

**Meeting between the Deputy Secretary-General
and Principals of the UNSDG Advisory Group on the UNDS Repositioning:
Management and Accountability Framework – Issues Paper
(14 February, 2019)**

This document is intended to inform the discussions by the UNSDG Advisory Group on key issues related to the new Management and Accountability Framework (MAF), which is being developed in the context of General Assembly resolution 72/279 on the repositioning of the UN development system. In line with the UNSDG-agreed concept note for the development of the MAF the current version contains only the country level chapter. Once agreed, the Transition Team - with the support of the Design Team and Reference Group - will begin work on the regional and global level chapters. Provision is also made in the concept note for the group to return to the MAF later in the year – as necessary - to ensure its alignment with other, ongoing elements of the UNDS Repositioning e.g. the new UNDAF.

The draft MAF was shared in January 2019 with UNSDG Design Team, Resident Coordinators, and UNCTs for the identification of any remaining flags. Despite the large number of comments received the resulting synopsis showed common concerns around the following four main themes.

1. Need for greater clarity of the dual reporting/accountability of UNCT members

It is proposed to add text at the beginning of the MAF document to bring greater clarity to the operationalization of the dual accountability model for RCs/UNCTs. The text will reiterate that country representatives remain fully accountable to their respective entities on individual mandates. It will also indicate that UNCT members will also report, periodically, to the RC on their individual activities and on their respective contributions to the collective results of the UN development system towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda at the country level on the basis of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).

2. Concern that the text does not sufficiently recognize collective ownership of the UNDS as set out in GA resolution 72/279.

A/RES/72/279 para.17: “Endorses the transformation of the Development Operations Coordination Office to assume managerial and oversight functions of the resident coordinator system under the leadership of an Assistant Secretary-General and under the collective ownership of the members of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group, as a stand-alone coordination office within the Secretariat, reporting to the Chair of the Group...”

The MAF will be edited to better reflect the spirit and intent of GA resolution 72/279. This includes the criticality of ownership from the UNSDG for the success of the reinvigorated RC system, as well as the need to allow the Secretary-General’s leadership to ensure an effective RC system in coordinating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

3. Ability of AFPs to fully implement their mandates

- Access to government and stakeholders – The text needs to acknowledge the RC's role in ensuring a coordinated relationship with national partners and stakeholders. This is a key request of Member States across regions. Moving forward, UNCT members will continue to have direct access to government counterparts and other relevant stakeholders. It is proposed that the MAF clarifies that access to head of state/government and central ministers is to be coordinated with the RC. Relationship with sectoral ministers and technical counterparts would proceed as per current practice, in line with a coordinated strategy to deliver on the UNDAF.
- Ability to mobilise resources locally – The MAF will be clear in stating that UNCT members retain their ability to fundraise locally. It will also clearly outline the need to ensure that the overall fundraising strategy is coordinated with the RC and the broader UNCT, according to activities aligned with the UNDAF. The need for better coordination stems not just from the principle of the reform for collective delivery, but also because donors and host government alike continue to express dissatisfaction about UN entities competing for resources, often for duplicative activities.
- Country programme documents/plans – There is a clear expectation from Member States – as reflected in GA resolution 72/279 – that the RCs will have “enhanced authority to ensure alignment of [...] agency programmes [...] with the UNDAF”. The MAF needs to specify how this will be done, i.e. how RCs will confirm that the CPD is indeed aligned to the UNDAF. To avoid misperceptions, the current text be amended to change the role of the RC from “*sign-off*” to “*agreement*” to the respective CPD, with a specific focus on confirming that the document is aligned to the UNDAF.
- Country presence – current wording in the MAF is intended to reflect the provision in the General Assembly resolution on the repositioning of the UN development system, which states that: “3. Also requests the Secretary General to work, through the UNSDG and in consultation with Member States concerned, to determine appropriate criteria with regard to the presence and composition of UNCTs, based on country development priorities and long-term needs and the approved UNDAF...”

It is noted that – as above – this issue is currently under discussion in the UNDAF work stream and alignment of the MAF wording to the new UNDAF will be taken up when agreement is reached.

- Appointment of UNCT members – it is proposed to review the draft MAF to bring greater clarity on the role of RCs in the appointment process. It is not envisioned that RCs would have any executive role in the selection and appointment process of UNCT heads; but rather that the RCs have an opportunity to provide specific inputs to regional directors on the profile of leadership that would be a best fit in a particular country context ahead of selection and deployment. The MAF needs to define how this input will be sought.

4. UNCT composition

- Text on UNCT members being “*on a UN staff appointment*” to be deleted in the interests of ensuring widest possible membership and collaboration.

- Reservations were also voiced about the inclusion of Bretton Woods institutions. It is proposed to retain the current text noting that: the wording is aligned with the SG's Bulletin on the repositioning; inclusion of other system entities is not mandatory; and, that this is intended to make the UNCT as collaborative as possible in supporting the development system in its entirety to deliver on support to countries.

Finally, in moving the MAF forward it is understood that it will need to address: the integrator role of UNDP; Multi-Country Offices; and, Non-Resident Agencies, in more detail. Text is also being provided on pooled funds by the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office.

UNDS Transition Team

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