexual harassment (OP113)</p>		
		<p>3.7 PARTNERSHIPS /SDGs FINANCING Countries' capacities to engage in innovative funding approaches including blended finance (OP58, 60-62), leverage innovative national, regional and global partnerships (OP 33-34) and mobilize means of implementation is strengthened (OP23-24, 27b, 44)</p>		