

## INTERACTIVE DISCUSSIONS: FOLLOW-UP TO ECOSOC DIALOGUE WORKSHOPS ON THE LONGER TERM POSITIONING OF THE UN DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

### GUIDING QUESTIONS

#### Friday 27 May, Morning Session

##### SESSION I: FUNCTIONS

*The UN should build on its unique advantages to deliver on the 2030 Agenda, taking into account the changed development landscape, and the role of different actors. This requires focusing on what the UN development system should do, and capturing that niche, as well as being clear on what the UN should not do.*

- What are the functions that the UN should and should not focus on, moving forward in different country groupings/situations, e.g. LDCs, Crisis-affected countries, SIDs, MICs [countries that have been MICs for a long time, and countries that have recently become MICs], High Income Economies?
- In addition to the direct support the UNDS may provide to countries in special situations, e.g. LDCs, conflict affected countries, countries with humanitarian crisis, is there a common understanding that the UN development system should generally focus on the following functions:
  - Support to implementation of norms and standards
  - Convening, brokering and leveraging
  - Thought leadership and policy support
  - Technical assistance and capacity development
- In order to deliver on these functions, which roles, responsibilities and authorities should be centralized at the global level? Which should be decentralized to the regional and country level?
- At regional level, how can functions and the division of labour be better defined in order to capitalize on the strengths of regional commissions on the one hand, and funds, programmes, specialized agencies and other entities?
- What changes would this require on the part of Member States, whether donors, recipients or both, in terms of funding and governance practices? What phases and timeframes would be realistic for these changes to take place?
- What are the broad implications of the above in terms of how the UNDS does business and how it is organized in terms of presence at system level? At entity level?
- What are the implications of no significant change in the ways that the UN functions?

## SESSION II: FUNDING

*Funding trends which have been in existence for over 20 years have shown no signs of deviating from their current path despite continued calls in QCPR resolutions for higher quality and predictability, more core and more adequate funding. In order to properly address the new, integrated Agenda, a significant strengthening of the multilateral character of the Organization is needed. This requires a reform of the current funding architecture from one where funding drives how the System functions to one where funding is aligned with and supporting the functions and strategic plans agreed to by governing bodies.*

- Do you agree that a system-wide consolidated balance sheet clearly showing how resources are linked to the achievement of outcomes in support of the 2030 Agenda would help address fragmentation and duplication, strengthen transparency and accountability, and facilitate identifying funding gaps ?
- How can we ensure that the type and quality of funding align with globally agreed priority functions of the UNDS? Which of the funding mechanisms discussed in the ITA paper (i.e. negotiated replenishments/pledges, voluntary indicative scale of contributions) best address different specific functions UN entities?
- What governance measures would help ensure that strictly-earmarked funding is properly aligned with an entity's strategic plan and doesn't contribute to fragmentation and duplication of efforts?
- What are three actions that could be undertaken by the UNDS [or its entities?] that would help in significantly tipping the scale from non-core to core and "as if" core?
- Which of the following approaches aimed at increasing the core/non-earmarked funding base of UN entities should be made a top priority?
  - Greater transparency and better results-based reporting relating to core/non-earmarked funding flows;
  - Institutionalized structured financing dialogues [thorough review of progress and forthcoming orientation];
  - Achieving full cost recovery (as mandated in the 2012 QCPR), to ensure an equitable proportion of non-earmarked and earmarked funding is spent on programme activities, instead of subsidizing non-core activities;
  - Introduce a joint activities contribution, or a "levy" on strictly earmarked contributions to generate a revenue stream of non-earmarked resources, and incentivize higher quality contributions.
  - Enhance multi-year funding to allow for better planning to take both shorter and longer-term humanitarian/development solutions into consideration together, and enhance overall cost efficiency.

## Friday 27 May, Afternoon Session

### SESSION III: PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

*It is clear that no country or organization can tackle today's development challenges alone. Philanthropy is changing the development landscape by injecting new money as well as new priorities. The private sector is increasingly engaged in tackling development issues, whether because of vested interests or because it acknowledges that stable societies that thrive represent profitable market opportunities. Overall, these actors bring to the playing field strengths that the UN system and its individual entities often does not have. Leveraging the strengths of all of them is both critical to rise to the challenge of the SDGs and vital for UN principles and agreed priorities to remain relevant.*

- In terms of those functions that would be better served by players outside the UN system, what different types of partnership approaches would be needed for the UN development system to coordinate with these players to maximize impact?
- What capacities would the UNDS need to further develop internally to support programme countries with policy advice and technical assistance to develop and leverage partnerships with external players? where would these capacities and resources be best physically located?
- What are critical measures that the UN should put in place to ensure a coherent system-wide approach that reconciles the need to protect its principles and standards with harnessing and leveraging the strengths of outside players, including the private sector in particular?
- What are key principles, measures and mechanisms that would ensure coherence without being a straight-jacket, that are essential at the level of individual entities and at the country level of a UNCT? What are the steps to develop these?