COUNTRY-LED EVALUATION DELIVERING AS ONE

UN PILOT INITIATIVE IN VIET NAM

Final Report

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAP	*Annual Action Plan*
APEC	Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
AWP	Annual Work Plan
CAP	*Common Action Plan*
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women
CPAP	Country Programme Annual Plan
CPD	Country Programme Document
CPE	Country Programme Evaluation
DaO	Delivering as One
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DOCO	Development Operations Coordination Office
ExCom	Executive Committee
FAO	*UN Food and Agriculture Organization*
GACA	*Government Aid Coordination Agencies*
GJP	Gender Joint Partnership
GSO	General Statistics Office
HACT	Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers
HCS	Hanoi Core Statement
HDR	Human Development Report
HoA	Head of Agency
HPPMG	Harmonised Project and Programme Management Guidelines
IFAD	*International Fund for Agricultural Development*
IFI	International Financial Institution
ILO	*International Labor Organization*
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MDTF	Multi-Donor Trust Fund
MEWG	Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group
MoCT	*Ministry of Commerce and Trade*
MoCST	*Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism*
MoET	*Ministry of Education and Training*
MoF	*Ministry of Finance*
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOH	Ministry of Health
MoHA	*Ministry of Home Affairs*
MOLISA	*Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs*
MONRE	*Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment*
MPI	*Ministry of Planning and Investment*
NIP	National Implementing Partner
NOP	Next One Plan
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OMT	Operations Management Team
OP	One Plan
OPFMAC	One Plan Fund Mobilization and Allocation Committee
OPMP	One Plan Management Plan
OPSC	One Plan Steering Committee
PAR	*Public Administration Reform*

PCG	*Programme Coordination Group*
PUNO	Participating UN Organisation
RC	Resident Coordinator
RCO	Resident Coordinator's Office
RMT	Resources Management Team
SBA	Standard Basic Agreement
SEDP	Socio-Economic Development Plan
SEDS	Socio-Economic Development Strategy
SPI	Strategic Partnership Initiative
TNTF	Tripartite National Task Force
UN	*United Nations*
UNAIDS	*United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS*
UNCT	UN Country Team
UNCTAD	UN Conference on Trade and Development
UNDAF	UN Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	*United Nations Development Programme*
UNEP	UN Environment Programme
UNESCO	*United Nations Economics, Science and Education Organization*
UNFPA	*United Nations Population Fund*
UNICEF	*United Nations Childrens Fund*
UNIDO	*United Nations Industrial Development Organization*
UNIFEM	*United Nations Development Fund for Women*
UNODC	*United Nations Office on Drug and Crimes*
UNV	*United Nations Volunteers*
WHO	*World Health Organization*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

1. This report presents an evaluation of the "One UN Initiative" in Viet Nam, which started in February 2006. Initially it focused on five pillars of UN reform: One Plan, One Budget, One Leader, One Set of Management Practices and One Green UN House. Vietnam later added One Voice. The evaluation tries to go beyond scrutiny of process and seek verifiable evidence of progress towards effectiveness. Methodology is described in Chapter 2.

2. Viet Nam has emerged as a global leader in the promotion and implementation of the aid effectiveness agenda, as exemplified by the 2005 Hanoi Core Statement on Aid Effectiveness (HCS), a localised interpretation of commitments and indicators under the Paris Declaration which outlines the 5 pillars of engagement (ownership, alignment, harmonization/simplification, management for results and mutual accountability).

3. UN reform had been actively promoted by the UN Secretary-General since the late 1990's. Following concerns about declining relevance to the needs of the country the government challenged the UN to implement reform and reposition itself in line with the provisions of the HCS and to build on UN comparative advantage to improve support to national policies. Bilateral donors expressed support for such a change and this led to a unique tripartite engagement led by government, with the UN and bilateral donors together. There was general agreement that a repositioned UN means moving from a narrow service delivery project focus to encompass better coordinated, and more substantive policy support.

4. The original objectives were most ambitious when initially only three UN ExCom agencies were involved, referring to 'transformation of the three agencies into one agency', and 'unification of management, budgets, programmes and management practices'. But even then there was little clarity of strategic intent, with the focus being more on how the system would operate rather than why. The evaluation team was asked to clarify the underlying strategic intent which has been summarised as: "to improve the effectiveness of the UN system to contribute to national development priorities and move towards providing high-quality policy advice and advocacy, focusing on the UN's normative role."

5. In early 2006 the UNCT agreed on a 'two track' approach, in which agencies ready to join the unified structure could do so immediately, while the specialized agencies would opt in or out depending on their specific circumstances and within their own time frames. Donors signed up to give practical support in the form of guaranteed multi-year un-earmarked financing of the funding gap in the first One Plan through to 2010. But after the first One Plan (OP1) was developed and before implementation could start, five of the other non-Participating Agencies intervened, arguing that they had been excluded from discussions and decisions, and that the arrangements failed adequately to support national development objectives. Accordingly the approach was revised for all 14 agencies, but with a drastic reduction in scope. The second One Plan (OP2) started in 2008 so there has been less than two years experience with the reforms.

6. Whilst the opportunity was lost to pilot a radical integration of three agencies and the intervention set back the pace of change, tackling the whole 14, albeit

at a reduced scope, arguably provides a more challenging test for sustainable reform.

PROGRESS UNDER THE SIX PILLARS

7. Objectives and achievements are assessed for each pillar in turn. A statement of conclusion, lessons and recommendations is given at the end of each chapter and the lessons are reproduced in this summary.

One Plan

8. One Plan was developed in two phases, first for an initial six agencies and then for 14. The evaluation has assessed the strategic focus and evidence of a resulting move 'upstream' in the work of the agencies.

9. Members of the UNCT argue strongly that the extensive effort that went into re-planning had a marked benefit in reducing duplication and overlap of functions or activities and identified opportunities for improved synergies, further reinforced through the Programme Coordination Groups (PCG).

10. Whilst government's main concern was that the new plan should continue to support national plans and honour existing agreements, donors' expectations were for more substantial change and their reviews of both OP1 and OP2 called for more strategic and outcome orientation.

11. Despite little evidence of a reorientation in line with comparative advantage and competencies, all parties recognise the change in culture within the 14 agencies that enabled the OP2 to be developed and the benefits that come from government and development partners sharing information more effectively, making efforts towards joint programming and being able to access all UN programmes in one coherent document.

12. Evidence to support claims of a move upstream comes from a range of achievements that illustrate a policy engagement. Many examples have been offered by respondents within the UN and confirmed by other stakeholders.

13. The most radical change under the one plan has been the successful introduction of Programme Coordination Groups (PCG). These are constructed around programme outcomes and can hold agencies to account for delivering results under the one plan. Suggestions are given in the main text for ways to strengthen the Next One Plan.

14. Efforts have been made to strengthen Monitoring and Evaluation but difficulties in the results structures of plans and specification of indicators remain a challenge for the Next One Plan. More success has been achieved with reporting progress under the reforms to the Tripartite National Task Force.

One Plan Lessons

- A continuing process and succession of objective statements complicates judgements about the extent of change and creates a situation where different stakeholders hold varying expectations. New countries embarking on UN reform should endeavour to create clear and explicit objectives.

- The tripartite structure developed in Viet Nam has been an effective mechanism to ensure the reform process has been led by government and has facilitated close engagement with the UN by donors.

- It is preferable to time the start of reform either to coincide with a new planning cycle or towards the end of a cycle. Starting soon after the beginning of the UNDAF period in Viet Nam left the One Plan constrained by prior commitments and with less flexibility for reform for a prolonged period before the Next One Plan starts. The varying planning cycles of UN agencies is an impediment to greater coherence in planning.

- Plans need to be inclusive of all agencies in order to enable a PCG structure to be created. PCG should be implemented first in sequence, fitted as best as possible to existing plans, so that staff have some experience of new ways of working and the new planning cycle can be driven from a multi-agency, outcome orientation.

- Donor support can be used to stimulate more upstream ways of working but arrangements need to include plans for institutionalising the change.

- Existing work on support to policy can be retro-fitted into a typology of support. That analysis has the potential to help structure arrangements under the Next One Plan to ensure that the work reflects the comparative advantages of the UN and is planned to be measurable.

- PCG are the most important element of the One Plan pillar and have enabled an orientation towards outcomes, new collaborative ways of working and a changed awareness of accountability to be introduced.

- It is important to achieve a human resources capacity assessment early in the reform process to enable planning for future needs. The lack of progress in this respect in Viet Nam makes this a high priority for the run up to the Next One Plan.

- Joint programmes have clear potential to benefit from and reinforce the workings of PCG and will benefit from detailed evaluation of their outcomes.

- There is evidence of clear benefits in promoting gender equality through the Gender PCG. It is important that the structure of PCG reflects not only direct support to the national strategy but also global UN obligations such as for gender equality, HIV and others.

One Budget/ One Plan Fund

15. One Budget/One Plan Fund brings a more strategic way to mobilise and allocate financial resources. The rationale behind introducing One Budget is that (i) the coordination in financial management takes place at the country level, (ii) the usage of resources is more effective and efficient in terms of reduced spending on administration and representative, and (iii) the unified budget is a prerequisite to a unified governance structure because it gives the Resident Coordinator more authority to manage the finances of the United Nations in Viet Nam than previously.

16. The Resident Coordinator leads the country-level mobilization effort for fund-raising for the One Plan Fund. The resources mobilized are in addition to those made available directly to Participating UN Organizations for the implementation of the activities indicated in the One Plan.

17. Donors are encouraged to contribute un-earmarked and multi-year resources. This marks a significant shift in donor support as they typically provided funds to the UN via earmarked funding for projects and programmes within specific UN agencies. The un-earmarked funding mechanism maximizes flexibility and adaptation to national priorities, is less tying, is less influenced by political issues, and provides a prompt funding response.

18. Since commencement of the One Budget, One Plan Fund has been allocated 5 times by a dedicated Mobilisation and Allocation Committee. The process has evolved, and now uses an assessment proforma that takes into account alignment with national policies and some aspects of past performance. The approach is systematic but is criticised as not leading to strategic funding decisions because of difficulties in scoring, self assessment by the agencies and a lack of separation of functions in the process of submission and review.

19. Some donors argue that it is better if the Plan is underfunded in order to help focus support on high priority programmes but interviewees in the RCO and UN agencies do not share this view. The One Plan Fund is an important tool to help stimulate greater strategic focus and outcome orientation.

One Budget/ One Plan Fund Lessons

- The experience of going through the allocation process has been really important – perhaps more than the outcome. But the allocation mechanism has not really been tested as the Plan has been so fully funded.

- The One Fund is an important incentive for changing agency programmes in line with One Plan intentions. The One Fund should be used to bring funding up to an agreed budget amount and adjusted if Other Resources become available.

- Donor support for the One Plan Fund has enabled a more flexible source of funding to be available for allocation at country level. The fund allocation process has been developed with more objective criteria and has potential to be effective. But there is little evidence yet of allocation decisions being used to make difficult choices and prioritise for One Plan outcome objectives. If, owing to consensual decision-making by OPFMAC, the allocation process does not give rise to allocations in line with plan priorities and proven agency performance, donors will need to consider whether it would be more effective to fund specific outcomes.

One Leader

20. The notion of having One Leader is fundamental to the original concept of reform. The challenge is how to create a modern management structure with clear lines of accountability that enable strategic decisions on programmes and finance to be taken.

21. UN agencies have struggled to develop effective and transparent accountability frameworks. Recognising the more ambitious objectives of the One UN initiative in Viet Nam, in parallel to system-wide arrangements specific proposals were developed through a Memorandum of Understanding on 'One Leader'. This document is a major step forward towards improved management and accountability. It is a voluntary agreement among the UN agencies. It brings a stronger framework for financial management and includes provisions for the performance evaluation of the UNCT members and the performance of the RC. The UNCT in Viet Nam was able to achieve these

arrangements by the strong commitment shown by government and donors to the reform.

22. Many examples have arisen in recent years where the UN has been able to provide stronger leadership. Some are related to the examples of policy support, others include better UN representation. Donors argue that without strong leadership, commitments to the One Fund would not have been so great. Under the RC leadership, PCG co-convenors have the authority to speak on behalf of the UN agencies.

23. UN staff speak of the vision, drive and leadership from the RC: "previously we were not a team". Agencies continue to deal bilaterally with technical ministry counterparts, but now have a common UN position.

24. The success of the One UN initiative has demonstrated substantial benefits from working together, but big challenges remain over allocation of budgets, agency profile and programme design. Senior officials in the UN argue there is still a need to break the 'entitlement culture' among agencies. The high degree of funding has limited the need for difficult financial decisions.

One Leader Lessons

- The UNCT in Viet Nam has been able to achieve progress towards One Leader by a combination of vision and ambitions among UNCT members and the strong commitment shown by government and donors to the reform.

- The creation of a 'Code of Conduct and Terms of Reference for UN Country Team Viet Nam to implement the One UN Initiative' was an important innovation that enabled the UNCT to progress beyond system-wide arrangements through the UNDG.

One Set of Management Practices

25. Harmonization of UN business practices for development is very much in line with high level UN reform and reform that the Government is pursuing. By 2005, the management practices of UN were recognised as programmatically fragmented and administratively profligate. Harmonization of the UN's business practices is seen by the Government as a core part of the One UN initiative in line with the implementation of the Government PAR strategy and Hanoi Core Statement.

26. There are four areas of work which can be divided into two subgroups. The first one is considered as UN business with external stakeholders, mostly with the national implementing partners (NIPs). They are dealing with issues of Harmonized Programme and Project Management Guidelines (HPPMG) which applies only to the three ExCom agencies, Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT), Cost Norms, and Standard Basic Agreements (SBA). The second subgroup is the back office business/ common services of UN internally which are essentially defined as joint operational arrangements of UN organizations that aim to improve efficiency and effectiveness. These cover areas such as travel and accommodation services, security, procurement, maintenance and supplies, joint training, some administrative services/processes, and IT support.

27. The UNCT considers that harmonization of management practices presents the most daunting procedural challenges, but the potential benefits in the form of lower transaction costs are very large.

28. The HPPMG and HACT in particular are a step towards promoting Government ownership. They are in line with Indicator 6 in HCS on Alignment and Indicator 10 on Harmonisation and Simplification.

29. There appears to be better support from UN headquarters for reform of management practices than in the areas of programmes, management and accountability. Progress in Viet Nam is another example of the unique success of the tripartite approach, particularly with active government participation in the reform process.

30. It is difficult to measure exactly and quantitatively to what extent the harmonisation of UN business practices and development of common services increased efficiency so far. For the common services some efficiency gains are already indicated in direct cost savings. It is important not to overestimate potential saving without taking into account unforeseen costs associated with new ways of working in the One Green UN House. For the harmonisation of UN business practices benefits have already been gained by application of the GoV/UN/EU cost norms but not yet for HPPMG and HACT.

One Set of Management Practices Lessons

- The UNCT is aware that the area of harmonization of management practices presents the most daunting procedural challenges, but the potential benefits in the form of lower transaction costs are very large.

- The HPPMG and HACT are a step towards promoting Government ownership. They are in line with Indicator 6 in Hanoi Core Statement on Alignment and Indicator 10 on Harmonisation and Simplification. It is expected that the HPPMG will become a useful tool for daily work and contribute to simpler business processes and lower transaction costs with clear roles and responsibilities of those managing and implementing programmes/projects.

- The GoV/UN/EU Cost Norms has created greater transparency and a basis for harmonization and alignment between donors and government, in the spirit of the Hanoi Core Statement on Aid Effectiveness.

- Harmonisation of Standard Basic Agreements is an important issue but not one that need delay other practical aspects of reform including moving forward with the Green One House. Response from the UN side is largely determined by legal departments in the headquarters of the various agencies and is an example of where support from headquarters has not kept pace with needs at country level. UN organisations are separate legal entities, hence it would be difficult to achieve a single SBA.

- In other respect, harmonisation of business practices appears to be under better support from the UN head quarters with General Assembly Resolution 63-311 (on System wide Coherence), UNDG Guidelines (for OMT) and UNDG framework on HACT.

One Green UN House

31. Donors and the government both consider that deepening UN Reform requires co-location in a One UN House. Given the current physical arrangement of 16 UN organisations in ten separate locations in Hanoi, the co-location in One House is seen as a necessary step to overcome the "silo mentality" of the organisations. Moreover, co-location is expected to enhance

development effectiveness through functional clustering of staff in PCG groups. The One House is planned to be a Green building with opportunities to cut greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental impacts such as reduced waste and water use.

32. The One Green UN House in Vietnam has received unprecedented support in the form of donor financial commitments and allocation of a building from the Government. This reflects the unique benefits that come from the tripartite arrangement.

33. Considerable progress has been made to date with: signed donor agreements for USD7 million; signed letters from 15 of 16 UN agencies committing funds to the balance of USD3.6 million; a letter of approval from the Prime Minister; Request for Proposal issued for the Design Team and Cost Consultants; and a Design Brief which sets out in detail quality and environment performance criteria of the project which has been approved by the Project Board.

34. The One Green House is a high visibility project that will bring credit to all parties if it can be seen to be managed efficiently. Generally every activity is on the critical path, but the project is currently running a little behind schedule. Resolution of some legal agreements presents the greatest risk to timely completion as unless these are all signed within the next 6 months, UNDP will not be in a position to call for tenders for the civil works.

35. Experiences show that in Viet Nam, delay of any construction project is quite common given the complication of legal framework and administrative systems. It is clear that there are still communication issues on both sides for how to accelerate the process. Government's view is that UNDP needs to process its procedures faster by decentralising more decision making to the UNDP at country level. In view of the very heavy workload faced by the responsible unit under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs it is important that it can demonstrate that it has adequate capacity to deal with the complex legal and technical issues inherent in the One Green UN House. Various suggestions have been put forward to ensure the process keeps momentum and goes forward efficiently and are taken up in the recommendations to this evaluation.

One Green UN House Lessons

- The One Green UN House in Viet Nam has received donor financial support and allocation of a building from the Government, plus financial commitments from UN agencies. This support is unprecedented among the UN reform pilots and reflects the unique benefits that come from the tripartite arrangement.

- As a demonstration example of the best possible eco-friendly and energy efficient office building in the region, the Green One UN House in Ha Noi will be a strong statement of the UN's commitment to environmental sustainability and addressing climate change.

One Voice

36. The rational of having this extra pillar is the identified need for a stronger UN voice on key development challenges in Viet Nam in support of the implementation of the One Plan, where strategic, coherent communications support was needed. The process of reform and change must also be effectively managed, explained and understood.

37. The concept of One Voice has a close link to One Leader. The One Voice is closely linked to the UN as a whole, with strong linkages to the UNCT, the RC, RCO and the PCGs. The One UN Communications team takes the lead in development and the plan/strategy is approved by the Management Board for the Communications team, comprising of participating HoAs and Head RCO. The UNCT approves a common set of advocacy messages to be used on an annual basis.

38. In December 2006 the UN Communications Team was officially formed with the participation of 5 agencies: UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNAIDS and UNV. As a result, One Voice is 'a pilot within a pilot'.

39. The joint team now comprises 11 communications staff from five agencies[1] plus three externally funded under a single management board which consists of Heads of Agencies of UNICEF and UNDP and one rotating member of the other 3 agencies, and the Head of RCO.

40. The Communications Team worked in a matrix structure for the first 18 months and is now under single management. The team has adopted UNICEF's job format for revised and generic job descriptions and a coomon performance assessment tool will be applied for all staff from 2010.

41. During interviews with different stakeholders, most provided positive assessments on the performance of the team in external communication, such as diversified services, better response and good quality of performance. Feedback on internal communications is also positive.

42. Differing perceptions arise about the extent to which One Voice has been achieved – to some extent driven by whether informants' interests are in One UN or Delivering as One.

43. The intention that the RC will take a lead on common issues that require the UNCT to speak with one voice, and present a common position and views is assessed by most interviewees to have been achieved.

One Voice Lessons

- Experience shows that UN agency staff can work in an environment with common job descriptions, managed by staff from other agencies, under a common work plan, and assessed using a common performance assessment tool. Barriers between agencies can be overcome.

- The set-up of the Team, with an appropriate skills mix, effective reporting lines, and a common workspace and work plan, has enhanced the ability of the Team to respond to communications needs in an integrated manner.

- The RC is acknowledged as the voice of the UN, but the example of the Tet card with signatures of all agencies demonstrates the challenge still to be overcome in agency image and visibility.

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[1] *Some other agencies have dedicated communication capacity, but not embedded into the Communications team. Most other agencies do not currently have dedicated communications capacity or budget, but might have appointed focal points for communications.*

CONCLUSIONS

Impressive progress

44. The Country Led Evaluation of the One UN Initiative in Viet Nam has found that the achievements to date are highly relevant, high or moderately effective, moderately efficient and likely to be sustainable.

45. There are limitations in some of the assessments. Progress towards effectiveness is constrained by the fact that the whole of the period evaluated falls within a single UNDAF cycle and more strategic change must wait for the Next One Plan.

46. In a similar way, improvements in efficiency will be more demonstrable when reforms under the One Set of Management Practices and One Green UN House come into operation. Judgements on sustainability are particularly difficult. The evaluation team has assessed sustainability as 'likely' because there is clear evidence of strong support and commitment by the Government of Vietnam, which has been a leader in much of this process, and by the community of bilateral donors, who collectively form a tripartite structure with the UN.

47. The One UN reforms have tried to tackle fundamental problems with management and accountability that beset the UN agencies. Considering what might reasonably have been expected, the performance of the reform is remarkable and brings forward many lessons for expanding the initiative to other countries.

Summary of evaluation assessments

	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Sustainability
One Plan	High-Moderate	Moderate-High	High	Likely
One Plan Fund	High	High-Moderate	Moderate	Likely with risks
One Leader	High	High	Moderate	Likely
One Set of Management Practices	High	Moderate	Moderate	Likely
Green One House	High	Moderate	Moderate	Likely
One Voice	High	High	High	Likely

48. The reforms make a specific contribution in progress towards the Hanoi Core Statement on Aid Effectiveness, especially through the work done under government leadership to prepare for harmonised project management guidelines. Cross cutting initiatives, especially gender, have benefitted from a higher profile under the reforms.

49. There still remain areas where progress is held back by the actions of the headquarters of UN agencies. The most significant is that a single format for reporting has not yet been approved, but other areas also need attention including more active engagement on revision of legal agreements, progress towards job descriptions that take account of new ways of working, more

effective accountability systems and a rationalised approach to agency visibility at country level.

Progress towards the strategic intent

50. Progress has been made in all areas identified by the evaluation team so the evaluation concludes that progress has been made towards the strategic intent. But in some areas progress is slight. The challenge for the Next One Plan is to continue that reform and demonstrate a substantial shift away from many service delivery projects to fewer more influential projects that deliver strong outcomes that support national objectives in those areas of UN comparative advantage.

RECOMMENDATIONS

51. Recommendations have been developed under each of the six pillars in a box at the end of each chapter. They are reproduced here, reorganised according to the different stakeholders to whom they refer. First are three overarching recommendations.

Recommendation to the Government of Viet Nam.

52. Government leadership and support has been an essential factor in the progress that has been made with the One UN initiative. That support needs to continue with special emphasis on mechanisms to improve the planning and implementation of UN projects and programmes. Working through the TNTF, government should support the PCG arrangements, seeing them not as an extra layer between government ministries and UN agencies, but as a new and more effective way of obtaining better value from UN expertise and resources. To enable that to happen, the Next One Plan needs to be much more effectively structured to support the SEDP and designed with measurable outcomes that can be monitored. To ensure UN support is well prioritised to support national objectives, further reforms are necessary to improve the managerial authority of the Resident Coordinator. Government should advocate for those reforms through the UN Development Group and the Executive Boards of UN Agencies.

Recommendation to bilateral donors

53. Direct support and involvement by bilateral donors through the Tripartite National Task Force has been a special feature of the One UN initiative in Viet Nam. There has been sufficient progress under the initiative for donors to continue their support by funding the One Plan Fund for the Next One Plan period. The mechanism of pooled funding under the One Plan Fund has provided a strong incentive for reformed ways of working within the UN. But further work is needed to ensure that funds are allocated in line with national priorities and UN comparative advantage. Systems need to be improved to introduce clearer separation of functions and more objective assessment of priorities. Donor support has also helped initiate improved UN support to policy advice. Fund allocation and policy support are two areas where donors should continue to use their influence and technical expertise to help maintain the pace of reform and move further towards the strategic intent.

Recommendation to the headquarters of UN Agencies

54. Perceptions among UN staff at country level are that UN reform would proceed faster and more efficiently with better support from UN Agency HQ. There needs to be stronger and more demonstrative support by agency headquarters in several areas: working through UNDG to reform accountability arrangements and give the Resident Coordinator clear managerial authority in the UNCT; revision of job descriptions to take account of working through PCGs and other forms of joint programmes; rationalisation of agency identity at country level so that heads of agency work as a unified management team with less need for separate visibility; revision of legal agreements to enable faster progress with the Green One UN House. And last, but not least, agreement over a common format for agency reporting that can be used within PCGs and for reporting to headquarters.

Recommendations from the six pillars

55. UN Country Team

- In recognition of the shift in accountability and central role of the PCG, these groups should have the lead role in working with government to define the scope of work and target outcomes for the Next One Plan, to which UN agencies will then be asked to deliver support.

- The plan for 2011 should be structured as much as possible to round off activities under the OP2 to enable a fresh start under the NOP.

- The Next One Plan needs to build on current achievements and demonstrate a more explicit approach to reform. Several key elements for the Next One Plan follow naturally from the experience under OP2:

  - Harmonisation of planning cycles with clear commitments from the headquarters of UN Agencies to work within a five-year cycle.
  - More explicit identification of UN comparative advantage and agency role in support of Viet Nam in the implementation of obligations from UN conventions, resolutions and treaties.
  - A more systematic approach to policy support.
  - Planning to measure outcomes of support for policy advice.
  - More explicit justification for service delivery work that demonstrates clear linkages to UN roles and comparative advantages or is used to gather data or pilot approaches in support of upstream policy support.

- Accountabilities for PCG need to be rationalised so that all UN staff are accountable for their delivery of outputs to the UN co-convenor of the PCG with which they work.

- In view of the central role of M&E to the success of the reform, consideration should be given to creating a One M&E team modelled on the experience with the One Communications Team.

- MPI has agreed to the Programmatic and Budgetary Framework for 2011. Actions needed now by the UN are to justify the plan and prepare the budget of the extension year. The envelope of OPF resources for the next OP is not yet known and there is a funding gap in 2011.

- The UNCT, working with OPFMAC should develop a new budget cycle process that brings a clear separation of function between submitting financial proposals, and reviewing and approving proposals, and improve the decision-

making process to ensure fund allocation is driven by plan priorities rather than agency entitlements.

- The UNCT should revise the 'Code of Conduct' for the Next One Plan period to progress further towards the concept of 'unified management' in the 'Agreed Principles, Objectives and Instruments to achieve One United Nations in Vietnam'. Specifically, greater financial and programmatic management authority should be vested in the RC.

- UNCT should press for all agencies to make plans to work under the HPPMG during the Next One Plan.

- An approach needs to be developed such that the Communications Team service is available to all UN agencies, not only those that contribute directly. Funding from the One Fund might be the means to achieve this.

- In view of the successful experience with the Communications Team consideration should be given to expanding this arrangement to other core areas such as monitoring and evaluation of the One Plan.

56. UN Country Team/ Monitoring & Evaluation Working Group

- M&E is an essential aspect of the One Plan because it provides the evidence of performance that guides future work. Maintaining a record of activities and delivery of outputs may be useful within the PCG but for reporting to the UNCT the format needs to describe contribution to outcomes. This requires a change during planning so that results chains are described and adoption of a reporting approach that describes how outcomes contribute to outcomes. Examples can be found in the work of some bilateral donors and their governments.

57. RCO

- New allocation criteria are relatively comprehensive, but require further improvements for the Next One Plan such as with regard to indicator weight, some indicators being too general and difficult to assess, and performance indicators to provide more evidence of progress towards outcomes.

- Efforts should be made to try and identify those elements of funding that are being applied to cross cutting issues of gender and human rights, to link to reporting on cross cutting issues.

58. UN Agency HQ

- The job descriptions of all heads of agencies and relevant professional/technical staff should include their role in PCG and that role form part of annual performance assessment.

- The practice of double reporting through PCG and by agencies to their headquarters needs to stop. Whilst this is a decision for UN agency headquarters, the Government of Viet Nam can support the One UN process by declaring its wish to all agencies that in future all reporting should be based on a single common format.

- In recognition of the spirit and nature of reform in Viet Nam and in response to leadership by GoV, those UN agencies concerned with renegotiating their SBA should commit to an agreed timetable that is aligned with the move to One Green UN House.

59. Tripartite National Task Force

- The TNTF needs to support the One Green UN House process and help create a mechanism by which DIPSERCO receives adequate technical

support to manage the complex legal and technical issues with the Hanoi People's Committee. Consideration should be given as to how MOFA can lead a process to provide the necessary support and establish a clear understanding with DIPSERCO on the project delivery mechanisms and timetable

60. Donors

- The One Plan Fund has been an effective mechanism and donors should support continuation of the Fund for the Next One Plan period, pending more general review of donor funding for the UN at country level. However, donors should retain the option of earmarking by outcomes if there is no evidence of improvements in the allocation process.

61. UNDG

- The UNDG Management and Accountability Framework of 2008 needs to be revised and brought up to date to reflect the experience of the UN Pilots. Experience from Viet Nam calls for simpler statements of authority over resources, budget allocation and programming for the RC and clearer lines of accountability between agency members of the UNCT and the RC.

A. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The "One UN Initiative" in Viet Nam started in February 2006, focusing initially on four pillars of UN reform including the One Plan, One Budget, One Leader and One Set of Management Practices. The Government of Viet Nam added One Green UN House and subsequently the Communications Team became the sixth pillar. For the first One Plan (OP1) in Vietnam, only six UN agencies participated. On 20 June 2008, 14 UN organizations in Viet Nam signed up to One Plan 2 (OP2). UN reform is being now implemented in eight pilot countries and there have been five self starters which implement different "One" pillars of the "Delivering as One" (DaO) initiative.

1.2 At the global level, UN reform is increasingly becoming important. The senior leadership of the UN in a visit to Vietnam in 2009 addressed the government and donor community with the message that there would be no business for the UN if the UN keeps doing business as usual.

1.3 UN reform in Viet Nam has benefitted from a unique and strong tripartite partnership with a Tripartite National Task Force (TNTF) comprised of representatives of the four Government Aid Coordinating Agencies (GACA; Ministry of Planning and Investment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Finance, and the Office of Government), representatives from the donor community and the participating UN Organizations.

1.4 The UN Initiative in Vietnam has been more advanced than in other pilots with the sixth "One" pillar. Vietnam is the first one to have One Voice – expressed specifically through One UN Communication Team. Five agencies have co-located their professional staff to this team under one manager in order to enhance and strengthen the consistency in UN messages and advocacy.

1.5 The Inter-Governmental Meeting of the DaO Pilots in Kigali in October 2009 decided to carry out country-led evaluations to generate lessons for moving UN reform forward. The findings of reform good practices as well as challenges and recommendations will be the major input for the DaO Conference in Ha Noi scheduled for June 2010 which is intended to devise a clear way forward for the further institutionalisation of the UN reform process in subsequent years.

1.6 The overall DaO aim (so-called '*Greater Why*') is that '*The population and institutions of Viet Nam benefit from a more strategic and effective contribution of the United Nations to the attainment of national priorities, under national leadership*.' Within this overarching aim, this evaluation in Viet Nam will assess the following issues:

   a) The extent to which the "One UN Initiative" has contributed to the attainment of national development results and priorities;
   b) To what extent the "One UN Initiative" in Viet Nam is on track to achieve the expected results against the strategic intent; specifically the key mechanisms, processes and structures set up under the "One UN Initiative" to implement change and improve effectiveness;
   c) The extent to which the "One UN Initiative" is contributing to the principles and recommendations of the Ha Noi Core Statement on Aid Effectiveness;
   d) Identify lessons learned from the implementation of the "One UN Initiative" in Viet Nam;
   e) Make recommendations on which actions would be required by key stakeholders in order to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the "One UN Initiative" in Viet Nam up to and including the finalization of the next One Plan (2012-2016)

OBJECTIVES OF THE ONE UN INITIATIVE

1.7   There is no clear single objective for the reform. The primary point of reference is the report of the High Level Panel, in which the concepts of 'One UN' and 'Delivering as One' (DaO) were introduced. Box 1 reproduces the key text.

Box 1 One UN for development - at country level

We recommend the establishment of One UN at country level, with one leader, one programme, one budget and, where appropriate, one office.

To bring about real progress towards the MDGs and other internationally agreed development goals, we believe that the UN System needs to "deliver as one" at the country level. To focus on outcomes and improve its effectiveness, the UN should accelerate and deepen reforms to establish unified UN country teams—with one leader, one programme, one budgetary framework and where appropriate one office. To deliver as one, UN country teams should also have an integrated capacity to provide a coherent approach to cross-cutting issues, including sustainable development, gender equality and human rights.[2][3]

1.8   However, this was subsequently rephrased as experience was gained with the pilot countries and in response to the interests and wishes of governments. The changing phrasing, described under 'strategic intent' has had the effect of leaving different stakeholders with different perceptions of the intended change, which in turn affects their views of how much progress has been made. We return to this important point in the findings in later Chapters. Having a clear objective is desirable for the evaluation and the terms of reference took that into account in point b) above with the concept of 'strategic intent'. The approach to this is described in the context of the reform in Viet Nam in Chapter 3.

STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

1.9   The remainder of this report is set out as follows. Chapter 2 summarises the methodology and analytical framework from the Inception Report and explains how it was applied in practice. Chapter 3 sets out the background and context in Viet Nam. Chapters 4 to 9 contain the main treatment of findings, structured according to the 6 pillars of reform in Viet Nam. Chapter 10 draws together the evidence into an overall assessment of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. Lessons and recommendations are identified topic by topic in the text. These are drawn together in Chapter 11 and 12. Terms of reference, a list of people interviewed and supporting analysis are in annexes.

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[2] *"Delivering as One" Report of the High Level Panel on System-Wide Coherence to the UN Secretary General 2006*
[3] *The TOR for this evaluation commented further that 'This essential aim of the DaO initiative is the* central reference for any related evaluations. The report of the High Level Panel also brought to the fore the need for the UN to gradually move away from traditional service delivery and project implementation towards <u>high quality policy advice and advocacy</u>.' (Background, second paragraph)

2 METHODOLOGY AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

2.1   The methodology for this evaluation falls between a process evaluation and an evaluation of development effectiveness. A formal independent evaluation is planned under the auspices of the UN General Assembly and this will tackle the question of effectiveness.[4] The briefing to the evaluation consultants was that this Country-Led Evaluation should go beyond scrutiny of process and seek verifiable evidence of *progress towards* effectiveness. The evaluation is not a meta-evaluation as there have not been any contributory evaluation studies of the elements of the DaO approach, nor is it a theory-based evaluation as there is no model of causality against which performance can be tested.

2.2   The questions posed in the Terms of Reference were used by the evaluation team to develop an Evaluation Framework[5] which helped the team identify potential sources of information from documents and interviews with key informants. The framework is organised around four evaluation criteria: Relevance, Effectiveness; Efficiency and Sustainability. Internationally agreed definitions of these criteria are:[6]

- **Relevance:** The **extent** to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and donors' policies.

- **Effectiveness:** The **extent** to which the development intervention's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.

- **Efficiency:** A **measure** of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results.

- **Sustainability:** The **probability** of continued long-term benefits. The resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time.

2.3   A minority of questions were answered through scrutiny of documents alone. Most questions required at the very least follow-up or cross-checking of findings through interviews as well and some questions could be answered solely by interviews. A list of all the people interviewed is at Annex B. A bibliography of documents consulted in addition to specific references in the text, is at Annex C.

2.4   A total of 14 UN Agencies are involved in the One UN Initiative and there were 11 Programme Coordinating Groups (PCG) up to the end of March 2010. In order to be able to probe in depth for some of the issues raised in the TOR, the team sampled a small number of PCG and agencies for more detailed enquiry, after agreement with the Evaluation Management Group/ Tripartite Working Committee.

- **PCGs**: Social and Development Policy; Gender; Governance; Disaster Management

- **UN Agencies**: UNDP; UNICEF; FAO; UNIDO and WHO

- **Government agencies**: MPI; MOFA; MARD; MOLISA;

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[4] Resolution 63/311 and Follow-up A/64/589 'Independent evaluation of lessons learned from "Delivering-as-One" programme country pilots'
[5] Table 2 in the Inception Report
[6] *Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2002) Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results-Based Management. Paris*

ANALYSIS

2.5 The evaluation has taken a pragmatic approach in responding to the questions in the terms of reference to make judgements against the '*statement of strategic intent*' set out in Chapter 3. There are limitations in the extent to which progress can be evaluated. The period of time since the One UN Initiative started is very short; performance reports are limited in scope and coverage, and deal primarily with activities and outputs, rather than outcomes; and the scope of reform is very complex without a clear intervention logic that explains how changes to institutional arrangements and ways of working lead through to improved development effectiveness. It would be very difficult to identify the contribution of the UN as a whole to Viet Nam's development during this time period; to attribute improved effectiveness to the One UN Initiative is even harder. The main test of performance is comparison between the situation now and the situation before the One UN Initiative started. However, there is no clear start date. Reforms to UN planning arguably commenced during the preparation of the UN Development Assistance Framework which predates the One Plan, however that mainly concerned the ExCom Agencies and was far smaller in scope than the subsequent One Plan 2. Judgements are based wherever possible on document comparisons but the greater part of information comes from interviews and perceptions of key stakeholders about the changes.

2.6 In the absence of an intervention logic the evaluation team proposed a set of development hypotheses in their Inception Report. These hypotheses create a progressive logic that describes how changes to planning lead to improved resource allocations which, supported by new organisational arrangements, lead to a shift in the nature and quality of support provided by the UN and result in broad-based perceptions of reduced transaction costs and improved effectiveness. For the key question of greater effectiveness, if the evaluation finds evidence to support these hypotheses, then it will be plausible to argue that the One UN initiative has had a positive effect on progress being made towards national development objectives.

- plans under OP2 focus on outcomes rather than outputs;
- development of the OP2 has led to improved resource allocations that reflect a clear and strategic plan for the UN to contribute to the attainment of national priorities;
- the PCG structure is perceived by stakeholders to have improved the focus and implementation of programmes (and those perceptions are well triangulated and, or supported by verifiable evidence);
- the changing staff structure and competence in UN agencies reflects a move towards provision of high-quality policy advice and advocacy;
- programmes developed and supported under the OP2 show evidence of a shift in orientation away from output delivery towards provision of high-quality policy advice and advocacy;
- the OP2 is perceived by stakeholders to have led to reduced transaction costs for the UN, Government and donors;
- UN support is perceived by stakeholders to have made a more effective contribution to the attainment of national development results and priorities, and these perceptions are well triangulated and, or supported by verifiable evidence.

2.7 The team recognises that in the absence of quantitative indicators this 'before and after' comparison requires careful interpretation. Preliminary findings were validated in a multi-stakeholder workshop[7] after the main period of data collection and the comments and observations from that workshop have been taken into account in this report.

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[7] Held in Ha Noi on 30th March 2010

3 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF UN REFORM IN VIET NAM

3.1   This chapter deals with three formative issues. Firstly, it describes the context of economic and social change in Viet Nam that created a platform from which reform could be launched. Secondly, the case for reform is restated to emphasise the important leadership of the Government of Viet Nam in this process. Last, is an analysis of the underlying strategic intent. In the absence of clear objectives for reform a review of its conceptualisation sets the scene for the findings in Chapter 4.

RAPID AND DYNAMIC DEVELOPMENT

3.2   Since the beginning of the millennium it has been clear that Viet Nam's unprecedented economic growth was propelling the country towards Middle Income Country status. Whilst global and regional economic pressures make the timing of that graduation uncertain, the trajectory is sufficiently clear for concessional aid donors, International Financial Institutions and the UN to have to plan new relationships and adjust to meet different demands on their services.

3.3   Growth has brought benefits to many citizens in the form of increased disposable income and has stimulated greater mobility of the population. Viet Nam is a favoured destination for foreign direct investment. With the exception of HIV/AIDS (MDG 6) and environmental sustainability (MDG 7) the country is broadly on track to attain the MDGs, but there remain significant geographic differentials with pockets of poverty in remote and mountainous areas and amongst vulnerable groups including ethnic minorities, migrants and the urban poor.

3.4   Recent years have seen Viet Nam broaden its cooperation with different international organisations and other countries in the region and the world at large; and actively participate in multilateral forums such as ASEAN, APEC and ASEM. Negotiations for accession to the World Trade Organisation, were completed by the end of 2006 and Viet Nam hosted the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit that same year. In 2007 Viet Nam was elected to a two year term on the UN Security Council.

RATIONALE FOR REFORM IN VIET NAM

3.5   Viet Nam has emerged as a global leader in the promotion and implementation of the aid effectiveness agenda, as exemplified by the 2005 Hanoi Core Statement on Aid Effectiveness (HCS), the Viet Nam Harmonization Action Plan and other government policies. The Hanoi Core Statement is a localised interpretation of commitments and indicators under the Paris Declaration which outlines the 5 pillars of engagement (ownership, alignment, harmonization/simplification, management for results and mutual accountability).

3.6   In the aftermath of the HCS the International Financial Institutions (IFI) present in Viet Nam organised themselves into the 'Five Banks' consultative grouping. Bilateral donors took some initiatives towards greater coordination through the 'Like Minded Donor Group' and other fora, and some drafted new country strategies to respond to the HCS and prepare for a reduction in ODA and development of new working relationships following Viet Nam's transition to MIC status.[8]

3.7   The government was concerned that the UN did not seem to be responding to the HCS. The flow of ODA from the UN had declined over 20 years from greater than 50% to less than 2% of net receipts. Indeed by 2009, contributions delivered by the UN were substantially lower than those by international NGOs.[9] UN agencies exhibited weak coordination mechanisms and inconsistent technical assistance. Individual agency

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[8] *For example, country strategies by Sweden, 2008; Norway, 2007; DFID 2007.*
[9] *According to interviewees, in 2009 INGOs delivered some US$260 million compared with less than US$100 million through the UN.*

behaviour was focused on trying to raise funds and compete with other sources of development finance. That resulted in agencies adapting to the priorities of their co-financiers and taking on functions that did not accord with their comparative advantage or the mandate of the United Nations.

3.8 In fact, government and partners recognised that the UN's comparative advantage is not financial in nature, but impartiality of advice, convening power and knowledge broker e.g. convening partners around Climate Change, HIV/AIDS, Avian and Human Influenza, Gender, Disaster Management and Human Rights (see Box 2). But despite global initiatives for UN reform led by the UN Secretary-General this awareness had not influenced agency capacity and actions.

Box 2 Comparative advantage of the UN

Principle 3: The comparative advantage of the United Nations lies in support for capacity building; impartial policy support and advice; the provision of objective monitoring and evaluation of development initiatives; access to international experience, expertise and best practice; the promotion of the principles of the United Nations; and support for programmes, projects and initiatives aimed at realizing these principles.

Source: Agreed Principles, Objectives and Instruments to achieve One United Nations in Viet Nam. 18 May 2006

3.9 The government challenged the UN to reform and reposition itself in line with the provisions of the HCS and to build on UN comparative advantage to improve support to national policies. Bilateral donors expressed support for such a change, arguing that 'business as usual was not an option'. There was general agreement that a repositioned UN means moving from a service delivery project focus to better coordinated, and more substantive technical/policy support. But exactly how that would be achieved was less clear. Fortunately, one of the catalytic proposals for UN reform originated in Viet Nam itself and this was a spur to change, although as the next section will show, the final shape of reform took time to settle down.

CONCEPTUALISATION, EVOLUTION AND STRATEGIC INTENT

3.10 In order to understand the evolving purpose behind the One UN Initiative in Vietnam the evaluation team have scrutinised seven background documents that are central to the approach. Full references and extensive quotes are given in Annex D. Table 1 summarises key statements from those documents (emphasis added by the evaluation team).

Table 1 Statements in support of reform

SOURCE	KEY STATEMENTS
"United Nations Reform: A Country Perspective" 2005	UN system at country level remains <u>programmatically fragmented and administratively profligate</u> main reason for the failure of UN reform to extend beyond the *rhetorical* to achieve *operational* unity is that the <u>agencies all maintain separate governance structures and budgets</u> <u>Pressure for change</u> has built up from three directions: the <u>government of Viet Nam</u>; … <u>bilateral donors</u>; and …the <u>World Bank</u> <u>country office reform cannot take place without radical change in both regions and headquarters</u> change at the country level must be guided by three core principles. These principles are i) the organisation must establish <u>clear lines of accountability and governance structures</u> conducive to efficient and effective management; ii) <u>country office finances must be unified</u>; and iii) <u>technical capacity must be concentrated in developing countries</u> and not in headquarters or in regional offices.
"Delivering as One" Report of the High Level Panel, 2006	To <u>focus on outcomes and improve its effectiveness</u> <u>one leader, one programme, one budgetary framework and where</u>

SOURCE	KEY STATEMENTS
	appropriate <u>one office</u>. have an <u>integrated capacity</u> … (for) … <u>cross-cutting issues</u>
Towards One United Nations in Viet Nam, February/June 2006	the <u>transformation of the three agencies into one agency</u> by the end of 2007 <u>one plan, one budget, one management and one set of management practices</u>
Agreed Principles, Objectives and Instruments to achieve One United Nations in Viet Nam, May 2006	To increase the <u>capacity of the United Nations ExCom agencies</u> the <u>efficiency and efficacy of its development activities and initiatives,</u> the <u>unification of management, budgets, programmes and management practices</u>. a <u>single physical location</u> establish <u>unified management practices</u>
UNDP Website, 1 February 2007	can <u>deliver in a more coordinated way</u> ensure <u>faster and more effective development operations</u> establishing a <u>consolidated UN presence</u> – with <u>one programme</u> and <u>one budgetary framework</u> and an <u>enhanced role of the UN Resident Coordinator</u>
Agreed Principles, Objectives and Instruments to achieve One United Nations in Viet Nam, January 2008[10]	increase the <u>effectiveness and efficiency of the UN participating</u> achieve <u>harmonisation of management, budgets, programmes and management practices</u>. <u>a single physical location</u> to <u>establish harmonised and ultimately unified management practices</u>
One Plan 2 introductory text (page 7) June 2008	<u>one programme</u> and <u>one budget</u> to <u>promote greater synergy and complementarity</u> among the Participating UN Organizations; <u>unifying management</u> for <u>greater coherence</u> and <u>strengthened accountability</u>; developing a <u>harmonized set of management practices</u> a <u>single physical location</u> for the UN Organizations in Hanoi; a <u>convening role</u> This role contributes substantially to <u>operationalising the Ha Noi Core Statement</u> <u>assistance to be targeted to more sensitive areas</u> of Viet Nam's transition to middle-income status. <u>strengthen capacity to implement the SEDP</u> enhanced role in <u>promoting global norms and standards</u> The <u>One UN will also be a more effective participant in providing support to policy discussions</u> in Viet Nam and a <u>more powerful advocate</u>

3.11 The various documents reviewed comprise a mixture of content concerned with both objectives and practical implications. Not all carry the same weight; some are agreements with government, others are UN reports or opinion pieces. But they have all influenced the views and actions of stakeholders. Some clear features emerge.

- The desire for one programme, one budget and one physical location is consistent throughout.

- Language about management is more varied with a progression of statements about one leader; one management; unification of management; harmonisation of management; and a harmonised set of management practices

[10] *The 2008 Agreed Principles was only an initial draft by the UNCT, developed during a UNCT Retreat in January 2008 as all HoAs realized the initial Principles were no longer relevant and as a response to the Evaluability Study of November 2007 which highlighted the need for greater clarity in terms of the strategic intent. The 2008 Principles was not an approved document by GoV or the donors or the TNTF and remained a draft by the UNCT.*

3.12 The most ambitious statements are those at the start of the Viet Nam initiative, when initially three UN agencies were involved, referring to '*transformation of the three* agencies *into one agency*', and '*unification of management, budgets, programmes and management practices*'. This perspective was not retained into the wider programme under One Plan 2 with 14 agencies.

3.13 There is little clarity of strategic intent, with the focus being more on **how** the system would operate rather than **why**. Such few statements as there are comprise outward-looking phrases such as to '*focus on outcomes and improve its effectiveness*' and inward-looking performance statements such as '*to promote greater synergy and complementarity*'. There is clearly a tension in the balance between emphasis on working more <u>efficiently</u> together, or working more <u>effectively</u> together, which implies a change in programmes.[11]

3.14 Probably the clearest and most coherent statement can be found in the One Plan 2, which not only draws together the thinking from previous years, but centres the process in the context of supporting national development priorities and the principles under the Ha Noi Core Statement. In the Inception Report the evaluators put forward the statement of strategic intent in Box 3 arguing that it is a fair reflection of the underlying objectives whilst recognising the variation over the period. The objective inherent in the 'Strategic Intent' underlies the approach to evaluating progress using the sequence of hypotheses described in paragraphs 2.5 and 2.6.

Box 3 Strategic Intent of the One UN Initiative in Viet Nam

"*The strategic intent of the One UN Initiative in Viet Nam is to improve the effectiveness of the UN system to contribute to national development priorities and move towards providing high-quality policy advice and advocacy, focusing on the UN's normative role.*"

3.15 Understanding the events of the early period of reform, during the three years 2005 to 2007, is important to understanding the achievements of later years. Three elements are important. Firstly, that the process was strongly driven in-country. Government took a leading role and was supported from an early stage by many of the bilateral donors. Secondly, these intentions were given substance in three influential documents:

- **Towards One United Nations in Viet Nam, February/June 2006** – which presented concrete proposals for implementation steps by three ExCom agencies
- **Agreed Principles, Objectives and Instruments to achieve One United Nations in Viet Nam, May 2006** – a tripartite document defining the nature and scope of reform
- **Terms of Reference for a Tripartite National Task Force to Establish One United Nations in Viet Nam, June 2006** – to define the scope and working modalities of the TNTF, established in April 2006

3.16 These provided a firm foundation for the planned changes and were the basis for the approval of agreed principles, objectives and instruments to achieve One United Nations in Viet Nam by Deputy Prime Minister Vu Khoan in May 2006, which is still the extant formal government commitment.

3.17 Thirdly, the scale of the planned change was relatively limited, being restricted to three ExCom agencies whilst the scope was radical: "To establish One United Nations in Viet Nam based on the unification of management, budgets, programmes and management practices. To achieve one management structure in the second half of 2006; one

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[11] *Efficiency is about **how** things are done "doing things right"; effectiveness is about **what** is done "doing the right things".*

programme and one budget preferably by the end of 2006; and one set of management practices to be introduced immediately and concluded preferably by the end of 2007."12

3.18 The three UN Development Group Executive Committee (UNDG ExCom) agencies represented in Viet Nam - UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF - felt that a unified management structure and programme was within reach.13 In early 2006 the UNCT agreed on a 'two track' approach, in which agencies ready to join the unified structure could do so immediately, while the specialized agencies would opt in or out depending on their specific circumstances and within their own time frames.

3.19 But in parallel with the process in Vietnam, generic descriptions of the Delivery as One pilots were already lowering expectations below the ambitions set in Vietnam.14 Rather than a unified approach, in 2007 the UNDG website describing the pilots referred to more coordinated delivery and a consolidated UN presence. This is significant. From the outset, proponents of reform have argued that success at country level can only be achieved if there are complementary reforms at headquarters and regional levels. Lowering the ambitions of change reduced the pressure on more fundamental and extensive reform of the agencies as a whole.

3.20 Donors signed up to give practical support in the form of guaranteed multi-year un-earmarked financing of the funding gap in the first One Plan through to 2010 (described in more detail in Chapter 5). After the first One Plan (OP1) was developed for the six Participating Agencies and before implementation could start, five of the other non-Participating Agencies intervened at the launch of OP1 in July 2007, arguing that they had been excluded from discussions and decisions, that the OP1 failed to address fully those aspects of the government's Socio Economic Development Plan (SEDP), and failed to provide for the implementation of various treaties, norms and standards which are the responsibility of the Specialised Agencies and to which the government is a signature.*15*

3.21 There is no evidence of dissatisfaction among the Specialised Agencies in the records of UNCT meetings made available to this evaluation prior to the June letter16 and those present at the time confirm that the rejection by the five specialised agencies was unexpected. It is argued by key informants that the reaction was in fact prompted by a realisation that the bilateral donors who were supporting the One Fund would not fund any agencies directly outside the fund mechanism. There is no definitive evidence as to whether that represented a policy change by the donors or poor communication about their intentions with the One Fund. However, it illustrates clearly the importance of financial incentives to stimulate change as it resulted in a dramatic change of pace and scope as the whole machinery of reform was reorganised to prepare a second One Plan that ultimately embraced 14 UN agencies.

3.22 The change of scale from six to 14 gave rise to a reduction in scope. Box 4 compares the objectives from 2008 (OP2) with the original set from 2006. The key changes are highlighted in yellow.*17*

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12 Agreed Principles, Objectives and Instruments to achieve One United Nations in Viet Nam, May 2006 (Objectives 2 & 3)
13 By the time the first One Plan was drafted these three had been joined by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), United Nations Volunteers (UNV) and United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) to make six participants.
14 In this context language is important. The evaluators have retained the term 'One UN Initiative' as set out in their TOR as a more accurate description of the change supported by government and donors in Viet Nam compared with the lower expectations of the other 'Delivering as One' pilot countries.
15 Letter dated 12 June 2007 from Heads of Agencies for FAO, WHO, ILO, UNESCO and UNIDO to Minister of Planning and Investment.
16 The team has been provided with UNCT meeting minutes or action matrices for 2006 through to 2010
17 It should be noted that the 2006 Agreed Principles were developed by the three parties, but were never formally agreed by UN HQ. The 2008 Principles was not an approved document by GoV or the donors or the TNTF and remained a draft by the UNCT.

Box 4 Original objectives of One UN from 2006	Revised objectives 24 January 2008
The main objectives of One United Nations in Viet Nam are: 1. To increase the capacity of the United Nations ExCom agencies in Viet Nam and the efficiency and efficacy of its development activities and initiatives, and to enable these UN agencies to fulfil its mandate more effectively. 2. To establish One United Nations in Viet Nam based on the unification of management, budgets, programmes and management practices. 3. To achieve <mark>one management structure in the second half of 2006; one programme and one budget preferably by the end of 2006; and one set of management practices</mark> to be introduced immediately and concluded preferably by the end of 2007. 4. To have a single physical location for the United Nations in Viet Nam as desired by the United Nations agencies preferably by the end of 2007, contingent upon the necessary financial, technical and administrative conditions. 5. To carry out the commitments contained in the UNDAF and the CPDs and CPAPs of the individual agencies, achieving synergies and efficiencies through the unification of governance structures and procedures. 6. To establish <mark>unified management practices</mark> to simplify planning, reporting and evaluation, and increase accountability. 7. To review the legal documents governing the relationship between the Government of Viet Nam and the United Nations Development Group Executive Committee members represented in Viet Nam. *Source: Agreed Principles, Objectives and Instruments to achieve One United Nations in Viet Nam. 18 May 2006*	The main objectives of One UN Initiative in Viet Nam are: 1. To increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the UN participating organisations in Viet Nam and the quality of its development activities and initiatives to promote value added, and a cohesive policy voice in the social economic context Viet Nam faces. 2. To provide the highest quality policy, economic and technical advice to the Government and people of Vietnam using all the available resources of the UN system and respecting the particular stated mandates of the UN Organizations and thereby avoiding overlap and duplication of action. 3. To achieve <mark>harmonisation of management, budgets, programmes and management practices</mark>. 4. To finalise the draft One Plan 2 and draft One Budget 2 for 14 Participating UN Organisations within the first quarter 2008. 5. To finalize the Harmonized Programme/Project Management Guidelines (HPPMG) by UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA, which is part of the One set of Management Practices, within the first quarter 2008. Other participating UN Organisations are invited to join as observers and requested to consider joining (elements of) HPPMG over time. 6. To refurbish the UN Apartment Building as an eco-friendly UN House – a single physical location for the United Nations in Viet Nam by mid 2009, contingent upon the necessary financial, technical and administrative conditions. 7. To carry out the commitments contained in the SEDP, UNDAF and the programmes of the individual participating UN organisation, through the implementation of the One Plan, and to maximise synergies and efficiencies through harmonisation of governance structures and procedures at country level. 8. To <mark>establish harmonised and ultimately unified management practices</mark> that will simplify planning, reporting, monitoring and evaluation, and increase accountability. 9. To review and update the basic legal documents governing the relationship between the Government of Viet Nam and the UN organisations represented in Viet Nam as many of these documents were dated many years ago. *Source: Agreed Principles, Objectives and Instruments to achieve the One United Nations in Viet Nam (2008-2010). 24 January 2008*

3.23 Whilst the opportunity was lost to pilot a radical integration of three agencies and the intervention set back the pace of change, tackling the whole 14, albeit at a reduced scope, arguably provides a more challenging test for sustainable reform.

3.24 The last significant scene-setting event is that the donors drafted a paper on principles of engagement which set out clearly the expectations of funding only through the One Fund, except for the remaining period of any prior commitments.[18] This document defines engagement through to the end of OP2 and defines the nature of support in the next One Plan (NOP).

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[18] *Donor Funding Framework One United Nations Plan Principles of Engagement (undated, believed to be in the period July to September 2008). The principles do not apply to Global Funds, Trust Funds and programmes which operate on a multi-country basis and are administered through UN Headquarters*

B. THE SIX PILLARS

4   ONE PLAN

4.1   Interviewees who have worked through the reform process say that the big challenges in the reform are how to handle the overall budget, how to deal with agency profile under a reformed system and how to rationalise programme design. Some argue that the One Plan is the cornerstone of the reform.

4.2   As explained in Chapter 3, One Plan was developed in two phases, first for the initial six agencies and then for 14. This chapter sets out the development of the plan. An assessment is given of the strategic focus and evidence of a resulting move 'upstream' in the work of the agencies.[19] The chapter then looks at the Programme Coordination Group (PCG) structure and the work of the Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group, One Plan Steering Committee (OPSC) and Tripartite National Task Force (TNTF).

4.3   Prior to the reform process the UNCT in partnership with government had prepared a Common Country Assessment (CCA) and UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for the period 2006-2010. The UNDAF, with its underlying agreements between the agencies and government, was the source document for reformulation into the two versions of the One Plan. Table 2 summarises the structural characteristics of the three plan documents.

Table 2 Comparison of UNDAF with OP1 and OP2

UNDAF	ONE PLAN 1	ONE PLAN 2
June 2005	July 2007	June 2008
14 Agencies: FAO, ILO, UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNODC, IFAD, IOM, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNV, WHO	6 Agencies: UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, UNAIDS, UNV, UNIFEM	14 Agencies: FAO, IFAD, ILO, UNAIDS, UNIFEM, UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO, UN-HABITAT, UNIDO, UNODC, UNFPA, UNV, WHO
UNDAF Outcomes:3	OP1 Outcomes: 5	OP2 Outcomes: 5
1. Government economic policies support growth that is more equitable, inclusive and sustainable.	1. Social and economic development policies, plans and laws support equitable and inclusive growth and conform to the values and goals of the Millennium Declaration and other relevant international agreements and conventions	1. Social and economic development policies, plans and laws support equitable and inclusive growth and conform to the values and goals of the Millennium Declaration and other relevant international agreements and conventions
2. Improved quality of delivery and equity in access to priority appropriate and affordable social and protection services	2. Quality social and protection services are universally available to all Vietnamese people.	2. Quality social and protection services are universally available to all Vietnamese people
3. Policies, law and governance	3. Viet Nam has adequate	3. Viet Nam has adequate

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[19] *The word 'upstream' is a widely-used shorthand for a move away from delivery of development services towards support for policy advice and advocacy*

UNDAF	ONE PLAN 1	ONE PLAN 2
structures conform to the values and goals of the Millennium Declaration.	policies and capacities for environmental protection and the rational use of natural resources for poverty reduction, economic growth, and improving the quality of life	policies and capacities for environmental protection and the rational management of natural resources and cultural heritage for poverty reduction, economic growth and improving the quality of life
	4. The principles of accountability, transparency, participation and rule of law are integrated into Viet Nam's representative, administrative, judicial and legal systems	4. The principles of accountability, transparency, participation and rule of law are integrated into Viet Nam's representative, administrative, judicial and legal systems
	5. Viet Nam has adequate policies and capacities to effectively reduce risks of, and vulnerability to, natural disasters.	5. Viet Nam has adequate policies and capacities to effectively reduce risks of, and vulnerability to, natural disasters, communicable diseases, and other emergencies
Country Programme Outcomes:6+5+5=16		Programmatic components or thematic clusters: 6+9+4+2+2=23
Country Programme Outputs: 22+32+18=72	Country Programme Outputs: 17+33+5+12+5=72	Country Programme Outputs: 28+43+22+19+6=118

STRATEGIC FOCUS

4.4   A core intention of the One Plan as expressed in the Strategic Intent is for it to *'improve the* effectiveness *of the UN system to contribute to national development priorities and move towards providing high-quality policy advice and advocacy'.* The terminology and structure of objectives has changed somewhat across the three documents which makes comparison difficult. OP1 applied only to the six participating UN organisations. Comparing the UNDAF with the OP2 the number of outcomes has changed from 3 to 5 and the number of country programme outputs from 72 to 118. The outcome statements are all rather permissive, not providing a strong framework for deciding what to do and what not to do, and there is no clear vision about what the UN strategy is. Superficially, this does not suggest a more strategic or rationalised plan, but OP2 contains the substance of the work of the specialised agencies which were not reflected in detail in the UNDAF which mainly establishes the programmatic agenda of UN Development Group agencies.

4.5   A significant factor to be borne in mind about trying to improve joint programming is that agencies have different planning cycles. Only the ExCom agencies have a five-year cycle; others budget on a two-year cycle. This is an obstacle to a more coherent approach that needs to be tackled in the Next One Plan.

4.6   It is questionable how much scope there was for the One Plan to improve on the UNDAF. To start with, the UNDAF itself was already considered a big step forward from previous plans:

Brought together by shared ownership of the MDGs, the United Nations agencies in Viet Nam increasingly speak with one voice. Government and international development agencies in Ha Noi have remarked to us that a distinct United Nations view, centred on the Millennium Declaration, has emerged in recent years. … The document therefore marks a

qualitative change in the nature of the relationship between the United Nations and the government of Viet Nam.[20]

The scope for improvement was also limited by agreements with government:

(The main objectives are…) To carry out the commitments contained in the SEDP, UNDAF and the programmes of the individual participating UN organisation, through the implementation of the One Plan, and to maximise synergies and efficiencies through harmonisation of governance structures and procedures at country level.[21]

4.7   Despite the UN's intentions or wishes, OP1 and OP2 could not be a 'zero-based' programme as the Country Programme Documents (CPD 2006-2010) and country programmes of other agencies were already approved by their respective executive boards and by the GoV. Hence, the government did not want to reopen discussions about programme priorities and financial allocations. Both plans were a process of combining the agency plans into a common programme within the overall framework of the UNDAF and in keeping with the general pillars and timeframe of the SEDP.

4.8   Members of the UNCT argue strongly that although the evidence is hidden in the detail of the plans, the extensive effort that went into re-planning had a marked benefit in reducing duplication and overlap of functions or activities and identified opportunities for improved synergies, further reinforced through the Programme Coordination Groups (PCG).

4.9   Whilst government's main concern was that the new plan should continue to support the SEDP and honour existing agreements, donors' expectations were for more substantial change. Joint Donor reviews in 2007 (OP1) and 2008 (OP2) make this clear:

… donors note that the primary motivation for UN reform in Vietnam is to refocus the UN's mission on areas where the UN has a comparative advantage and to work as One.

Donors see it as important that the scale of operations and the number of UN agencies in Vietnam does not increase as a result of the pilot. What donors wish to see is a re-focussing of the UN's role in supporting Vietnam's development

Donors expect to see a radically different UN in Vietnam by 2011 ready to work in a different way over the subsequent five year period (2011-2015). Emphasis will be upon UN as policy adviser executing its normative function, and working as one. This will mean a marked shift away from service delivery and from project funding. (Joint Donor Assessment 2007)

… the OP2 suffers from the same limitations identified in the donor assessment of OP1. Under OP1, the contents were constrained by the prior commitments made in UN programmatic documents agreed with government before the reform process started and therefore do not reflect the reform process. Under OP2, the support identified by the new eight agencies has also not really been prioritised by the particular competences and comparative advantages that the UN as a whole offers to Viet Nam[22]*. This is because of the need to build trust within the larger group and the lack of a formal mechanism within which this could have quickly been done. The UNCT view that the results of the reform process will really be shown in One Plan 3 (OP3), which should be completed in 2010, is therefore correct.*

… evidence that OP2 indicates an increased move from its traditional role supporting projects and programmes into a more normative role, offering international best practice in a non-partisan manner, is also difficult to assess. However, there is no evidence that development of the OP2 has meant that the eight agencies have developed new projects that meet this objective. Nor did the fund ceiling used for defining potential allocations

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[20] *Ryan, Jordan., and Jesper Morch (2005) Ibid, page 4*
[21] *Agreed Principles, Objectives and Instruments to achieve the One United Nations in Viet Nam (2008-2010). 24 January 2008 (See Box 4 for a comparison with the 2006 version)*
[22] *Comparative advantage analysis might mean an agency either withdrawing from a sector and trusting another agency to address its mandate or deciding not to enter a sector.*

between the 14 agencies from the One Plan Funds include one skewing allocations towards support of the normative role of the UN. (Joint Donor Assessment 2008)

4.10   Despite an absence of strong evidence of a reorientation in line with comparative advantage and competencies, all parties recognise the change in culture within the 14 agencies that enabled the OP2 to be developed and the benefits that come from government and development partners being able to access all UN programmes in one coherent document. Most importantly, as the *de facto* UNDAF, OP2 allowed development of the programme coordination group (PCG) approach outlined in the OPMP, which requires active participation by all resident agencies (see later in this chapter). Development of OP2 should also be seen as a strong indicator that inclusiveness has been achieved within the UNCT, a significant achievement given the relations between UNCT members in June 2007.

4.11   The OP2 incorporates and reflects recommendations from UN conventions, resolutions and treaty bodies as well as national priorities on gender equality, women's empowerment and human rights. A Gender Audit was conducted in December 2008 and provides an analysis of gender in the OP2. It led directly to a Gender Mainstreaming Strategy 2009-2011 with two objectives:

- To enhance the capacity of the UNCT to respond to national priorities for gender equality and women's empowerment; and

- To mainstream gender in One Plan development and implementation, including PCGs and Joint Programmes.

4.12   An example of the synergy that the process of developing OP2 fostered can be found in the recently approved Joint Programme on Green Production and Trade which brings together ITC, UNCTAD, ILO, UNIDO, and FAO. Interviewees stress that this programme draws on the comparative advantages of the agencies and is unlikely to have been developed in its present form without the interaction prompted by the OP2 process and further facilitated by the PCG, described later in this chapter.

Moving towards policy advice and advocacy

4.13   The aim of UN reform bringing a change in programme focus is clear in the strategic intent, is a significant theme in policy statements about UN reform and is evident in statements by the supporting donors. Whilst it is apparent that the formal expression of OP2 does not convey a significant change, the evaluation hypothesised that a move upstream would be evidenced in a combination of features concerning staff skills mix and capacity, programme design, programme execution and strategic communication. These changes are quite feasible within the framework of OP2.

Policy-oriented outputs

4.14   Evidence to support claims of a move upstream comes in several different ways. Firstly, illustrations of work that illustrate a policy engagement. This may include gathering of data to inform a policy, preparation of analytical work to stimulate policy debate, or direct contribution to policy-making or the drafting of laws and regulations. Specialised agencies argue that much of their work has always had a policy orientation, even where some aspects include service delivery but which can mean demonstration projects that provide a knowledge basis to support policy. But for the ExCom agencies in particular, such examples suggest a different way of supporting government. Many examples have been offered by respondents within the UN and a selection is reproduced in Box 5.

Box 5 Illustrations of policy-oriented outputs[23]

Policy dialogue

Choosing Success series: four policy dialogue papers critically examined macroeconomic and development policy options available to the Vietnamese authorities

Policy Dialogue events: The UN has been very active in organizing public and 'closed-door' policy dialogue events with the Vietnamese policy research community, civil society, government, international development partners and the Party

Drafting of laws and national policies

Support for implementation of key gender laws: the Gender PCG has worked collaboratively to support implementation of the Law on Gender Equality and the Law on Domestic Violence.

Support to developing the *Law on Child Adoption*.

Revised *Law on Persons with Disabilities* which has been brought more in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Food Safety: FAO, WHO and UNICEF have assisted the Government in drafting the new Food Safety Law which was submitted to the National Assembly last year and awaits final ratification.

The 2009 *Health Insurance Law* was supported by WHO and UNICEF. MOH was able to request and receive different and complementary support from both WHO and UNICEF,

Pesticides: Plant Protection and Plant Quarantine Law is being drafted with FAO assistance.

Avian and Human Influenza: FAO, WHO, UNICEF and UNDP assisted the Government in the development of the Vietnam Integrated National Plan for Avian Influenza Control and Human Pandemic Influenza Preparedness and Response 2006-2008 and the Integrated National Operational Program for Avian and Human Influenza.

Production of policy research

UN Policy Paper on *Climate Change*; the *Gender and Climate Change* study.

Social impact of the economic crisis: UNDP, UNICEF, and ILO supported a Rapid Impact Monitoring exercise on the social impact of the global economic crisis conducted by VASS/Centre for Analysis, in collaboration with MOLISA, Oxfam, Action Aid, and the World Bank.

Food security: a quick assessment by UNDP, FAO, UNICEF on the impact the crisis would have on different groups and sets of development challenges

Commissioning of independent research

Access to justice: Commissioned independent research (underway) on (i) role of public defenders in criminal cases and (ii) access to lawyers more generally in both civil and criminal cases.

Integration of policy work into new projects

Economic policy advice: An increasing number of UNDP projects have been moving 'upstream' focusing on the provision *of* capacity building assistance and mobilizing international expertise for policy-related purposes. This includes projects on economic diplomacy policy (MOFA), land policy reform (MARD), the provision of policy advisory services on fiscal, macroeconomic and financial services (MOF), strategic development planning (DSI/MPI), Urban Poverty and labour market dynamics (GSO) and recently economic analysis for the National Assembly.

High-level engagement with Government

Policy work with the *Vietnamese* delegation in the *2009 Copenhagen Climate Change* negotiations

Engagement in sensitive policy issues

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[23] *Categorisation by the evaluation team following comments on the draft report*

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UNCT paper on Viet *Nam's* *challenges from a rights-based approach* for the Universal Periodic Review on Human Rights (May 2009)

Methadone Maintenance Therapy (MMT) in Viet Nam: A focus on prevention has resulted in progress towards *increasing* access to HIV services, and most notably, to the implementation of a national pilot MMT Program for drug users.

Support for *Anti-corruption*

Changing perceptions

Family Survey: The UN supported the first-ever nation-wide Survey on the Family in 2008

Study on Sex Ratio at Birth: The *release* of government-owned data demonstrating the rapidly increasing imbalance in the number of boys born compared to the number of girls born.

Changing institutions

Education sector response to HIV: The Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) was supported in their efforts by the Education Sub-group of the Joint United Nations Team on HIV for (1) the development of a new national curriculum integrating reproductive health and HIV prevention, and (2) the establishment of a central coordinating mechanism in MOET.

4.15 The examples in Box 5 are convincing, though without any evidence of the situation before 2005 it is difficult to form a judgement about how big a change these represent. What needs to be more clearly demonstrated is that this work is the result of a change in programme emphasis and creation of the necessary capacity. For some agencies, such a move is a logical extension of past programmes. For example, FAO has had a long involvement in pesticides and promotion of integrated pest management. More recently the focus has changed to pesticide regulation and consideration of food safety and the legal framework. UNFPA's work with population census and statistics created the evidence base from which analysis about the implications of changing sex ratio at birth could be developed.

4.16 When stakeholders outside the UN were asked about examples of policy engagement the most frequently cited example is the work of four policy advisors in UNDP dealing with economics, climate change, governance including the legal sector, public administration reform and anti-corruption. Some of their work is illustrated in Box 5. The way in which this work was initiated and the challenges that remain are an interesting example for the reform process and are summarised in Box 6.

Box 6 The DFID-UNDP Strategic Partnership Initiative

Partnership with the UN started as a series of stand alone co-financed projects in governance but progressed to a core funding arrangement called the Strategic Partnership Initiative (SPI). The objective was to broaden and deepen UNDP engagement in the reform process. The SPI aimed at increased UNDP engagement on democratic governance, accountability and voice with more specialist staff engaging on issues of quality of growth, access to justice, anti corruption and local governance. Ongoing co financed projects were to be subsumed within the arrangement.

An evaluation of DFID's Viet Nam country programme in 2007 was critical of progress with the SPI, arguing that:

> *'While there has been a positive impact on economic governance and environment through e.g. timely and effective support to the GOV in the formulation of the Common Investment Law and the Joint Enterprise Law and support to the National Assembly Budget Committee, there is less evidence of enhanced capability of UNDP to engage in policy development. More generally, DFID Viet Nam resources have been used to augment existing UNDP plans rather than to re-orientate the programme in a strategic sense or to build up capacity. Also UNDP remained far from the vision set out by DFID Viet Nam of a UN capable of a continuing policy dialogue with government in areas such as governance, democracy and human rights, based on strengthened technical capacity on the ground.'*

Subsequent to the analysis in the CPE, UNDP managed to turn around the poor performance. A team of policy advisers was recruited and studies commissioned that have been very well received by the government and donor community.

A Project Completion Report in May 2009 found that UNDP has not only responded to government demands, for example using SPI funds to contract the Harvard School resulting in fresh thinking on Vietnam's future development as it becomes a middle income country, but has also sought to create demand, influencing debates on civil society with new insights. The creation of policy advisory positions, has allowed UNDP to develop its comparative advantage further, to include policy analysis and advisory services in economic governance, public administrative reform, the fight against corruption, the rule of law and access to justice, and climate change. The work on economics and climate change is financed by Spain.

The capacity of UNDP, in terms of policy analysis and advocacy, has clearly improved. This is reflected in the creation of a policy unit within the programme division of UNDP. In terms of organisation there are still issues to be addressed including the line management of advisors, coordination between the advisors in terms of functions, linkages with UNDP project implementation, and technical and administrative support to advisors to maximise efficiency and impact.

Sources: DFID Country Programme Evaluation 2007; SPI Project Completion Report 2009; interviews

4.17 Donor support was able to provide the necessary impetus to foster a change in orientation. The shift to funding through the One Fund means that the work should be sustainable as long as it remains a priority for UNDP support to government. But as yet, there are challenges about implications for the rationalisation of UNDP's staffing structure and skill mix to embed this change in focus and it is not clear the extent to which these advisors speak for One UN as a whole as opposed to just for UNDP. This highlights the fact that policy engagement can be done effectively by agencies working alone and is not necessarily a feature of joint working although arguably the PCG structure, described below, is a means to prioritise and monitor policy interaction.

4.18 A shift away from service delivery into a more normative role, offering international best practice in a non-partisan manner, implies a reconsideration of staffing. There is evidence of a move in this direction with UNICEF, to a lesser extent in the establishment of the expanded UNIFEM office and in the creation of a policy unit in UNDP noted in Box 6. In 2008 UNICEF had a programme mid-term review and as a result a decision was made to abandon sectoral service delivery and reorganise around two pillars: policy advice and knowledge management; and capacity development and institutional strengthening. Technical staff have been reorganised during 2009 to work in these pillars. The agency reports that this change has been a challenge to manage. UNICEF's annual programme also demonstrates a very clear reduction in service delivery cost lines and a rise in policy advocacy work.

Organisational capacity and skills-mix

4.19 A capacity assessment exercise was carried out in mid-2008 by the Dalberg and UN Global Change Management Support Team.[24]

4.20 The methodology used was based on data provided by UN Agencies on number of posts in the agencies, an analysis of the job descriptions, estimation of non-resident support, validation surveys and interviews with Heads of Agencies, PCG Co-Conveners and development partners. The assessment provided general information on the current capacity of the UN in Viet Nam. It was observed that the staff profile of the UN in Viet Nam was not significantly different from the staff profiles in pilot countries with LDC status. In fact, the staff profile in Viet Nam had not changed much over the last 20 years regardless of the significant changes in the external environment, with Viet Nam integrating in the world economy and soon becoming a Middle Income Country. This could indicate a lack of flexibility and ability to adapt to new circumstances.

4.21 However, the external capacity assessment did not meet the UNCT expectations. Both the methodology and the quality of the data analysis had not been commensurate with the UN's ambitions to get an in-depth analysis of the changes in the staff skills needed to shift more from 'downstream service delivery' to 'upstream policy advice'. This was largely because the assessment was not a skills mix review of staff in relation to the emerging development needs in Viet Nam, but a review of job descriptions. The UNCT has devised two other complementary processes to achieve greater clarity on the skill-set needed: the Staff Survey and the Stakeholder Survey, both conducted in 2008.

4.22 The next One Plan will need an overview of needed capacity that goes beyond the preliminary estimates in the One Plan Management Plan (OPMP) across the whole of the UN, irrespective of agencies. A top priority for the UNCT is to develop a robust change management strategy through to the end of 2011.

PREPARING MORE EFFECTIVE SUPPORT FOR POLICY ADVICE AND ADVOCACY IN THE NEXT ONE PLAN

4.23 Whilst the content and structure of the OP2 does not yet demonstrate a strategic shift by the UN, the examples in Boxes 5 and 6 clearly show the potential for a reformed way of working. The challenge will be for the Next One Plan to build on these successes and demonstrate a more explicit approach to reform. Several key elements for the Next One Plan follow naturally from the experience under OP2.

- **Harmonisation of planning cycles**. Clear commitments are needed from the headquarters of UN Agencies to move to a five-year cycle. Where there are underlying constraints owing to financing arrangements, shorter-period firm plans need to be complemented by indicative plans for the balance of the five years.

- **More explicit identification of comparative advantage and agency role** in support of Viet Nam in the implementation of obligations from UN conventions, resolutions and treaties.

- **Systematic approach to policy support.** The categorisation of policy outputs in Box 5 is a start to a more structured approach to planning. Development thinking on how best to plan for policy support in recent years has led to typologies of interventions.[25] Typically, five areas are identified: changing perceptions (improving the information available to policymakers); setting an agenda (helping frame the way an issue is debated); building networks (across stakeholders to support delivery of change); developing capacity (within organizations to enable them to understand and respond to an issue); and changing institutions (Public administrative reform to influence policy, strategy and resource allocation within a set of organizations).

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[24] UN Delivering as One: Capacity Assessment for Viet Nam, 15 September 2008
[25] *See for example: River Path Associates 2007, Evaluation and the New Public Diplomacy*

- **Planning to measure outcomes of support for policy advice**. Measurable outcomes require planning to measure from the outset. Structured approaches to intervention logic in the five areas of policy influence can help identify indicators that cover outcomes such as: change in attitude; change in perceptions; change in intention; and behaviour change. An important example can be seen in the core UN role of capacity building, where there is a need to shift away from reporting delivery of outputs to monitor outcomes that demonstrate how organisations and individuals change their performance *as a result of* capacity building.
- **More explicit justification for 'service delivery' work** that demonstrates clear linkages to UN roles and comparative advantages or to gather data or pilot approaches in support of upstream work.

PROGRAMME COORDINATION GROUPS

4.24 Programme Coordination groups are arguably the most radical of the initiatives under the One Plan. The evaluation held focus group discussions with members of four PCG to learn about experience with their operation and have reviewed documents from all the PCG. At the start of OP2, 11 PCG were created; following a joint UN-GoV review in 2009 their number and structure have been revised to eight and their modality changed such that after April 2010 they will be co-convened by GoV and the UN.[26]

4.25 The purpose of the PCG as described in the OPMP is to 'help deliver results in the One Plan in a more coordinated and effective manner. PCGs aim at enhancing efficiencies, improving coherence and reducing transaction costs for the UN and other stakeholders in the long run. The objectives of PCGs also include high quality coordination, institutional learning (across organizations) and staff development'.[27] This is a mechanism to change the way of working among the agencies and in particular to shift away from independent uncoordinated action.[28] The aim was for diversity of approach, responding to the challenge of the focal topic and the nature of the participating agencies.

4.26 Characteristics of their structure and operation are: joint planning/ programming; dialogue with government and other partners; monitoring of delivery and follow-up; annual work plans; and joint annual reviews and meetings with partners. To achieve this each PCG would have a management group and a wider programme team and each would be co-convened by two heads of agencies. Pre-existing theme groups, joint teams and working groups were to be subsumed into the PCG.

4.27 Interpreted at its most liberal, these arrangements shift command of programme delivery away from agencies and into these new consultative groups, but financial accountability was to remain with the agencies. In the spirit of diversity each PCG was to develop its own terms of reference. Examination of these reveals some interesting features.[29] Firstly, of the nine for which a statement of objective was found seven refer to improving coherence, five to improving efficiency and eight to improving effectiveness. It is notable that effectiveness is so widely mentioned because that implies the PCG having the power to influence which programmes are implemented and more importantly, which are not. If the PCG can influence programme delivery and yet financial accountability stays with the agencies, what are the PCG accountable for? Of the ten PCG for which terms of reference were available to the evaluation team, there is a high degree of consistency of coverage, with virtually all describing coordination, planning, monitoring and reporting, and

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[26] *Dang Ngoc Dung (2009) Independent Evaluation of The Programme Coordination Groups, MPI*
[27] *One Plan Management Plan Chapter 3*
[28] *The design of the PCG is widely recognized as being derived from the experience of the Joint Team for HIV/AIDS which was introduced as a reformed way of working under the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)*
[29] *Terms of reference (TOR) were reviewed for 10 of the 11 PCG but for two (gender and sustainable development) the TOR did not include a simple statement of objective.*

mainstreaming of gender, human rights and culture as their work. Six of the ten have strong statements of accountability of which the following is typical:[30]

- *Participating UN Organisations, through their PCG members, are accountable to the PCG co-conveners for the implementation of the One Plan components placed under their responsibilities, and for their contributions to the delivery of the PCG work plan.*
- *The co-conveners are accountable to the Resident Coordinator and the Heads of Agencies for the delivery of the components of the One Plan that the PCG covers, as well as the actual implementation of the key functions of the PCG as per the minimum requirements defined by the One Plan Management Plan*

4.28 This approach to accountability has been carried through to the generic TOR for the revised arrangements starting in April 2010, but modified to take account of new arrangements for co-convening between UN and government. In addition, the generic TOR reinforces accountability with the note that:

- *While the co-conveners will strive for consensus, they are entrusted with the necessary level of authority to make decisions on PCG programmatic priorities, joint interventions and measures that may be required to ensure the successful implementation of the One Plan in line with UN and Government regulations.*

4.29 However, there remains a tension in the generic TOR. Although the '*accountability for the results in the common action plan and reporting of the results as identified in the annual work plan lies with the PCG*' at the same time '*The management and financial accountability, including monitoring and reporting, for specific projects/programmes remains the responsibility of individual UN Agencies and their National Implementing Partners. The monitoring and reporting system for the One Plan will not undermine this basic accountability.*'[31] And in addition, the PCG co-convenors don't have authority over PCG members. How can the PCG be accountable for results and not accountable for management and finance?

4.30 Issues remain with accountability, not least that under the PCG structure it will be necessary for the job descriptions of heads of agency and for relevant staff to include their role in the PCG so that performance can be included in annual reviews. Changing accountability in this way can only be done with approval of agency executive boards.

Performance of the PCG

4.31 An independent evaluation of PCGs was carried out at the request of MPI as part of the joint UN-GoV review in 2009.[32] The findings from that evaluation highlighted a number of strengths and weaknesses.

- The extent to which different PCG have been able to move forward on joint working is variable: some PCG were found to have only acted as a mechanism to share information, with little joint work; others have introduced joint activities either with separate and individual funding by the agencies or joint funding through the One Fund.

- Perceptions of the effectiveness of joint supervision varies, with the UN finding it valuable but government less convinced, arguing that UN agencies are not yet supervising on behalf of each other (in other words still dividing up the supervision task into each agency's technical domain); and poor organisation and reporting to enhance the involvement of implementing partners.

- Concerns by government that the PCG have just added a layer of management between the implementing partner and UN agency.

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[30] *The four PCG without a statement of accountability were: 4 Gender, 5 Health & reproductive rights, 8 Sustainable development, and 11 Communicable diseases & animal diseases*
[31] *Generic Term of Reference for Programme Coordination Groups (PCGs)*
[32] *Dang Ngoc Dung, ibid*

4.32   The review also pointed out that UN staff have sometimes found the work of PCGs to be onerous as it is additional to 'normal' agency activities. Most importantly, the requirements to maintain double reporting – to the PCG and for the agency HQ - is strongly criticised as an example of where UN agency headquarters are out of touch with reforms at country level. [33]

4.33   A set of focus group discussions were held for this evaluation with the Social and Economic Development Policies, Governance, Disaster Management and Gender PCGs. The findings reinforce those of the independent evaluation and bring out some further points of detail summarised in Box 7.

Box 7 Feedback from discussions with PCG members

Within the global context of UN reform globally there is a decade of experiences with theme groups, so a key question is what value do PCGs add over the theme groups? The effects, benefits and added value are illustrated here.

Constraints
- The current OP2 is based on the perspectives of agency programmes which were not planned around a joint implementation modality. The Next One Plan needs to consider joint programming.
- PCG do not have financial accountability to implement OP2 and OP2 is implemented through individual agency annual work plans. It is key limiting factor that reduces potential benefits and leads to double reporting /planning.

Effects within the UN
- PCG provide a forum for coordination among UN agencies on a particular thematic area. This allows for more transparent and open dialogue and agreements on common issues.
- Staff of one agency also take accountability to other UN agencies when implementing activities together.
- More networking among agencies leads to better mobilisation of internal resources
- PCG plays a challenge function and holds agencies more accountable
- But continuation of different agency processes causes more work

Benefits to working with partners
- Better coordination with government counterparts.
- PCG enables review of social policies with wider perspectives that can improve support to government.

Examples of added value
- Facilitating joint research/ dialogue/ advocacy, e.g. on food security, social impacts of the global financial crisis; launching UNDP HDR on migration together with UNFPA migration conference (dealing with international and domestic perspectives at the same meetings)
- The Joint Programme on Gender Equality (JPGE) is essentially a pilot within the pilot and facilitates a constructive meaningful synergy between 11 UN partners and 3 national partners. The JPGE would not have been possible without the PCG
- Strengthened capacity of staff & PCGs on gender as a cross-cutting issue.

4.34   The experiences related in Box 7 are an example of the learning process that this arrangement has enabled. Interviews with other individual PCG members highlighted additional issues including criticisms that in the first full year of operation the PCG had not been successful in stimulating wider involvement; too many meetings tied up too much staff time and in some themes the arrangement has competed with established coordination mechanisms. However, respondents stressed that the experience was valuable in helping to improve operations and it is important to have a means for learning

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[33] *The team was told that only UNFPA does not have to send separate reports to its headquarter*

from experience across other PCG. The experience of the Joint Programme on Gender equality under the Gender PCG is summarised in Box 8.

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Box 8 Joint Programme on Gender Equality

The Joint Programme on Gender Equality (JPGE) under the Gender PCG provides a vivid example of how the One UN Initiative has worked. Although the JPGE was developed prior to the establishment of the Gender PCG, under the gender theme group, it was nevertheless a product of reform, with a commitment to working jointly, together with a strong gender group. The JPGE is the most developed of the joint programmes.

There are 11 participating UN agencies and three national partners. The One Plan has USD20 million specified for gender activities and of that USD4.5 million is for the joint programme.

The purpose of the joint programme is to support implementation of two laws, the Law on Domestic Violence, which had it's origins in advocacy work with the National Assembly, and the Law on Gender Equality which is linked to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

A number of clear benefits have arisen as a result of the JPGE and Gender PCG:
- The wide UN membership of the joint programme has stimulated much greater engagement in e.g. development of manuals in support of the two laws.
- Despite some structural difficulties arising because the two laws are the responsibility of two different ministries, good communications have been achieved and stakeholders in both government and the UN claim better contacts and communication between the ministries.

It is a practical example of new programming which is explicitly designed to support policy and is also supported by the UN Gender Mainstreaming Strategy that is implemented through the Gender PCG.

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4.35 Recommendations from the independent evaluation have influenced the decision to reduce the number of PCG and to change the co-convening arrangements to be jointly between government and the UN (see Annex F).

PCG reporting

4.36 This evaluation has also looked at reporting under the PCG, reviewing all reports for 2008 and draft reports for four PCG for 2009. PCG reports are in two parts, a narrative report and a results table. In fact, the information in both is primarily narrative. Reports vary a little among the PCG but are generally structured according to the outcomes and country programme outputs in the One Plan.

4.37 PCG reports present a very different picture of progress than is suggested by the claims of moving upstream illustrated in Box 5. Whilst there are some examples of narrative linking the support by the UN to implementing partners with planned outcomes, such as improved performance of a service or introduction of new policies or regulations, the great majority of reporting is about undertaking activities or delivering outputs. There is a preponderance of weak performance statements: processes being described as 'enhanced', strengthened' or 'improved' with no baseline or quantification against which the extent of achievement can be judged. There is almost no quantitative data, no reference to national statistics, no comparison of actual against planned, few independent evaluations and no assessment of the effectiveness of performance. The challenge this represents is taken up in the next section.

4.38 The One Plan Annual Reports for 2007 and 2008 reflect some of the weaknesses of the PCG reporting. Although they avoid the trap of describing activities, without a comprehensive and systematic review of PCG performance the annual reports are driven by an anecdotal style in which reporting against outcomes is organised around descriptions of selected key achievements. These are creditable and valuable to report, but as a reporting tool it is impossible to gain any sense of how well the UN has performed against planned intentions and the extent of added value that UN support has brought.

Such criticisms are not directly related to the One UN reforms but reflect wider challenges with results-based management in the UN. [34]

PCG going forward

4.39   The PCG approach brings a substantial opportunity for improved performance. The shift from agency-led approaches which are in danger of being supply driven to justify agency presence, to PCGs which are outcome-oriented and demand-driven, is a radical reform. It provides an enormous opportunity for the agencies to consolidate their technical roles and contribution within a framework that is structured to respond to national needs. The Next One Plan needs to take an aspirational approach to the work of the PCG, ensuring that they have the lead role in the process to define UN support to national plans which are then taken up by the agencies. The role of the PCG would be to identify the national need, define the scope for UN response, then 'commission' agencies to contribute.

SUPPORT FOR CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

4.40   Although increased support for cross-cutting issues is not a specific objective of the reform initiative, experience with the Gender PCG illustrates benefits that have been gained. Because gender is considered a cross-cutting issue, the PCG is responsible for support to gender mainstreaming, including capacity-development for the UN to support national gender equality commitments. In 2008 the Gender PCG conducted a gender audit of the One UN in Viet Nam, to provide a baseline for progress on gender mainstreaming and inform development of a gender mainstreaming strategy for the One UN and One Plan 2006-2010. That led to the development and adoption of an internal gender mainstreaming strategy for the UNCT. The strategy commits the UNCT to developing the capacity of the UN in Viet Nam to mainstream gender, and to ensure gender is mainstreamed in implementation of the One Plan. The Gender PCG monitors implementation of the strategy by the UNCT and agencies and is also responsible for implementation of some key activities. These activities constitute the "Common Action Plan" of the PCG.

4.41   Gender mainstreaming is not tracked in allocations or expenditure at the UNCT, agency or programme level. Nor are gender results monitored or measured effectively. This leads to significant underestimation of the investment in and impact of UN interventions on gender equality and women's empowerment in Viet Nam.

4.42   By the end of 2008, the Gender Report noted that "The UN in Viet Nam has a strong portfolio of gender-specific initiatives worth an estimated $20 million, or 5 percent of the One Plan budget. However, gender mainstreaming in broader UN programming is weak and gender results are not monitored or measured effectively.

4.43   A Human Rights Technical Working Group (HRTWG) was set up in 2007 and continues to play a central role in coordinating specific activities and supporting the mainstreaming of human rights in the work of the UNCT. The group has been working upstream with MOFA and MPI; has prepared a toolkit on mainstreaming HRBA into UN works; supported preparation of the UNCT paper to the Universal Policy Review; supported a project with MOFA on treaty ratification, which facilitated a workshop on sharing of regional UPR lessons learned. All that has provided the UN with a platform for dialogue and technical cooperation in the area of human rights.

4.44   In the OP2 human rights has been mainstreamed in three of the outcomes of the Plan.[35] The 2008 Stakeholder Survey showed that key stakeholders consider that the UN has a

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[34] *See for example 'Evaluation of Results Based Management at UNDP' (2007)*

[35] *They are outcome 1 (Social and economic development policies, plans and laws support equitable and inclusive growth and conform to the values and goals of the Millennium Declaration and other relevant international agreements and conventions) ; Outcome 2 (Quality social and protection services are*

recognized comparative advantage on promoting a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) to programming. However as commented by key staff of the HRTWG although the HRBA is better in comparison with other countries, there is room for improvement. One constraint is limited capacity. There are fewer focal points than for gender and relatively few UN staff (about one third) attended training in HRBA.[36] The HRWG is under the Governance PCG, and is not yet as institutionalized as the Gender PCG. Given that capacity, the monitoring and reporting mechanism is not systematic yet. For the Next One Plan, it is suggested that the HRBA need to be taken more attention by improving budget resources allocated, strengthening monitoring system and appointing a Human Rights Advisor.

4.45 For 2010-2011, in the budget allocation criteria, contribution to both gender and human rights based approach are to be assessed for funding from the One Plan Fund. This is an important mechanism for tracking and monitoring cross cutting issues across the work of the One UN.

MONITORING AND REPORTING

4.46 Architects of the One Plan recognised the importance of a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system and a specialist was recruited to the RCO in 2007. A M&E Working Group (MEWG) was established and records show a regular pattern of meetings more or less at monthly intervals since then. The MEWG supports the UN Country Team (UNCT) by providing technical advice and guidance on planning, M&E and RBM. The MEWG supports the Programme Coordination Groups (PCGs) to monitor development results (results related to the interventions spelled out in the One Plan) and process results (progress in relation to UN reform). Members are drawn from all the agencies and there is an M&E focal point in each PCG.

4.47 Various initiatives have been mounted by the group including early work to develop a comprehensive set of indicators and during 2009 in particular, initiatives to develop capacity and raise the level of knowledge and skills about results based management and development of simplified Guidelines on the PCG Annual Review, Reporting and Planning Process 2009-10.

4.48 Members of the working group acknowledge that the PCG struggle with the quality of reporting and in particular the difficulty of reporting progress towards outcomes. They consider the challenge is more manageable for programmes with a clear sector focus such as health and education, but very difficult for PCG with wide scope such as social and economic development policies. Good progress can be seen in the way PCG are engaging with national authorities in the use of data and PCG 1 is planning a working group on Data for Development.

4.49 Many of the problems are not linked to the One UN initiative but reflect weaknesses in the UNDAF methodology, which does not create a logical results chain that links the outputs delivered with UN support to planned outcomes. Without that plan structure, reporting is very difficult. When OP1 was prepared there were attempts to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework, but that was lost with the expansion to OP2.

TRIPARTITE NATIONAL TASK FORCE

4.50 The Tripartite National Task Force (TNTF) in Vietnam is a unique cooperation forum among the pilot countries. 'The TNTF objective is to advance UN reform by providing

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universally available to all Vietnamese people) and Outcome 4 (The principles of accountability, transparency, participation and rule of law are integrated into Viet Nam's).
[36] *Kay Engelhardt, Dam Thu Hang, Public and Social Research, , May 2009, Staff Survey, Gender Mainstreaming and Human Rights Based Approaches in the One UN in Vietnam*

effective oversight of the unification process and serve an advisory function'.[37] TNTF was established in 2006 and is comprised of representatives of the four Government Aid Coordinating Agencies (GACA),[38] representatives from the donor community and the participating UN Organizations (PUNOs).

4.51   The establishment of a cooperation forum in which GoV has a lead role but with direct involvement of donors is acknowledged by all three parties to have helped strengthen the momentum of reform. Better coordination and information sharing have been achieved through the forum and its follow-up activities. The cooperative mechanism is also regarded to have reduced transaction costs for tripartite stakeholders.[39]

4.52   Good performance has been achieved with reporting against the process of reform to the Tripartite National Task Force. A lengthy and comprehensive set of indicators was defined in the context of the approval of the OP2. The TNTF Results Framework for the UN Reform Process' started in June 2008 and this has provided an accessible but comprehensive overview of progress that donors and government find useful. An experiment was tried using a simplified colour coded (traffic-lights) version but the preferred format is a narrative table. However, whilst effective on process, it appears that the Strategic Outcomes are not closely linked to the One Plan Development Results.

ONE PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

4.53   The implementation of the One Plan itself is overseen by the One Plan Steering Committee (OPSC), which was officially approved by the Prime Minister on 15 July 2007, Decision no. 916 QD/TTg. The mandate of the OPSC is to oversee and coordinate the implementation of the One Plan to ensure the achievement of its outcomes and its contribution to national development results, and to provide broad strategic advice on the allocation of resources from the One Plan Fund. The OPSC is co-chaired by the Vice-Minister of the Ministry of Planning and Investment and the UN Resident Coordinator and has eight members - four representatives of the GACA and four members of participating UN Organizations (on a rotating basis).[40]

4.54   The implementation of One Plan has been steered and overseen by OPSC through two meetings since comencement. Although planned to meet every six months OPSC has met once a year.[41] The first meeting was held in October 2008 to review the timeline of PCGs, OP Annual Review Processes, finalisation of OP Annual Report 2007, provide direction on the development and finalization of a set of strategic criteria and guiding principles for the allocation from the One Plan Fund.[42] The second meeting in September 2009 was convened to get an agreement on the extension of OP2 to end of 2011[43] and revision of the allocation criteria.

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[37] *TNTF Term of Reference, June 2006*
[38] *Ministry of Planning and Investment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Finance, and the Office of Government*
[39] *Instead of consultation among 13 donors or many discussions with GoV back and forth, issues have been discussed or reviewed during the TNTF meetings.*
[40] *Depending on the substantive issues to be discussed at the meeting of OPSC, the two Co-Chairs will decide to invite representatives from other concerned Ministries and Government agencies as participants. OPSC TOR, 15 July 2007*
[41] *The reason provided by GoV is that the OP is implemented well and there is no need for OPSC to meet more frequently.*
[42] *OPSC Review Meeting Minute October 2008*
[43] *OPSC Review Meeting Minute September 2009*

Table 3 Comparison between TNTF and OPSC

	ROLE & MANDATE	COMPOSITION	FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS	WORKING MECHANISM
TNTF	Oversight of the One UN Initiative process *(5 pillars + One Voice)* and serve an advisory function	Representatives of GACA, Donors PUNOs.	Every 6 months	**Advisory mechanism**
OPSC	Oversee and coordinate the implementation of the *One Plan*	▪ Two Co-chairs (Vice –Minister of MPI and UN RC) ▪ GACA (MPI, MoF, MoFA, OoG) ▪ 4 Rotating PUNOs	Every 6 months but actually only 2 meetings organised so far	**Management mechanism.** OPSC decisions have been implemented by related organisations.

4.55 OPSC is a mechanism between government and the UN concerned with implementation of the One Plan. The TNTF is a coordination task force that brings together donors as well as the UN and GoV. It deals with the process of reform. There is no duplication between OPSC and TNTF as OPSC is a management mechanism while TNTF is an advisory mechanism or channel.[44] (See Table 3.)

CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ONE PLAN PILLAR

ONE PLAN

Conclusions

- Relevance. The relevance of work done under the One Plan is assessed to be high to moderate. The plan tackles directly the challenge of bringing the work of all agencies together under a manageable number of outcomes; it is closely aligned with national policies and takes obligations from UN conventions, resolutions and treaties into account. Programmes do not yet reflect agency comparative advantage. The One Plan has the potential to improve strategic focus and outcome orientation but has not done so yet.

- Effectiveness. Good progress has been made in a short time period and the assessment is moderate to high. There are many examples of policy orientation and the PCG structure has made a big difference to new ways of working. Reporting does not yet demonstrate how work is contributing to outcomes and there are few examples of a clear rationalisation of programmes and staff skills mix within the agencies. There is some evidence of more outcome focus in annual plans but the UN is still involved in many fragmented projects.

- Efficiency. Is rated as high. The process of developing the One Plans and work in the PCGs has reduced duplication and brought new synergies.

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[44] *Interview with MPI*

- Sustainability. Is rated as <u>likely</u>. The One Plan is well regarded by government and donors, who want to see continuation and improvement. The challenge is for the Next One Plan to demonstrate a marked shift away from service delivery.

Lessons

- A continuing process and succession of objective statements complicates judgements about the extent of change and creates a situation where different stakeholders hold varying expectations. New countries embarking on UN reform should endeavour to create clear and explicit objectives.

- The tripartite structure developed in Viet Nam has been an effective mechanism to ensure the reform process has been led by government and has facilitated close engagement with the UN by donors.

- It is preferable to time the start of reform either to coincide with a new planning cycle or towards the end of a cycle. Starting soon after the beginning of the UNDAF period in Viet Nam left the One Plan constrained by prior commitments and with less flexibility for reform for a prolonged period before the Next One Plan starts. The varying planning cycles of UN agencies is an impediment to greater coherence in planning.

- Plans need to be inclusive of all agencies in order to enable a PCG structure to be created. PCG should be implemented first in sequence, fitted as best as possible to existing plans, so that staff have some experience of new ways of working and the new planning cycle can be driven from a multi-agency, outcome orientation.

- Donor support can be used to stimulate more upstream ways of working but arrangements need to include plans for institutionalising the change.

- Existing work on support to policy can be retro-fitted into a typology of support. That analysis has the potential to help structure arrangements under the Next One Plan to ensure that the work reflects the comparative advantages of the UN and is planned to be measurable.

- PCG are the most important element of the One Plan pillar and have enabled an orientation towards outcomes, new collaborative ways of working and a changed awareness of accountability to be introduced.

- It is important to achieve a human resources capacity assessment early in the reform process to enable planning for future needs. The lack of progress in this respect in Viet Nam makes this a high priority for the run up to the Next One Plan.

- Joint programmes have clear potential to benefit from and reinforce the workings of PCG and will benefit from detailed evaluation of their outcomes.

- There is evidence of clear benefits in promoting gender equality through the Gender PCG. It is important that the structure of PCG reflects not only direct support to the national strategy but also global UN obligations such as for gender equality, HIV and others.

Recommendations

- In recognition of the shift in accountability and central role of the PCG, these groups should have the lead role in working with government to define the scope of work and target outcomes for the Next One Plan, to which UN agencies will then be asked to deliver support.

- The job descriptions of all heads of agencies and relevant professional/technical staff should include their role in PCG and that role form part of annual performance assessment.

- The practice of double reporting through PCG and by agencies to their headquarters needs to stop. Whilst this is a decision for UN agency headquarters, the Government of Viet Nam can support the One UN process by declaring its wish to all agencies that in future all reporting should be based on a single common format.

- The plan for 2011 should be structured as much as possible to round off activities under the OP2 to enable a fresh start under the NOP.

- The Next One Plan needs to build on current achievements and demonstrate a more explicit approach to reform. Several key elements for the Next One Plan follow naturally from the experience under OP2:

  - Harmonisation of planning cycles with clear commitments from the headquarters of UN Agencies to work within a five-year cycle.
  - More explicit identification of UN comparative advantage and agency role in support of Viet Nam in the implementation of obligations from UN conventions, resolutions and treaties.
  - A more systematic approach to policy support.
  - Planning to measure outcomes of support for policy advice.
  - More explicit justification for service delivery work that demonstrates clear linkages to UN roles and comparative advantages or is used to gather data or pilot approaches in support of upstream policy support.

- Accountabilities for PCG need to be rationalised so that all UN staff are accountable for their delivery of outputs to the UN co-convenor of the PCG with which they work.

- M&E is an essential aspect of the One Plan because it provides the evidence of performance that guides future work. Maintaining a record of activities and delivery of outputs may be useful within the PCG but for reporting to the UNCT the format needs to describe contribution to outcomes. This requires a change during planning so that results chains are described and adoption of a reporting approach that describes how outcomes contribute to outcomes. Examples can be found in the work of some bilateral donors and their governments.[45]

- In view of the central role of M&E to the success of the reform, consideration should be given to creating a One M&E team modelled on the experience with the One Communications Team.

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[45] *See for example the new-style DFID logframes with result trajectories, and DFID Output to Purpose Reviews. See also the US Government Programme Assessment Rating Tool (PART).*

5 ONE BUDGET/ ONE PLAN FUND

OBJECTIVE OF HAVING ONE BUDGET/ ONE PLAN FUND

5.1   The rationale behind introducing One Budget is that (i) coordination in financial management takes place at the country level, (ii) the usage of resources is more effective and efficient in terms of reduced spending on administration and representative, and (iii) the unified budget is a prerequisite to a unified governance structure[46] because it gives the Resident Coordinator more authority to manage the finances of the United Nations in Viet Nam than previously.

5.2   One Budget provides a resource estimation (including both regular and other resources) needed to implement the One Plan as reflected in the Result and Resources Framework of the One Plan. The One Plan Fund is a part of 'other resources' to agencies and a mechanism to mobilise and allocate donor funds for the non-core unfunded part of the One Plan, and new initiatives responding to emerging needs within the context of One Plan. The objective of the One Plan Fund[47] is to support the coherent mobilization, allocation and disbursement of donor resources to the One Plan under the direction of the Resident Coordinator. It is intended to facilitate the realisation of One Plan outcomes by strengthening the planning and coordination process, tying the funding allocation to the One Plan and channelling funds towards the highest priority needs.

5.3   The Viet Nam One Plan Fund is administered by the Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) Office of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in accordance with its financial regulations and rules.

Evolution of One Plan fund: OPF Windows 1 and 2

5.4   The first One Plan built on the key components of the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2006-2010, and on Country Programme Documents (CPDs) and Country Programme Action Plans (CPAPs) (2006-2010) that were agreed for UNICEF, UNDP (including UNV) and UNFPA in 2006, and on the UNAIDS and the UNIFEM country work plans. This One Plan superseded the individual CPAPs and other action planning documents for this period as a legally binding document for the six participating agencies.

5.5   The One Plan 1 (OP1) became effective on 23 August 2007. The six participating UN Organizations had already approved from regular (core) resources a total cumulative commitment amounting to USD73 million. The participating UN Agencies agreed to seek additional funding to support the programmes specified in this One Plan, referred to as Other (non-core) Resources, to a target of USD 145 million,[48] making the total budget cost for the activities of OP1 USD218 million. This left an initial funding gap of USD88 million for full implementation of the One Plan 1.[49]

5.6   One Plan 2 was signed on 20 June 2008. Given that OP2 included the planned activities of all 14 resident UN Agencies in Viet Nam, the resource requirements were significantly greater than for the original OP1 for six Agencies. The revised One Budget indicated an overall resource requirement of USD403 million for 14 agencies for the five year period from 2006 to 2010. Of this total, it was expected that USD95 million would be available from 'core resources' from UN agencies and USD308 million was either to be secured or expected to be secured from 'other resources'. Of this amount, approximately USD207 million had already been secured or was reasonably expected to be secured, leaving an estimated funding gap of USD101 million for the period. By 31 December 2008, due to the

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[46] *United Nations Reform: A Country Perspective, Jordan Ryan and Jesper Morch, 2005*
[47] *According to Terms of Reference – One Plan Fund for Vietnam, Version 10 July 2007 and Terms of Reference – One Plan Fund II for Vietnam, Version 4 November 2008*
[48] *One Plan I Document, August 2007*
[49] *2007 One Plan Report, Page 28.*

efforts of UN agencies to raise funds from both 'core' and 'other' sources this funding gap had been reduced to USD85 million.[50]

5.7 Participating UN Agencies developed a joint resource mobilisation strategy for the funding gap under the One Plan. This was based upon the budget for the plan (as per the Results and Resources Framework) and included existing resource mobilization avenues of the participating UN Agencies as well as new ways of raising funds through common funding mechanisms to support coherent implementation of the One Plan.

5.8 There are two allocation windows in the One Plan Fund (OPF). Window I responds to OP1 (six agencies) and Window II to OP2 (the six plus an additional eight agencies). Allocation is managed by the One Plan Fund Mobilization and Allocation Committee (OPFMAC) and there are two allocation fora: OPFMAC 1 for the allocation of OPF Window 1 and the expanded OPFMAC for the allocation of OPF Window 2. Stakeholders (donor, UN and GoV) agreed to merge Window I into Window II from 2009 and the merge has been effective since January 1st 2010.

PROVISION OF RESOURCES – MOBILISATION BY DONORS

5.9 On behalf of the UN, the Resident Coordinator leads the country-level mobilization effort for fund-raising for the One Plan Fund. The resources mobilized are in addition to those made available directly to Participating UN Organizations for the implementation of the activities indicated in the One Plan. Funds mobilised under the first Window of the One Plan Fund were available for disbursement to the signatories to the OP1. As soon as OP2 was signed, funds began to be mobilized under the second Window of the OPF. These funds are made available to all UN Agencies that signed the OP2.

5.10 A joint One Plan funding mechanism in collaboration with the government created a more strategic and cohesive way of UN support to national priorities. A Guiding Principle for Resource Mobilisation is that Donors are encouraged to contribute un-earmarked and multi-year resources.[51] This marks a significant shift in donor support mechanisms as donors previously typically provided funds to the UN via earmarked funding for projects and programmes within specific UN agencies. The un-earmarked funding mechanism maximizes flexibility and adaptation to national priorities, is less tying, is less influenced by political issues, and provides a prompt funding response.[52] The multi-year funding mechanism creates higher predictability in spending planning for OP. Since the commencement of the OPF, almost all donors have contributed resources through the multi-year and un-earmarked mechanism, except for contribution of USD4 million from Luxembourg which is earmarked for Outcome 1 – UN Joint Policy Programme.[53] The funding mechanism benefits UN and Government, but donors are concerned about reporting spending to their Headquarter. Indications from other countries where a One Fund is operating are that donor's audit agencies will want to see evidence to demonstrate value for money and clear lines of accountability over the fund. Donors are likely to want to be able to trace allocation of the fund to specific outputs and outcomes and link to annual performance targets.[54]

5.11 As of 31st Dec 2009, the total funds provided to the two OPF windows were USD64,966,739 as shown in Tables 3 and 4. Total commitments[55] of donors for both OP1 and 2 are USD77,860,755. Funds received reached 76.5% (USD64.9 million/USD85 million) and funding commitments 91.7% (USD77.8 million/ USD85

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[50] *2008 One Plan Report, Page 30.*
[51] *However, in cases where this approach is not possible, earmarking at outcome level is accepted, but it is expected that the percentage of earmarked resources will diminish over time.*
[52] *Interviews with Ministry of Planning and Investment and Ministry of Health during Evaluation Mission*
[53] *See in the Letter of Agreement between the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the United Nations Development Programme*
[54] *Evaluation interviews with donors (see also comments about reporting in Chapter 4)*
[55] *See more details via http://www.undp.org/mdtf/one-un-funds/vietnam/overview.shtml*

million). This high mobilization rate indicates that the UN has to-date been very successful in mobilizing resources for the One Plan. The positive response to the new funding mechanism suggests that donors strongly support the One UN Initiative. This creates advantages for OP implementation and a strong foundation for funding allocation for activities of the OP. But some donors support the UN and remain outside the One Fund, such as Japanese support to WHO and ILO for Occupational Safety and Health, though this is contrary to the Donor Principles of Engagement. Many UN agencies have indicated that the One UN Initiative has been a useful mechanism for resource mobilization. Moreover, the One Plan Fund has had the unintended effect of expanding some agency presence.[56]

Table 4 Donor contributions to the One Plan Fund Window I as of 31st December 2009

	JAN-DEC 2007 (USD)	JAN-DEC 2008 (USD)	JAN-DEC 2009 (USD)	AS AT 31 DEC 2009 (USD)
Donor				
Canada	1,011,839	1,012,043		2,023,882
France	1,000,000			1,000,000
Ireland	1,000,000			1,000,000
Luxembourg	4,176,500		1,000,000	5,176,500
Netherlands	2,500,000			2,500,000
New Zealand	1,000,000	1,000,000		2,000,000
Norway	6,407,909			6,407,909
Spain (MDG-F)	4,000,000			4,000,000
Switzerland	880,000	800,000		1,680,000
United Kingdom	4,144,800	980,700		5,125,500
TOTAL	**26,121,048**	**3,792,743**	**1,000,000**	**30,913,791**

Source: Administrative Agent, Income Statement by Donor, Window I

Table 5 Donor contributions to One Plan Fund Window II as of 31st December 2009

	JAN-DEC 2008 (USD)	JAN-DEC 2009 (USD)	AS AT 31 DEC 2009 (USD)
Donor			
Australia		1,667,000	1,667,000
DAO Funding Window		10,531,000	10,531,000
Finland	428,295	1,542,840	1,971,135
Ireland	1,360,300	1,421,100	2,781,400
Luxembourg		500,000	500,000
Spain (MDG-F)	4,000,000	4,000,000	8,000,000
Netherlands		1,452,600	1,452,600
Norway	2,151,463		2,151,463
New Zealand		1,000,000	1,000,000
Sweden	1,269,500		1,269,500
Switzerland		560,000	560,000
United Kingdom		2,168,850	2,168,850
TOTAL	**9,209,558**	**24,843,390**	**34,052,948**

Source: Administrative Agent, Income Statement by Donor, Window II

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[56] *The case of UNHABITAT*

5.12 Summarizing contributions made by donors under the two windows of the MDG Trust Fund, Spain, Norway and United Kingdom are the first, second and third ranking fund contributors to the One Plan Fund, with amounts of USD12 million, USD8.6 million and USD7.3 million respectively (not including DaO Funding Window of USD10.5 million).

5.13 In general, the majority of donors have contributed funds in a timely manner, and have informed the Administrative Agent (AA) in advance of the transfer of these funds with a high degree of predictability;[57] more details on the timings of funding transfers are provided in Tables 4 and 5. Only one donor, Luxembourg, has experienced delayed transfers on two occasions.[58] As cited within the OPFMAC meeting minutes of Tuesday 16 December 2008, Luxembourg decided to withhold their second transfer because of 'unsatisfactory quality of the progress report of the Social Policy Joint Programme', which came under the part of the fund earmarked to them. A second delay occurred with Luxembourg's third transfer due in January 2009 but was received in November 2009 because of the delayed receipt of the 2008 One Plan Annual Report which was disseminated in July 2009. The withholding of funding together with other shortfalls led to OPFMAC to reduce funding to the projects/programmes of UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA. A lesson learned is that this unexpected cut in funding affects the implementation of activities, produces a risk of breaking the plan framework and produces difficulties in reaching consensus among agencies and counterparts.[59] Learning from this experience, key criteria on performance, delivery rate and quality of delivery have been added into the allocation criteria but the evaluation has not seen evidence that the quality of reporting has improved.

ALLOCATION OF FUNDS

5.14 Since commencement of the One Budget/One Plan Fund, OPF has been allocated 5 times by OPFMAC, see Table 6 for more details. The first 3 allocations were made to Window I Participating United Nations Organisations (PUNOs) for expenditure in 2008 and 2009, with a total of about USD30 million. The 4th and 5th allocations were made mostly for Window II. All 'incoming 7' agencies (FAO, UN Habitat, ILO, UNESCO, UNODC, UNIDO, WHO) have been allocated expenditure in 2009 under the 4th allocation of more than USD9 million. The full amount requested was allocated to all 13 PUNOs (excluding IFAD[60]), including 'original and incoming' agencies under the 5th allocation for 2010 expenditure with more than USD33 million allocated to activities, projects and programmes.

Table 6 OPF allocation summary

	TIMING	ALLOCATION TOOLS	TO WHOM	AMOUNT (USD)
Allocation 1	5 December 2007	PUNOs all submitted full AWPs together with a completed checklist which formed the basis of the MDTF best practice allocation criteria, (Allocation criteria for a proposed AWP)	Original PUNOs of Window I for expenditure in 2008: UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNAIDs, UNV (not UNIFEM)	16,466,148 (17,327,648 – 861,500)

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[57] *An interview with Administrative Agent*
[58] *In its original Letter of Agreement the 2nd transfer of funds was to be made at the beginning of 2008 but was delayed until January 2009*
[59] *OPFMAC meeting minutes on Tuesday 16 December 2008*
[60] *IFAD is a member of the One Plan but has not requested and is not a recipient of One Plan Funds*

	TIMING	ALLOCATION TOOLS	TO WHOM	AMOUNT (USD)
Allocation 2	24 March 2008	Supplement to the 5th December 2007 allocation	The Kon Tum Joint Programme UNICEF, UNFPA	861,500
Allocation 3	16 December 2008	Similar to previous cases, the agencies submitted requests for funding and full AWPs (using previous allocation criteria for a proposed AWP)	The allocation to the 'original 6' PUNOs for expenditure in 2009: UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNAIDs, UNV (not UNIFEM)	12,923,753
Allocation 4	8 May 2009	This was the first time that the allocation based on the ranking by cluster allocation methodology. This was also the first time that PUNOs submitted Submission Forms (based on MDTF recommended best practice) rather than AWPs.	The first allocation to the 'incoming 7' agencies: FAO, UN Habitat, ILO, UNESCO, UNODC, UNIDO, WHO	9,303,245
Allocation 5	15 December 2009	The allocation was based on the revised allocation criteria[61] agreed by the UNCT. PUNOs submitted Submission Forms with self-assessment and an approval of HoA.	Allocations was made to all 13 PUNOs for expenditure in 2010 (not IFAD)	33,353,059

Source: Administrative Agent Notes

5.15 For the first 3 allocations of OPF Window I, the allocation was based on criteria which were finalized and endorsed by OPFMAC at its 6th meeting on 5 December 2007.[62] PUNOs used the allocation criteria to prepare their proposed Annual Work Plan (AWP) and submitted full AWPs together with a completed checklist which formed the basis of the MDTF best practice allocation criteria to OPFMAC for approval.

5.16 The ranking by cluster allocation methodology was applied for the first time to the 4th allocation for the seven incoming PUNOs for expenditure in 2009. This was also the first time that PUNOs completed Submission Forms[63] which were made to be consistent with the 23 thematic clusters (23 outputs of OP Results and Resources Framework) with self-assessment of each submission cluster. When clusters were submitted to OPFMAC, each OPFMAC member (Head of Agencies of the 13 PUNOs and the RC) ranked cluster submissions anonymously. The allocation criteria ranked the cluster submissions

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[61] *Model 2 from "In the Option for a Comprehensive Allocation Mechanism Report", Janine Constantine, Nov. 2009*
[62] *OPFMAC Meeting minute, 5 December 2007*
[63] *The Submission Forms based on MDTF recommended best practice rather than AWPs*

according to 'high', 'medium' and 'low' priority levels. Depending on which level the cluster submission achieved, the cluster submission would receive more or less fund (a high priority would receive 100% of available funding, a medium priority cluster 60%-100%).[64]

5.17   For example: UN-HABITAT 'Population and Development Policy' cluster submission for Urbanisation Study initially requested funding of USD150,000 but as this was ranked as a medium-level priority it therefore only received an allocation of USD122.059 (81.37%). This funding decision was also influenced by the 'delivery rate' achieved by the agency in the previous year. Delivery rate is calculated as the actual OPF expenditure of the agency in the previous year as a proportion of the agency's approved OPF allocation for this year.[65]

5.18   The Fund is normally allocated in advance of the new fiscal year (in Vietnam before January) but the initial allocation criteria by cluster were approved late (in May 2009) and as a result agencies and counterparts only had 5 months in the first year to implement the whole year's plan. This led to an adjustment of the delivery and performance rates for the next year's allocation for agencies which had received funds late in 2009.

Analysis of the most recent allocation criteria

5.19   The latest allocation on 15 December 2009 for expenditure in 2010 was based on the revised allocation criteria.[66] A set of 4 options was developed for a more comprehensive and more evidence-based OPF allocation mechanism. The OPFMAC agreed to adopt Model No. 2 of these options during a special meeting in November 2009 (see Annex G). The agreed model is an attempt to balance national priorities with the UN's comparative advantage and the past performance of Participating UN Organisations (both in results and financial disbursement). The new criteria are comprehensive and based on a set of three core criteria categories: Eligibility, Programme Priority and Performance:

- *Eligibility criteria* that refer to the quality of programming, the capacity of Agencies and Implementing Partners to deliver results, and the degree to which the expected outcomes (based on indicators with baselines, targets and means of verification), and associated budget are realistic.
- *Programme priority criteria* that prioritize resource allocations to development results explicitly linked to national priorities and the UN's comparative advantage (including normative functions) and identified cross-cutting issues in Viet Nam.
- *Performance criteria* that prioritize allocations to activities that have demonstrated progress in the achievement of annual deliverables and absorption of funds.

5.20   New allocation criteria use a 'traffic light' approach whereby the colour of the criteria category are green (passed), orange (passed with some concern) or red (failed). Requests for Funding must obtain a green rating for the eligibility criteria in order to be eligible to receive funds from the OPF. Requests for Funding that score red in any of the criteria will not receive funding from the OPF.

5.21   With these new criteria, PUNOs submitted Submission Forms with self-assessment and an approval of its own HoA. Based on Agencies' self-assessment, RCO will compile an initial overall rating for each proposal and consolidate submissions to OPFMAC for final decision-making. OPFMAC will receive the documentation from RCO, review and then meet to allocate OPF resources for the following year and provide information to OPSC.

5.22   While the new criteria have many strengths, there are also a number of continuing weaknesses which require further attention before the next OPF allocation round. First,

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[64] *Expanded OPFMAC - Final One Plan Fund Window 2 Allocation Criteria, Version of 12th May 2009*
[65] *Delivery rate criteria were applied even in the first OPF allocation. However, the delivery rate was based on the total amount of the regular and non-core resources, but there was no objective way to verify the actual delivery performance.*
[66] *Option for a Comprehensive Allocation Mechanism Report, Janine Constantine, Nov. 2009.*

while each category of criteria has a number of indicators and each of the indicators currently have points attributed to them, 17 out of 19 indicators have an equal (one) point attributed to them and only the remaining 2 have a different number (two) of points attributed to them. It is intended that this system will provide higher weighting to high priority indicators and less weighting to less important indicators. In reality, however, it fails to effectively distinguishing between stronger and less strong submissions. Secondly, some criteria are very difficult to assess, such as indicators 8 and 9 relating to 'national priorities'[67] because priorities are expressed in very general terms (see earlier discussion on the One Plan) and may require more specific sub-criteria or indicators. Thirdly, performance indicators 18 and 19 actually resulted in incorrect assessment of PUNOs, resulting in some PUNOs being ranked with a red light. More detailed guidance on these indicators needs to be provided. Moreover, performance indicators need to be adjusted with more evidence about progress towards outcomes, which is not currently identified.[68]

WORK OF OPFMAC AND ROLE OF THE RESIDENT COORDINATOR

5.23 One Budget/One Plan Fund has left a funding gap for mobilization over a number of years of implementation. The funding gap for One Plan 2 (2008-2010) at the time of signing the OP2 (June 2008) was USD101,170,176. There was a significant challenge for OPFMAC and the Resident Coordinator (RC) to find a way to fill this gap and this depends on the actions of RC and OPFMAC, especially RC (Box 9). If only small funds are available, RC will be required to mobilize more and at the same time to negotiate with other agencies to adjust the allocation. As mentioned above the high mobilization rate achieved indicates that RC and OPFMAC were very successful at mobilising resources for the One Plan.

Box 9 OPF governance

One Plan Fund Mobilization and Allocation Committee (OPFMAC)

The One Plan Fund Mobilization and Allocation Committee consists of the UN Resident Coordinator and the Country Directors/Heads of Participating UN Organizations. The Committee is chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator. It is responsible for developing a joint resource mobilisation strategy, for prioritising the allocation of funds from the Viet Nam One Plan Fund, and for providing oversight of the management and operations of the Viet Nam One Plan Fund. The prioritisation will be guided by recommendations from One Plan Annual Reviews undertaken by the Joint Govt/UN One Plan Steering Committee, and by key documents including the One Plan.

UN Resident Coordinator

The overall management of the Viet Nam One Plan Fund is led and coordinated by the Resident Coordinator in consultation with the Participating UN Organizations. The Resident Coordinator is responsible for providing strategic leadership of the Viet Nam One Plan Fund on the basis of the One Plan; mobilizing resources for the Viet Nam One Plan Fund in collaboration with Participating UN Organizations; approving allocation of funds from the Viet Nam One Plan Fund based on priorities identified within the One Plan and endorsed by the Joint Government/UN One Plan Steering Committee, as well as the UN's comparative advantage; overseeing the programme coordination support allocation; and chairing the One Plan Fund Mobilization and Allocation Committee. The Resident Coordinator makes ultimate decisions on fund allocation (with documented process and rationale for these decisions). Programme implementation will be the responsibility of the Country Directors/Head of Participating UN Organizations. The RC will hold Country Directors/Head of Participating UN Organizations accountable for their organization's components of the results of initiatives funded through the Viet Nam One Plan Fund.

One Plan Steering Committee

The One Plan Steering Committee is co-chaired by the Vice Minister of the Ministry of Planning and

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[67] *Interview with RCO*
[68] *There is only the performance indicator 18 which links to outputs but not outcomes*

Investment and the Resident Coordinator will provide guidance and recommendations on priority actions to be undertaken to meet the objectives of the One Plan and approve the guiding principles for the allocation of funding from the One Plan Fund.

Administrative Agent

The UNDP MDTF Office has been appointed the Administrative Agent of the Viet Nam One Plan Fund. Its responsibilities as Administrative Agent include providing the receipt, administration and management of contributions from Donors; disbursement of such funds to the participating UN Organizations in accordance with OPFMAC decisions; and provision of consolidated financial reports on the One Plan Fund Account to the Resident Coordinator based on reports of the participating UN Organizations.

Source: OPFMAC and OPF TORs, and RC MoU

5.24 OPFMAC has allocated One Plan Fund five times (see the allocation section for more details). The allocation in December 2009 is particularly important and illustrates several key lessons about decision-making and the fund allocation process. The UNCT did not need to conduct such an elaborate allocation review process for 2010 as it was in a position to cover with available funds the collective ask of PUNOs for projects and activities under OP2 by allocating almost the whole current balance of the OPF despite the fact that would leave a funding gap for the extension year 2011. However, the UNCT decided that it would use the opportunity of the 2010 allocation round to put the new allocation criteria to the test and learn from this first experience for future allocation rounds. The allocation meant that for the first time under the OP2, the entirety of the requirements of PUNOs for the concerned year were fully allocated at the onset of the year allowing for a timely preparation and signing of Annual Work Plans. This constitutes a major achievement and result.

5.25 However, there are questions about the allocation effectiveness of this round. Firstly, all project/programme submissions were allocated funding, even when they were given a red light. Out of the 76 OP Fund requests submitted, 6 were rated as yellow in terms of eligibility and 12 were rated as red in terms of performance, which in principle would disqualify the concerned requests for eligibility for OP funding'.[69] The UNCT after due and careful consideration of the reasons explaining these ratings took the decision to allocate funding to these projects. This is a clear example of consensual decision-making. But critics view this experience as a failure of the reform to bring about more objective and decisive strategic decisions rather than perpetuate entitlement-based allocations.

5.26 Secondly, in terms of the funding gap for the extension year 2011, it has been argued that the 2010 allocation should have focused on projects with a high or medium priority, and should have rejected some low priority projects in order to retain some funding on hand for the 2011 allocation. Relating to these points above, some interviewees have argued that the OPFMAC chair should lead more negotiations with agencies with regard to allocations which may not be fully funded or be rejected. They have also raised concerns that the RC Accountability Framework may not fully ensure effective financial decision making without formal empowerment for resource allocation decision-making being devolved by headquarters, even with the MoU which gives the RC authority to make final decisions on allocation (but only when heads of agencies have been unable to reach a negotiated agreement).

5.27 Thirdly, the latest allocation required a self-assessment from PUNOs with approval of their own HoA, without any independent assessment for submissions. RCO commits to undertake only '*an initial review of submissions and to contact agencies for further clarification and/or the provision of specific documents if further information is required to supplement information provided in the submission*' and '*compile an initial overall rating*

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[69] *OPFMAC meeting minutes on 15 December 2009*

for each proposal and consolidate submissions to OPFMAC for final decision-making'.[70]
The RCO may in the future conduct the submissions assessment but the current RCO
does not have sufficient expertise to undertake this important task. In order to enable the
allocation process to become more effective and objective there should be an outside
peer review process or an independent assessment, or the strengthening of the expertise
of the RCO.

5.28   Further concerns relate to the institutional structure and functions of OPFMAC. HoA
makes fund request submissions and OPFMAC is responsible for deciding the result of
the submission assessment. OPFMAC includes RC and all HoA, however, and HoA are
responsible for assessing RC's performance. Despite the creation of an elaborate process
designed to foster rational decision-making based on technical assessment, the process
lacks a separation of functions between proposals and allocation, lacks independence and
objectivity. Most importantly, there is no mechanism for an effective challenge between an
overarching strategic view of the work of the UN
and the submissions by the agencies.

5.29   Information has been shared on OB/OPF
guidelines, submissions and allocations among UN
agencies. Information on OP /OPF budgets and
financial reports has been updated and information
on received funding and commitments is easily
accessible via websites. Information sharing is
rather transparent inside the UN system. But donors
inform the evaluation that they were not consulted
about the adoption of the technical assessment criteria nor do they not

> *"(Fund allocation) is the most difficult work but UN has managed it successfully without GoV's participation. We assess it highly."*
>
> **(High level government official)**

5.30   Regarding GoV participation in OB/OPF resource allocation, one high level GoV official
said that the 'UN would like the GoV to participate in the process but GoV does not wish
to intervene in this issue; the GoV can only advise and provide comments'. In principle,
GoV agreed with the UN on the One Plan which was integrated with budget but the GoV
does not need to know the precise funding allocation between agencies as this is an
internal issue within the UN.

5.31   In summary, distribution of information about the OB/OPF is rather transparent inside the
UN system, resource allocation has reached a consensus[71] and follows set criteria.
However, the allocation efficiency is still not high and needs a more strategic and outcome
orientation.

Policy of budget under-funding

5.32   An issue raised by donors concerns the extent to which the fund allocation process is part
of the incentive structure to achieve greater strategic focus in programming. Some donors
argue that it is better if the One Plan is underfunded in order to help focus support on high
priority programmes. Interviewees in the RCO and UN agencies do not share this view,
arguing that development is disrupted if planned activities have to be curtailed or
cancelled.

5.33   This point of view would be more convincing if the One Plan was highly focussed, but as
seen in Chapter 4, although there are improvements over the former UNDAF and agency
agreements, improvement to the plans was constrained by prior agreements with
government. It is a well established principle of public sector reform that the budget
provides a strong incentive for change when it is comprehensive (all funding is taken into
account) and there is a hard budget constraint (that is to say no extra-budgetary sources
of finance can be accessed). Concerns do exist that extra funds can be accessed outside

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[70] *Guidelines for OPFMAC submission and allocation process for 2010 OPF*
[71] *'This is the most difficult work but UN has done this successfully without GoV's participation. We highly assess it' (A high level official of MPI)*

the One Budget by agencies through global or regional arrangements and there were instances of donor HQ financing programmes without working through their country offices which were contributing through the One Fund. The response by the specialised agencies to the introduction of the One Fund under OP1 is clear evidence of the effect of financial arrangements and the evaluation team takes the view that the One Fund is a relevant tool to help stimulate greater strategic focus and outcome orientation. This will be very important as activities under the current plan period are brought to a close in 2011 and the Next One Plan is prepared.[72]

Actual allocations

5.34 Total transfer to PUNOs for OPF windows I and II as of 31 December 2009 reached USD62,066,859, but OPFMAC has made allocation decisions for total of USD72,907,705 (including commitments).

5.35 The budget of each agency constitutes the regular (core) budget and other resources which include OPF and non-OPF resources. Figure 1 illustrates the OPF proportion versus the total funding of each agency to assess the importance of the OPF to each agency (Financial data as at 30 September 2009, provided by AA). Figure 1 highlights that OPF played a very important role to UNAIDs during the period 2008-2010 as OPF equates to 44.9% of the total funding of that agency during this period. The next highest ratios of OPF to total funding were at UNICEF and UNFPA at 42.2% and 33.2% respectively. OPF is not important to IFAD as this agency has not requested any funding from OPF and the OPF proportions of FAO and WHO are only 10.1% and 13.5% respectively. Data sources are at Annex G.

Figure 1
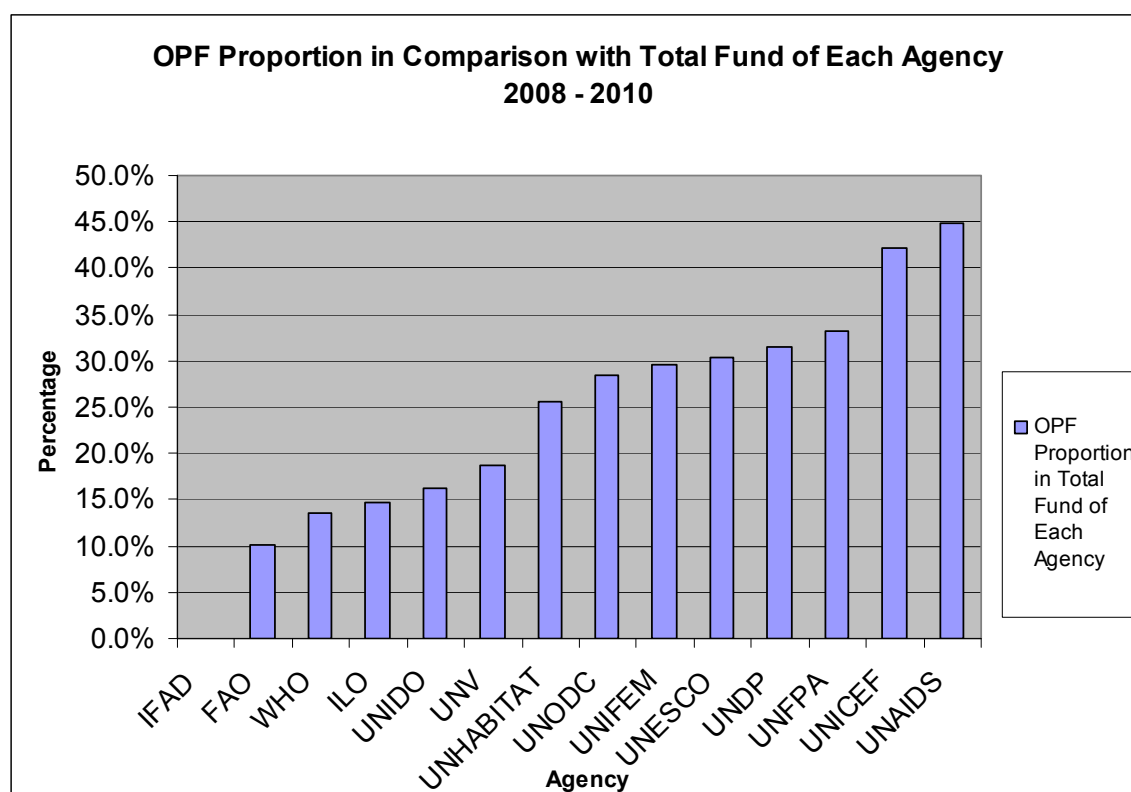
Source: Financial data as at 31 December 2009 (updated at 17 May 2010), provided by AA.

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[72] *It does create a dilemma however, in that a large One Fund is desirable as an incentive for agencies to participate in the One Plan, but the large fund needs to be underfunded in order to reinforce difficult allocation decisions.*

5.36 Figure 2 illustrates the OPF proportion of each agency in comparison with the total OPF during the period of 2008-2010. In other words it highlights which agencies received more or less of the OPF during this period. The Figure shows that UNICEF got the biggest proportion of the total OPF (32.4%), followed by UNDP and UNFPA at 26.8% and 10.3% respectively. In contrast, IFAD has not requested funds from OPF, UNIFEM and UNV have 0.8% and 0.9% respectively.

5.37 There has been no duplication, and overlapping of planning and resources has been avoided.[73] The budget is clear showing how much of the fund will be allocated to which agency, for which expected output and outcome. There appear to be close links between the plan and budget, and the budget and results.[74]

5.38 There is no clear evidence to show that OB/OPF has allocated more funding to cross cutting issues such as HIV, Human Rights and Gender.[75] However, cross cutting issues (climate change, gender, culture and human rights) have appeared in the latest allocation criteria as the assessment indicators for OPF allocation. This helps to track agency working in these areas and also to make agencies in a sense more accountable for the work they do on these issues and contributing to effective mainstreaming.

Figure 2:
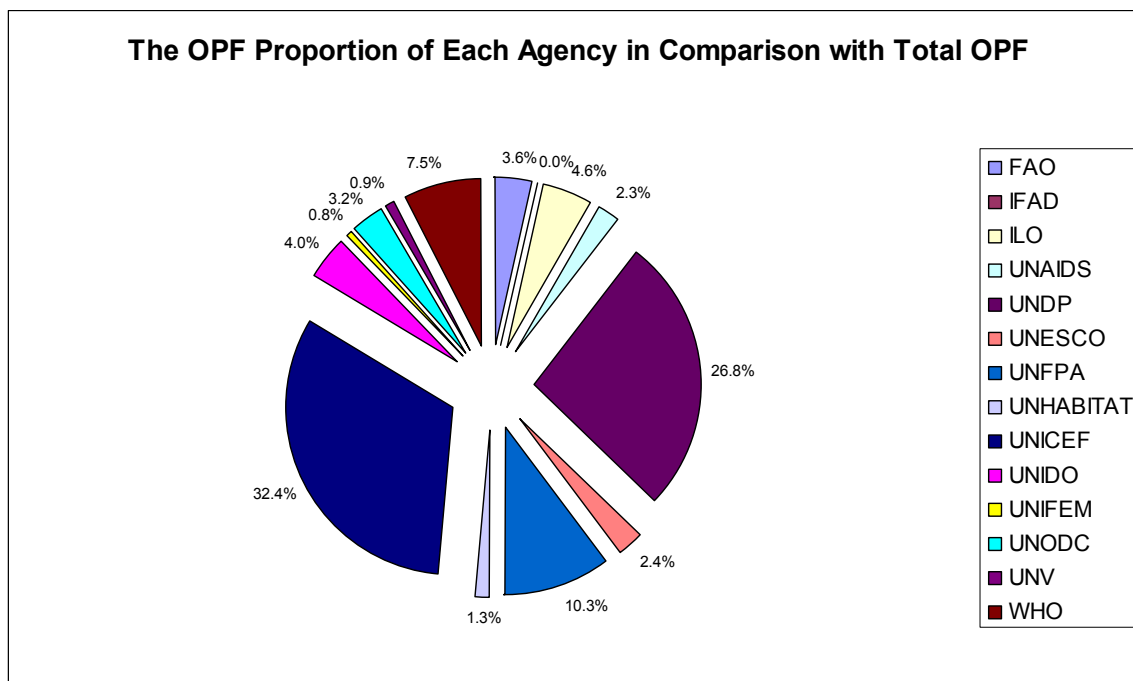
Source: Financial data as at 31 December 2009 (updated at 17 May 2010), provided by AA.

Financial reporting and auditing (scrutiny)

5.39 Financial reporting on sources and use of funds which uses the MDTF template has been undertaken for the fiscal years 2007 and 2008, under three sections: Source of Funds, Use of Funds and Other Related Expenses. The Financial Report is prepared in a simple way: the Source of Fund demonstrates the Gross Donor Contributions in each window of each year, but the detailed amounts contributed by each donor of each year have been monitored and consolidated in the separate window tables, see above table 3 and 4 in this section; the Use of Funds shows the Total Transfer to Implementing Agencies during the

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[73] *Interviews with MPI and MONRE.*

[74] *Interview with MoF officials*

[75] *'There is no way to track gender expenditure to find clear evidence of an increase in allocation for gender (Gender focus group discussion); interview with UNAIDS*

period only, other "Summary Financial Report - Schedule A" that MDTF provides to donors has more detailed information on how each UN agency spends the fund allocated to them, split by cluster and project. The Financial Report also presents the Balance of Funds available.

5.40 Annual financial auditing will be conducted for each Implementing Partner in accordance with standard regulations. All audits to be conducted in 2007 (for financial year of 2006 – before the One Plan became effective) followed existing individual ExCom Agencies' schedules/ plans, arrangements and procedures. The One Plan stated that "efforts will be made to organize joint ExCom audits of IPs in 2008 and onwards (for financial years of 2007 and onwards)." However, such Joint Audits are in fact are not possible because of Agency-specific financial rules and regulations.

Comment on other questions in framework on efficiency and sustainability

5.41 Some donors assess that OB/OPF has not yet reduced the transaction costs for donors and has required more work from donors, such as participating in PCG review meetings. GoV assess that it somehow reduces the transaction costs for GoV in terms of reducing the costs for M & E (overseeing the budget and plans) because plans are clearer now and there is a joint monitoring). The UN evaluates that it reduces the transaction costs significantly and in different ways, such as rationalizing the way raising the fund is simplified and led by RC, as in the past all 14 UN agencies approached donors to seek funding separately. Now agencies focus most of their time on policy work or programme implementation, instead of on resource mobilisation.

5.42 The concern over funding gap for extension year 2011 and fund mobilisation for Next OP as the donor community has not discussed about filling the funding gap for 2011 and funding for the next OP yet; some donors have tentatively put forward a plan to fund the next OP, while others wait for the results of this evaluation before making a final decision, however, this issue will be planned to discuss in Hanoi conference in June this year.

CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ONE BUDGET/ ONE PLAN FUND PILLAR

ONE BUDGET/ ONE PLAN FUND

Conclusions

- Relevance. Rated as <u>high</u>. The un-earmarked and multi-year funding mechanism creates flexibility and active adaptation to national priorities; and more predictability. The fund is a clear stimulus to agency behaviour.

- Effectiveness. <u>High to moderate</u>. Funds have been predictable. Allocation has evolved through 5 rounds. The new criteria are relatively comprehensive and try to balance national priorities with the UN's comparative advantage and past performance. There needs to be further improvements in terms of more weighting to agency performance and outcomes.

- Efficiency. <u>Moderate</u>. Greater transparency is needed about allocations. There are some improvements in transaction costs. There needs to be a 'separation of functions' between proposals for funding and assessment for allocation decisions.

- Sustainability. <u>Likely, but with risks</u>. Changing patterns of donor funding means there is uncertainty about continuing mechanisms to allocate to the One Fund at country level; future commitments will depend on convincing progress with reforms under the NOP; reporting will need to demonstrate progress towards measurable outcomes.

Lessons

- The experience of going through the allocation process has been really important – perhaps

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more than the outcome. But the allocation mechanism has not really been tested as the Plan has been so fully funded.

- The One Fund is an important incentive for changing agency programmes in line with One Plan intentions. The One Fund should be used to bring funding up to an agreed budget amount and adjusted if Other Resources become available.

- Donor support for the One Plan Fund has enabled a more flexible source of funding to be available for allocation at country level. The fund allocation process has been developed with more objective criteria and has potential to be effective. But there is little evidence yet of allocation decisions being used to make difficult choices and prioritise for One Plan outcome objectives. If, owing to consensual decision-making by OPFMAC, the allocation process does not give rise to allocations in line with plan priorities and proven agency performance, donors will need to consider whether it would be more effective to fund specific outcomes.

Recommendations

- The One Plan Fund has been an effective mechanism and donors should support continuation of the Fund for the Next One Plan period, pending more general review of donor funding for the UN at country level. However, donors should retain the option of earmarking by outcomes if there is no evidence of improvements in the allocation process.

- MPI has agreed to the Programmatic and Budgetary Framework for 2011. Actions needed now by the UN are to justify the plan and prepare the budget of the extension year. The envelope of OPF resources for the next OP is not yet known and there is a funding gap in 2011.

- New allocation criteria are relatively comprehensive, but require further improvements for the Next One Plan such as with regard to indicator weight, some indicators being too general and difficult to assess, and performance indicators to provide more evidence of progress towards outcomes.

- The UNCT, working with OPFMAC should develop a new budget cycle process that brings a clear separation of function between submitting financial proposals, and reviewing and approving proposals, and improve the decision-making process to ensure fund allocation is driven by plan priorities rather than agency entitlements.

- Efforts should be made to try and identify those elements of funding that are being applied to cross cutting issues of gender and human rights, to link to reporting on cross cutting issues.

6 ONE LEADER

6.1   The notion of having One Leader is fundamental to the original concept of reform. The underlying situation before the initiative in Viet Nam is described in the Ryan, Morch (2005) paper as follows:

The United Nations Resident Coordinator is powerless to reorient the incentive structures facing individual agencies. He or she must rely on moral suasion to generate consensus and promote joint programming. Lacking any power to influence decisions on the finances, personnel, planning and partnerships of individual agencies, he or she must rely on the goodwill of agency representatives and their superiors in their respective headquarters.

6.2   They argued that '*One United Nations means one chain of command, one budget and one plan*'. The report of the High Level Plan uses the phrase '*One Leader*' although subsequent documents in Viet Nam refer to One Management (see Annex D).

6.3   The challenge is how to create a modern management structure with clear lines of accountability that enable strategic decisions on programmes and finance to be taken, whilst still preserving the management integrity of the individual agencies and maintaining a degree of distinctiveness that reflects each agency's comparative advantage and responsibilities to support Viet Nam in the implementation of the various treaties, norms and standards.

6.4   The One UN initiative has tackled that challenge by the development of specific agreements in Viet Nam and through the tripartite arrangements with GoV and donors, and the provisions of the One Plan Fund.

ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORKS

6.5   UN agencies have struggled to develop effective and transparent accountability frameworks. For example, the 2007 corporate evaluation of Results Based Management in UNDP noted that:

The UNDP accountability framework does not support results-based management. Roles and responsibilities are generally clear, but country programme outcomes and indicators are not subject to quality assurance and there is little independent validation. Individual targets in the Results and Competency Assessment are self-selected and are often applied retrospectively and poorly linked to incentives. Despite the intended shift to managing for outcomes, individual staff remain tied to a project orientation and accountability for outputs. There is no evidence that the Resident Representative/ County Director is held accountable for managing for outcomes, and there is considerable scepticism within UNDP over whether this is feasible, despite evidence of moves towards such an approach in sister organizations such as UNFPA.[76]

6.6   A sound accountability framework would be expected to consist of at least four basic features: 1. Definition of clear roles and responsibilities (accountability relationship) 2. Clear performance expectations and reward systems (transparent incentive mechanism) 3. Credible and timely measurement and reporting of the results achieved (giving account) 4. A mechanism to hold to account (e.g. fair review of results, 360-degree feedback, reward achievement or appropriate consequences for under achievement, resolve disputes, apply incentive systems, or adjust if necessary).[77]

6.7   In 2007, UNDP implemented a new Accountability Framework as an integral part of its Strategic Plan. The same year, UNFPA introduced an ambitious approach to 'accountability for outcomes' which is a difficult area for UN programmes which work through implementing partners and are generally of relatively small scale.

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[76] *UNDP 2007 Evaluation of Results Based Management at UNDP (Executive Summary page x)*
[77] *Ibid page 35*

6.8   In parallel with these changes UNDG was working on a '*Management and Accountability System of the UN* Development *and Resident Coordinator System including the "functional firewall" for the RC system*'. That document was finalised in June 2008, during the period of the OP2. Box 10 reproduces the Vision Statement and specific provisions for UNCT members.

Box 10 UNDG Resident Coordinator Management and Accountability System

Vision statement

In the long term all Agencies agree that we need a Resident Coordinator who:
- Has an equal relationship with, and responsibility to, all UNCT member agencies,
- Is recognized by and accredited to government,
- Has all the leadership qualities required to be an excellent team leader who can represent the whole UN development system effectively,
- Is empowered by clear recognition by each agency of his/her role in strategically positioning the UN in each country
- Has immediate access to Agencies' technical resources to support the RC function,
- Has flexible financing for start-up/preparatory activities of the UNCT.

WHO	IS ACCOUNTABLE FOR WHAT	TO WHOM
Resident Coordinators	1. Report on UNCT results 2. Achieve agreed RC results drawn from UNCT workplan, and 4. (*sic*) Implement the RC/UNCT "code of conduct"	1. National government 2. UNCT 3. Regional Managers Team (RMT to undertake assessment process, DOCO to support and monitor)
UNCT members	1. UN country team results where they have agreed to lead the team 2. Implement RC/UNCT Code of Conduct 3. Agency results	1. UNCT/RC, RMT (RMT to undertake assessment process, DOCO to support and monitor) 2. Regional Director or equivalent agency manager

6.9   This framework marked a significant step forward to defining the approach to the RC system. However, it falls far short of the framework described in para 6.6. Whilst the strategic role of the RC is recognised and the need for a "functional firewall"[78] set out, it does not respond to ambitions for a clear leadership role and chain of command, nor does it take account of features under the reform such as the One Plan Fund. The Framework includes a road map and next steps which notes the requirement of an incentive system for relevant staff in each agency, the role of the RC mobilising resources, creation of a separately accredited Country Director (CD) post in UNDP to separate UNDP management from RC representation, and reporting of UNCT members to the RC. These were to be resolved by the end of 2009. The evaluation team has been unable to locate any reports that verify progress towards these.

6.10   A generic job description for the Resident Coordinator was finalised by UNDG on 29 January 2009, drawing on the management and accountability framework and taking forward some lessons from the Delivering as One Pilots. The TOR is explicit in a number of areas directly relevant to the One UN reforms:

- The management of the RCS is anchored in UNDP; however, it is owned by the UN system as a whole and its proper functioning is participatory, collegial, and based on consensus and mutual accountability.
- (the RC) Leads the UNCT in strategic development of the UNDAF and specifically takes the final decision on strategic focus and allocation of resources against that focus

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[78] *The "functional firewall" is an arrangement whereby whilst the RC system is managed by UNDP the RC acts to advance the interests of the whole UN system.*

- (the RC) … manages resource mobilisation for the UNDAF
- is the primary interlocutor for the UNCT with the Head of State or Government
- (the RC) Negotiates and builds consensus within the UNCT to pursue a united direction and 'speak as one' voice

Arrangements in Viet Nam

6.11 Recognising the more ambitious objectives of the One UN initiative in Viet Nam, in parallel to the system-wide arrangements noted above, specific proposals were developed in country. In December 2007 a '*Code of Conduct and Terms of Reference for UN Country Team Viet Nam to implement the One UN Initiative*' was promulgated. Key provisions were that whilst decisions will be made on a consensus basis by the UNCT, '*if for any reason the UNCT cannot reach a decision by consensus, the UN RC will decide the matter after consultation with senior representatives of the parties concerned*'.

6.12 In September 2008 these collective principles were brought together in the Memorandum of Understanding on 'One Leader'. This document is a major step forward towards improved management and accountability with several key features. First of all, it reflects a voluntary agreement among the UN agencies. Secondly, it brings a stronger framework for financial management with provisions for the RC ultimately to decide on the One Budget; to lead, at the country level, the mobilization of other (non-core) resources and as the chair of the OPFMAC have the authority to make ultimate decisions on fund allocations.

6.13 Thirdly, to counterbalance this authority, the RC will provide inputs for the performance evaluation of the UNCT members and the performance of the RC will be assessed on an annual basis with inputs from the 180 degree assessment of the RC by the UNCT.

6.14 The UN was able to achieve these arrangements with the strong support of Government and donors. High level officials in government informed the evaluation team that the government considers "*high level leaders must be decisive; if not then agencies will remain independent and will not be efficient. If both policy and resources are not well coordinated then effectiveness will be low. If coordination is only at a low level it will not work*".[79] Donors appreciate the progress that has been made but mostly wish to see continued efforts towards a clearer expression of management authority in the RC, especially with regards to programming and financing decisions. Representatives of some partner countries remain critical of the continuing individual agency visibility as typified by the use of agency flags and the joint seventeen signatures of the UN 2010 Tet card. But all parties speak admiringly of the personal commitment and effort of the current RC in taking forward his role in a pragmatic and determined way.

6.15 The views from heads of UN agencies are supportive but cautious about the need for more formal authority. Examples of comments include "If you want to see limitations in the role, they are there. If you want to make it work, you can"; "Accountability will only change if joint board approval is given"; "the relationship is only as good as the current team"; "the RC is mandated but without authority". There are no criticisms about the operation of the firewall. Indeed, the Executive Director of UNFPA is reported as having commended the operation of the firewall in Viet Nam.

6.16 With the progress made and steady improvement in arrangements partners in Viet Nam feel that prominence of issues regarding the One Leader has lessened. However, the consensus perspective from interviews is that the RC needs to be provided with a level of authority matching the responsibilities and accountabilities placed on her/him, a call that echoes views expressed at the Kigali meeting in October 2009.[80]

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[79] *Evaluation interview*

[80] *Intergovernmental Meeting of the "Programme Country Pilots" on "Delivering as One" 19-21 October 2009 in Kigali (Rwanda)*

6.17 Throughout the development of the initiative in Viet Nam the RC Office (RCO) has played a critical role in providing support and intellectual capital for the reforms. Stakeholders observe that recruitment from outside the UN on temporary appointment to head the RCO during the early period of reform was particularly valuable in bringing a well-informed and neutral perspective to the assignment. Examples of the work of the Office are diverse and numerous ranging from tasks such as the stakeholder surveys and stocktaking reports though to core features such as allocation methods for the One Plan Fund. Specific support in the areas of Gender, and Monitoring and Evaluation have also been valued and have complemented work by the agencies through the PCG. The RCO acted as a liaison point for relations with government and the donor community, providing a secretariat function for the Tripartite National Task Force. The Office has facilitated and reduced transaction costs for the UNCT, government and donors.

6.18 Continuity of the Office will remain important through the preparation of the Next One Plan and its implementation. There has already been natural turn-over in some posts and continuity has been maintained. A critical issue in the development and scope of work of the RCO will be the extent to which the Office has to provide independent scrutiny of financing proposals under the Annual Work Plan.

BENEFITS FROM ONE LEADER

6.19 It is difficult to distinguish achievements that reflect the One Leader pillar separately from the effects arising from the One Plan and One Voice. This is particularly true of external benefits. The list here is illustrative.

6.20 Development support to government is a mixture of ideas and resources. The UN agencies are not significant providers of resources to Viet Nam and must demonstrate their contribution towards policy. Many examples have arisen in recent years where the UN has been able to provide leadership. Some are related to the examples of policy support in Box 5. Others include better UN representation at Consultative Group meetings; leadership on climate change; and a stronger presence alongside the World Bank and other partners in a variety of settings including meetings regarding the 2009 financial crisis. More specifically, donors argue that without strong leadership commitments to the One Fund would not have been so great. Under the RC leadership, PCG co-convenors have the authority to speak on behalf of the UN agencies.

6.21 The effects may be more significant internally. UN staff speak of the vision, drive and leadership from the RC: "*previously we were not a team*". Agencies continue to deal bilaterally with technical ministry counterparts, but now have a common UN position. This greater visibility is said to bring benefits to sensitive issues such as poverty among ethnic minorities.

6.22 However, there are still concerns. The success of the One UN initiative has demonstrated substantial benefits from working together, but big challenges remain over allocation of budgets, agency profile and programme design. Senior officials in the UN argue there is still a need to break the 'entitlement culture' among agencies. Few major decisions have had to be resolved by the RC rather than through consensus. The high degree of funding has limited the need for difficult financial decisions. The RC did have to take the final decision about co-conveners under the April 2010 reorganisation, but most of these were by mutual agreement. Whilst some continue to argue that the leader is not empowered and cannot decide because anyone can object, others say the experience to date is creating an operating culture from which it will be possible to move to more decisive arrangements under the Next One Plan.

CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ONE LEADER PILLAR

ONE LEADER

Conclusions

- Relevance. Rated as <u>high</u>. One Leader was identified as a core requirement from the inception of reform and received high support from GOV and donors.

- Effectiveness. <u>High</u>. Arrangements negotiated in Viet Nam have resulted in genuine progress towards a more empowered, decisive role for the RC. Changes are visible to GOV and development partners.

- Efficiency. <u>Moderate</u>. Few opportunities have arisen to test the RC's managerial authority, which will come with the NOP and Fund. Accountability arrangements need to be more explicit.

- Sustainability. <u>Likely</u>. This must be assessed with the next generation of UNCT, but arrangements developed in Viet Nam are congruent with wider UN reforms.

Lessons

- The UNCT in Viet Nam has been able to achieve progress towards One Leader by a combination of vision and ambitions among UNCT members and the strong commitment shown by government and donors to the reform.

- The creation of a '*Code of Conduct and Terms of Reference for UN Country Team Viet Nam to implement the One UN Initiative*' was an important innovation that enabled the UNCT to progress beyond system-wide arrangements through the UNDG.

Recommendations

- The UNDG Management and Accountability Framework of 2008 needs to be revised and brought up to date to reflect the experience of the UN Pilots. Experience from Viet Nam calls for simpler statements of authority over resources, budget allocation and programming for the RC and clearer lines of accountability between agency members of the UNCT and the RC.

- In Viet Nam, the UNCT should revise the 'Code of Conduct' for the Next One Plan period to progress further towards the concept of 'unified management' in the '*Agreed Principles, Objectives and Instruments to achieve One United Nations in Vietnam*'. Specifically, greater financial and programmatic management authority should be vested in the RC.

7 ONE SET OF MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

OBJECTIVES OF REFORM

7.1   Harmonization of UN business practices for development is very much in line with high level UN reform and reform that the Government is pursuing. As stated in the General Assembly documents on System Wide Coherence[81] "*the absence of harmonization of management practices increases transaction costs for Government and other partners, results in inconsistencies in donor relations and impedes coordination between the agencies*" and "*Calls on the Secretary General Assembly Resolution 63/311 … to continue progress in the simplification and harmonization of business practices within the UN development system…*". For Vietnam, reform and harmonization of UN business practices is a demand from the GOV and was started in 2005, before the High Level Panel report. By 2005, the management practices of UN were recognised as programmatically fragmented and administratively profligate bringing high cost not only to the government of Vietnam but also damage to the UN itself. One UN means minimising administrative cost, waste and inconsistencies.[82] Harmonization of the UN's business practices, is seen by the Government as a core part of the One UN initiative in line with the implementation of the Government PAR strategy and on-going committed reform program in simplified administrative procedures.[83]

7.2   Developing a harmonized set of management practices to simplify planning, reporting and evaluation and increase accountability, has became one of the five pillars of the reform and 3 of the 7 objectives to achieve One UN in Vietnam.[84] More importantly, the OPMP[85] and OP2[86] stated that one of the fundamental assumptions of the One UN Initiative in Viet Nam is to simplify planning, reporting and evaluation, and increase accountability and efficiency and the overall simplification.[87] In the OPMP, the benchmark with High Level Panel Report to the OPMP is to have "*One integrated results-based management system, with integrated support services*".

MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

7.3   For UN, as stated in the UNDG guideline note,[88] UN Business Operations are defined loosely as" all non-programmatic activities needed to deliver UN Programmes efficiently

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[81] *GA, October 2009, Resolution adopted by the GA 63/311 System Wide Coherence and December 22, 2009 -Follow-up to General Assembly resolution 63/311 on system-wide coherence related to operational activities for development.*

[82] *Jordan Ryan, Jesper Morch. "United Nations Reform: A Country Perspective", September 2005 The document stated that the absence of harmonisation of management practices increases transaction costs for Government and other partners, results in inconsistencies in donor relations and impedes coordination between the agencies"*

[83] *Prime Minister Decision 30/QD-TTg/2007 on reform of administrative procedures during 2007-2010 and Decision 136/QD-TTG/2001 on PAR's Comprehensive Strategy 2001-2010.*

[84] *Agreed Principles, Objectives and Instruments to achieve One United Nations in Viet Nam, May 24, 2006. For the revised draft in 2008 (which was a draft by the UNCT and not expected to be approved by GoV or UN HQ) the issue of harmonisation of Management Practices are stated in the 3 of 9 objectives.*

[85] *UN Vietnam, April 16, 2008, OPMP "The One Plan Management Plan (OPMP) is an internal UNCT document that outlines how the UN Organizations participating in the One UN Initiative in Viet Nam will organize themselves in the most effective way so as to successfully implement the One Plan and other key elements of the "One UN Initiative".*

[86] *One Plan, 2006-2010, June 2008*

[87] *It is stated in the OP 2008 that "the Participating UN Organizations in Viet Nam will work closely with the Government of Viet Nam in order to make progress in the harmonization of management practices to the extent permitted by governing body policies and organizational rules and regulations on individual Participating UN Organizations. In the case of UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA, specific progress has already been reached in harmonizing these management practices with the Government in such areas as financial management and planning and cash transfers, as well as financial monitoring and audits."*

[88] *UNDG, March 16, 2010, Operation Guidelines for the implementation of common services*

and effectively". Business Operations include a broad range of UN Operational processes and tasks needed for UN Programmatic goals to be realized, from policy development to infrastructure development to implementation. Examples of the UN Business Operations include UN Communications processes and infrastructures, financial processes and structures, procurement, ICT, personnel management, security, and building maintenance.

7.4   For the One UN Initiatives in the One Plan,[89] the harmonization of One Plan Management Plan (OPMP), or area covered by OPMP, are considered to comprise a broad range of issues such as: harmonization of reporting formats, common cost norms, cash transfer modalities, training, contracting and recruitment, project and programmed management methodologies, and where appropriate back-office operations, to the extent permitted by governing body policies and organizational rules and regulations on individual Participating UN Organizations. In this document, harmonization of management practices as mentioned to cover through the works of the PCGs, Business Practices and Common Services. While the PCG work is presented under the One Plan Pillar, the latter two issues are the focus of this chapter.

7.5   With the One UN initiatives in Vietnam, under the pillar of One Set of Management Practice, there are four topics which can be divided into two subgroups. The first one is considered as UN *business with external stakeholders*, mostly with the national implementing partners (NIPs). They are dealing with issues of Harmonized Programme and Project Management Guidelines (HPPMG), Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT), Cost Norms, Standard Basic Agreements (SBA). The second subgroup is the *back office business/common services of UN internally* which are essentially defined as joint operational arrangements of UN organizations that aim to improve efficiency and effectiveness. These cover areas such as travel and accommodation services, security, procurement, maintenance and supplies, joint training, some administrative services/processes, and IT support (see also common services section).[90]

7.6   For the UN business in Vietnam, the non-programmatic activities are the responsibility of the Operation Management Team (OMT), Communication Team and E&M Team Working Group. The UNCT is also aware that the area of harmonization of management practices presents the most daunting procedural challenges, but the potential benefits in the form of lower transaction costs are very large.

STRUCTURE, COMPOSITION AND WORK OF OPERATION MANAGEMENT TEAM (OMT)

7.7   In order to ensure that operational efficiency and effectiveness gains are made under the reform mandate, the first step is to ensure that a knowledgeable, responsible and involved governance structure is in place.[91] By 2009, the UNDG guidelines[92] cover all aspects of governance of common services and harmonized business practices, but have not yet been tested at the country level nor are there any examples of its application from any country office at this time.

7.8   In Vietnam, since its creation in 2006, the governance (structure, composition and works) of the Operation Management Team (OMT) has evolved considerably.

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[89] *One Plan, 2006-2010, June 2008*
[90] *Additionally, being co located in the Green One UN House (One Green UN House), detailed components of common services could include common registry, common reception and switchboard, common IT facilities, common maintenance and office supplies, common library facilities, common medical dispensary, common security and cleaning arrangements, (including outsourcing), and possibilities to create a common car pool facility, or dedicated taxi services.*
[91] *UNDG, 2009, Guidance Note on Common Services and Harmonized Business Practices 2009: Business Operations Work Stream*
[92] *UNDG, March 16, 2010, Operational Guidelines for the implementation of common services*

Table 7 UN Activities handled by the OMT

ACTIVITY TYPE	
Normative	LSSC
	Hardship Classification
	DSA
	Place to Place
	Rental Subsidy
Project Management	HPPMG
	HACT
	SBAA
	Cost Norms
UN House	Evaluation Committees
	Macro Change Management
	Business
Pandemic/Business Continuity	Macro Level
	Security Preparedness
	BCM
	Pandemic
Traditional	Direct Charges Activities
	Facilities Services
	Common Services

Sources: OMT minutes February 2010

7.9   A UN-wide Operations Management Team (OMT) in Viet Nam was established in November 2006 and prepared an Action Plan for Common Services to achieve greater efficiencies.[93] Common services were already considered as a priority in these areas: developing long-term agreements for procurement; common cost norms; learning and training services; travel services; and a shared interpreters/translators pool.[94] During 2007[95] and 2008, the TOR of the OMT were revised and actual work on the OMT at some extent was still on common services. The stock taking report of March 2009 suggested that "*the OMT should facilitate and create wherever possible transaction*

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[93]*DAO evaluation study, November 2007, Vietnam UNEG Evaluation of the Pilot Initiative for Delivering as One Evaluability of UN Reform Process in Viet Nam.*
[94] *UNCT meeting minutes, Sept 5, 2006 and May 30, 2007*
[95] *UNCT meeting minutes March 2007*

efficiencies which would streamline business processes and ultimately also save staff/project time"[96]

7.10   In 2008, restructuring of the OMT membership and working groups were carried out[97] with establishment of 4 working groups each with a lead agency, where the issues of program support activities were specifically addressed. They are i) UN House (lead: UNDP), ii) Programme Support (HACT, costs norms, HPPMG – lead: UNICEF), iii) Emergency preparedness (AI, business continuity - lead: WHO), and iii) Harmonization of business practices (lead: UNFPA).[98] The work of the UN House will be addressed in a separate section of the report as One Green UN House.

7.11   During 2008 and 2009, the great achievements of the OMT work are in the area of the Programme Support Working Group. They are the approval and implementation of common GoV/EU/UN Cost Norms by June 2009, Viet Nam becoming HACT compliant and formal approval of the HPPMG in 2010 (see next sections). During this time, the OMT also received additional human resource – a Common Services Coordinator in first quarter of 2009. However capacity of the OMT is still a big concern and also the lack of program staff in the process was an issue. It is indicated that there are approximately 75 staff work in Operations in UN Viet Nam, but only 8 UN Agencies have sufficient strength in numbers to participate in more than routine OMT fora. The OMT is accordingly looking to restructure its organisation and governance.

7.12   A suggested new structure and organisation of the OMT has been proposed. The restructuring is intended to provide a more effective arrangement for the development and implementation of the Next One Plan but as it has net yet been finalised or accepted is outside the scope of this evaluation .

7.13   It should be noted that since being set up, the One UN Support Facility has been established to facilitate the transformation process and provide support for: i) organizational diagnosis, change management expertise and teambuilding during the implementation of UN reforms; ii) UN-wide instruments to enhance coherence and iii) tracking and measuring the results of the One UN initiative towards a more effective, coherent and efficient UN. All agencies participating in the One UN initiative will benefit. The initial resource requirements are USD2 million over a two-year period from mid-2007 to mid-2009.[99]

7.14   The main achievements of the OMT with the HPPMG, HACT, Common GoV/UN/EU cost norms, SBA and Common Services are addressed in the following sections.

HPPMG – OBJECTIVES

7.15   Development of the Harmonised Set of Project and Program Management Guidelines is in the spirit of the Paris Declaration and HCS,[100] and within the aim of decreasing transactions costs for Government counterparts and key partners in the program/project management and implementation. This is to be done by harmonising the program and projects management procedures of the UN to better align them with the government current system and to simplify current business process. As mentioned the GOV sees the HPPMG (and HACT) as a core element and at the centre of UN reform.[101] The approval of the HPPMG and HACT is considered by the GOV as a successful achievement of the both parties.

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[96] *The OPMP, April 2008*
[97] *UNCT meeting minutes, Sept 8, 2008*
[98] *OMT briefing-UN Heads of Agency Meeting, 30 September 2008*
[99]*DAO evaluation study, November 2007, Vietnam UNEG Evaluation of the Pilot Initiative for Delivering as One Evaluability of UN Reform Process in Viet Nam.*
[100] *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, March 2005 and Hanoi Core Statement on Aid Effectiveness, May 2005*
[101] *UN Vietnam, April 16, 2008, OPMP*

Process of development of HPPMG

7.16 The HPPMG was an initiative of the GoV before the One UN Initiative in Viet Nam started. The leading role and systematic involvement of GOV has enabled the HPPMG to integrate quite a number of government procedures and systems, particularly with financial and reporting procedures and requirements (see Box 11[102]). The active involvement of the GOV resulted not only in strengthening its capacity and the level of harmonization/alignment with the government procedures, potentially strengthening its ownership, but also reduced the time and effort to reach agreement. Draft 1 was prepared by a team of one international consultant and one national consultant who were recruited by the ExCom Agencies and the GACA represented by MPI. After an intensive UN ExCom /GoV workshop to review draft 1 in January 2007, a Joint UN/GoV Task Force consisting of representatives from GACA, ExCom Agencies and two national consultants, was officially established in May 2007 to prepare drafts 2 to 6. It was agreed among the members of the Task Force that the working language would be Vietnamese, both in discussion and drafting process. However, in fact Vietnamese and English were used in parallel. Approval by the PM[103] in March 2010 has shown the success and value of the efforts. The HPPMG itself represents a major step forward in the joint efforts of aligning with Government systems and harmonizing between the three Agencies at the country level. During HPPMG development, other UN agencies have participated in different meetings reviewing the HPPMG with a view to possible adaptation of part or whole.

Box 11 Government Regulations incorporated in the HPPMG

1. Labour Code adopted on 5 July 1994 by the National Assembly of the S.R. Viet Nam and Amendments adopted on 29 November 2006 by the National Assembly
2. Bidding Law adopted on 29 November 2005 by the National Assembly
3. Accounting Law adopted on 17 June 2003
4. State Audit Law adopted on 14 June 2005
5. State Budget Law adopted on 16 December 2002
6. Personal Income Law adopted on 21 November 2007
7. Value Added Tax Law adopted by on 10 May 1997and Amendments adopted on 17 June 2003
8. Decree 128/2004/NĐ-CP issued by the Government on 31 May 2004 providing implementation guidelines for the Accounting Law with regard to public sector accounting
9. Decree 111/2006/NĐ-CP issued on 29 September 2006 providing detailed implementation guidelines for the Bidding Law and the selection of building contractors as stipulated by the Construction Law
10. Decree 58/2008/NĐ-CP providing detailed implementation guidelines for the Bidding Law and the selection of building contractors as stipulated by the Construction Law
11. Decree 131/2006/NĐ-CP issued by the Government providing guidelines for ODA management and utilization
12. Decision 19/2006/QĐ-BTC issued by the Ministry of Finance on 30 March 2006 on accounting requirements for public service and administrative agencies
13. Decision 61/2006/QĐ-BTC issued by the Ministry of Finance on 2 November 2006 on select cost norms applicable to ODA-funded programmes/ projects
14. Decision 19/2007/QĐ-BTC issued by the Ministry of Finance on budget accounting requirements for revenues and expenditures from foreign loans and aid resources
15. Decision 59/2007/TTg on the use of vehicles in public institutions
16. Decision 803/2007/QĐ-BKH issued on 30 July 2007 by the Ministry of Planning & Investment on reporting requirements for ODA-funded programmes and projects

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[102] *Taken from the HPPMG Draft of December 2009*
[103] *The PM letter to MPO N 443, March 16, 2010 said: a) Agreed to the content of HPPMG in the context of piloting the One UN initiatives; b) requested MPI to: i) arrange with UN for the roll out of implementation; ii) inform relevant national IPs about that; iii) coordinate with UN for updating the HPPMG with current regulations when necessary; and iv) work with UN to consider to apply HPPMG by others UN agencies beside the ExCom; and c) request MOFA to take the lead in coordination with other GACA Agencies to push the process of SBA revision for submitting for PM approval*

17. Decision 916/2008/QĐ-TTg issued on 15 July 2008 by the Prime Minister on the Establishment of the Inter-Agency Committee for the Implementation of the One Plan
18. Inter-Agency Circular 02/ TTLT- BKH- BTC issued on 17 March 2003 by the Ministry of Planning & Investment and the Ministry of Finance providing guidelines on developing financial plans for ODA-funded programmes and projects
19. Circular 116/2005/TT- BTC issued on 19 December 2005 by the Ministry of Finance on the closure of programmes and projects(
20. Circular 03/2007/TT-BKH issued on 12 March 2007 by the Ministry of Planning and Investment on management arrangements for ODA-funded programmes and projects
21. Circular 04/2007/TT-BKH issued on 30 July 2007 by the Ministry of Planning and Investment providing guidelines on the implementation of Regulations on ODA Management and Utilization issued in conjunction with on Government Decree 131/2006/NĐ-CP dated 9 November 2006
22. Circular 16/2007/TT-BTC issued by the Ministry of Finance on recurrent procurement for programmes and projects
23. Circular 33/2007/TT-BTC issued on 9 April 2007 by the Ministry of Finance providing guidelines on financial closure of programmes and projects that use State budget resources
24. Circular 63/2007/TT-BTC issued on 15 June 2007 by the Ministry of Finance providing guidelines for the procurement of assets from State budget resources for recurrent activities of public institutions
25. Circular 82/2007/TT-BTC issued on 12 July 2007 by the Ministry of Finance providing guidelines for State management of foreign grant assistance as part of the State budget revenue
26. Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, March 2005
27. Ha Noi Core Statement on Aid Effectiveness, June 2006
28. Accra Agenda for Action on Aid Effectiveness, 4 September 2008

Source: HPPMG,

Prospective benefits and Harmonization with Government procedures

7.17 The content of the HPPMG and interviews show that it is a crucial document (Box 12). A number of administrative and financial procedures have been aligned and harmonised with the GOV procedures and regulations.[104] The HPPMG has incorporated the UNDG's harmonised country programming guidelines (i.e. guidelines for the CCA, UNDAF, CPD), the UN DOCO's Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers to Implementing Partners (i.e. HACT Guidelines), and the locally agreed guidelines on the preparation of the One Plan. Furthermore, it has defined lines of accountabilities between the parties involved in UN-supported programmes/ projects with the introduction of a two-track governance system, i.e. Government rules are applied when Government implements project activities and Agency-specific rules are applied when a UN Agency implements project activities.

7.18 Taking into context of the highly complex Vietnam's financial management system, one could see how much success of this alignment and harmonisation and the benefit the HPPMG could bring to the National Implementing Partners (NIP). It is expected that the HPPMG will become a useful tool for daily work and contribute to simpler business processes and lower transaction costs with clear roles and responsibilities of those managing and implementing programmers/projects. A line ministry official working on a UN funded project/programme was "*happy with the HPPMG as the guidelines are quite detailed and comprehensive; this unified set will save a lot of time as they do not have to prepare the Project Management Manual, do not have to have numbers of different accountants to deal with different cash transfer modalities and do not have to prepare different reports to different parties, donors and government.*[105] The HPPMG is only for

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[104] *TNTF minutes, May 2009*
[105] *As in the case of UN Kon Tum Joint Program*

Excom agencies, but those agencies account for more than 50% of total budget of the OP.

> **Box 12 Main content of the Harmonized Programme and Project Management Guidelines**
>
> The HPPMG consist of three main parts and one set of annexes, namely:
>
> **Part I - Guiding Principles** which discusses the key principles and directions that serve as the basis for the development and implementation of the HPPMG.
>
> **Part II - Programme-Level Management** which provides guidelines for the formulation, management, monitoring and evaluation of Country Programmes and the One Plan supported by the United Nations in Viet Nam as well as the roles and responsibilities of the relevant parties.
>
> **Part III - Project-Level Management** which refers to guidelines for the formulation, management, monitoring and evaluation of individual programmes and projects supported by the United Nations in Viet Nam as well as the roles and responsibilities of the relevant parties.
>
> **The Annexes** which consist of reference documents, forms and formats which are referred to in the three main parts of the HPPMG.
>
> *Source: HPPMG, Draft Version December 2010*

Issues to be addressed:

7.19 As the HPPMG is the pilot harmonization of management procedures and requirement of the Government and between ExCom Agencies, there will potentially be issues raised during actual implementation which will need to be addressed. Additionally, owing to the long process of the HPPMG drafting and approval, the implementation will need to be updated to the current situation, particularly with different government regulations issued since 2004, especially the upcoming revision of decree 131 and different financial regulations planned for 2010;[106] thirdly, the need for further simplification of the planning processes is still a concern of the different parties involved and planning, monitoring and evaluation mentioned in the HPPMG still cumbersome (the guidelines comprise more than 400 pages).

7.20 Government is to encourage all UN agencies to apply the HPPMG. At the time being, other UN agencies and some bilateral donors have different perspectives on HPPMG application. Some agencies support it in principle and would like to participate as much as possible, once it is assessed by their headquarters which is currently being undertaken. Others expect to try to use some aspects of HPPMG, such as the reporting module if possible. Others consider they can accept and adopt nearly all the principles and procedures of the HPPMG as their rules allow for most of the procedures proposed. The EU is not going to apply the HPPMG, as 80% of EU fund to Vietnam is through a budget support modality.

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[106] *Law on Independent Auditing will be developed; Management cost for the projects/program using the state budget will be adjusted; New regulations and guidelines on management and dealing with assets/ properties of the projects/program funded by the State budget will be issued; Regulations for government officers in mission related to travel costs when having holidays, on training budget, cost norms on conferences, cost norms for receiving guests…will be issued; State Budget Law may be revised in 2010 MOF Circular 212/2009/TT-BTC dated 6/11/2009 on guidelines on state accounting using TABMIS (Treasury and Budget Management Information System); Decision 33/2008/QD-BTC date 02/6/2008 on issues of MLNSNN, and MOF circular 136/2009/TT-BTC date 02/07/2009 on adding, adjusting list of budget lines and code of National Target Program*

HACT

7.21 The Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) is a common operational framework for transferring cash to government and non-government Implementing Partners designed to reduce the *multiplicity* of UN procedures.[107] According to UNDG, since 2005, the HACT Framework has introduced a risk management approach to cash transfers combined with the harmonisation of administrative procedures so as to simplify and reduce transaction costs and, through its focus on accountability and transparency, strengthen national capacities in these areas. In Vietnam, the HACT approach should in theory provide a good fit with developing operational and programmatic harmonization activities. In contrast with the HPPMG which is developed only in Vietnam, the HACT has been implemented in more than 100 countries.

Development process and current status

7.22 The HACT *framework* has been in use since 2006. By using the same modalities to handle cash transfers to all implementing partners, the process potentially will become much simpler and less burdensome for all parties involved. In comparison with other countries, where HACT is not attracting the interest of government, Viet Nam is in a situation where government demonstrated in-depth knowledge and understanding of the HACT process.[108] In that respect, the micro capacity assessment for implementing partners will be undertaken for those partners that receive or are expected to receive cash transfers above an annual amount of USD500,000 combined from all agencies (or as locally agreed among the agencies). In 2009, the UNCT agreed to follow the UNDG framework whereby, for each Implementing Partner, audits will be scheduled at least once during the programme cycle if more than USD500,000 in cash transfers is received/disbursed collectively from the agencies during the programme cycle. Interviews with GACA members show that the GOV wishes the UN to follow GOV requirements with regard to financial procedures and principles.

7.23 The ExCom Agencies *have* made considerable progress including the establishment of a HACT Working Group in 2006; the undertaking of an independent and thorough macro-assessment in 2006; the completion of micro-assessments of eight principal ministries in 2006 and 2008; advanced plans to assess remaining joint implementing partners in 2009; the implementation of a spot check programme by UNFPA and UNICEF and the implementation of the FACE forms to administer cash transfers by all three participating agencies.[109] The HPPMG explicitly incorporated the HACT framework as the sole cash transfer mechanism.[110] Specialized agencies that are members of UNDG and to whom HACT may apply have also agreed to adopt HACT at the UNDG meeting on 24 April 2008.[111] So far, FAO, HABITAT, UNESCO, UNOPS and UNIDO confirmed that they will use HACT where applicable to their operations in 'Delivering as One' pilots. ILO agreed in principle but needs to conduct more detailed internal assessments before proceeding; UNCDF and GAVI Secretariat are currently exploring the possibilities of using HACT.

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[107] *UNDG, Framework for for Cash Transfers to Implementing Partners, Sept 2005, "Pursuant to the UN General Assembly Resolution 56/201 on the triennial policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP (UNDG ExCom Agencies) adopted a common operational framework for transferring cash to government and non-government Implementing Partners".*

[108] *UNCT meeting November 5, 2009 with Auditor mission from UNDP, UNICEF and UNPFA to Vietnam on HACT review.*

[109] *UN HACT Working Group, HACT in Viet Nam; Progress to Date and Follow-up. March 2009 and Auditor Report, March 2010*

[110] *Part II- Project Level Management- Chapter VIII on Project Financial Management of the HPPMG indicated that HACT is one of the key financial management principles that all UN funded project should be ensured.*

[111] *The minutes of the UNDG meeting that took the decision on adoption of HACT by Specialized Agencies are available at: http://www.undg.org/docs/9060/24April_UNDG_minutes_FinalDraft.doc*

Main Issues

7.24 Document review and *interviews* shows that all micro assessments for the implementing partners were carried out after the project/program implementation had started.[112] Secondly, the issues of which NIPs should be considered under the assessment still need to be resolved as the line ministries assessed, MOH, MPI and MARD are ones which handle more than 50 donor projects each, above USD500,000. The Government's view is that the exercise of micro finance assessment to line ministries seems to be unnecessary and is not bringing any value added. The Auditors report 2010[113] stated that the country is still not compliant[114] with the HACT framework.

COST NORMS

7.25 In Vietnam, the differences between current donor cost norms in the past led to a situation where donors outbid each other. The harmonized donor cost norms or common GoV/UN/EU cost norms are based upon an open market approach which is aimed towards gradual alignment of donor cost norm systems with the government system.

History and current status

7.26 In Vietnam, the UN and EU had developed cost norms without any attempt at harmonisation. The process of harmonisation started in January 2007 by a UN/EU working group, including representatives from UNDP, different specialized UN organizations, the European Commission and several EU Member States[115] and the result of that was approval of the UN/EU cost norms in October 2007. During its implementation, some adjustment was made, for example by increasing certain components by 20% in 2008 in order to reflect the high inflation rate at the time.[116]

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[112] *According to UNDG, Framework for Cash Transfers to Implementing Partners, Sept 2005, "The Agencies will assess the risks associated with transactions to an Implementing Partner, before initiating cash transfers under the harmonized procedures. Two types of the assessment are Macro assessment and Micro assessment. Micro capacity assessment will do for the implementing partner that receives or is expected to receive cash transfers above an annual amount (US$ 100,000 combined from all Agencies, or as locally agreed among the Agencies) and is responsible for using the* Funding Authorization and Certificate of Expenditures *(FACE) form to report the use of the funds.*

[113] *Joint Audit of the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) in Vietnam (UNDP/UNFPA/UNICEF), Report No: UNF106, Issue Date: 15 March 2010*

[114] *The basic criteria for HACT compliance is that (i) there is a legal basis for HACT; (ii) a Macro-assessment has been conducted; (iii) Micro-assessments have been carried out; (iv) in case an IP is not micro-assessed, high risk has been assumed; and (iii) an assurance plan has been developed and implemented.*

[115] The WGs are worked on the basis of the following main principles: i) Cost norms rates should be based on local market conditions; ii) Harmonisation and alignment in the spirit of the Hanoi Core Statement, meaning the downward revision of donor cost norms towards Government cost norms, and abolishment/phasing out of allowances ("top-ups") for Government staff; iii) Specialized needs to be taken into account (e.g. for translation/interpretation) and iv) Periodical review of rates (annually, bi-annually or based on market fluctuations).

[116] *Denmark Ambassador , May 3, 2008- Adjustment to UN EU cost norm 2007*

7.27 A second round of review was led by GoV as a tripartite initiative[117] and it was approved to be rolled out by June 2009. The harmonization with government procedures in this cost norms is seen in the phasing out payment to government officials working with projects/program and the integration of government financial norms to travel. Since then the cost norms have been implemented by UN-supported programmes and projects.

7.28 The advantages of this GoV/UN/EU cost norms is that i) the fee is more marked based; ii) it covers only the cost norms but not finance requirements or procedures as happened with the 2007 norms; and iii) the principles of the cost norms are quite advanced in comparison in term of its effective implementation, among which is provision for facilitation of periodical review of rates with a minimum of annual review using the same methodology by the tripartite working group. The UN EU Cost Norms 2009 has created greater transparency and a basis for harmonization and alignment between donors and Government, in the spirit of the Hanoi Core Statement on Aid Effectiveness.

Benefits and Issues

7.29 The success of the cost norms is shown via appreciation of NIPs and donors during their project/programme implementation. Certain bilateral donors (DFID, CIDA) also use the cost norms for their projects. However, as mentioned by members of the Working Group and NIPs there is a need for annual reviews to ensure the Cost Norms remain current, for example in the area of hotel rates.

STANDARD BASIC AGREEMENTS

7.30 There are 16 UN agencies working in Vietnam, each of them established at a different time and each them has a different arrangement with the GOV (in practice, only about 11 has a separate SBA, others coming under the provisions of UNDP).[118] As One UN reform proceeds the GOV wants to have only one Standard Basic Agreement with the UN instead of having different ones for 16 UN agencies. At the time being, the government has sent a proposed draft of the revised SBA to the RC. In the recent letter of the Prime Minister dated March 16, 2010 to MPI, MOF, MOFA and MOJ mainly concerned with HPPMG implementation, it is mentioned that the MOFA need to take a lead and coordinating role with other GACA agencies to push process of the SBA revision, and to

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[117] *The tripartite initiative consist of GOV (MOFA, MPI and MOF), the EU and UN. The 2009 UN EU cost norms are based upon the following principles: i) Reflection of the spirit of the Hanoi Core Statement in respect of harmonisation and alignment; increased ownership and capacity in public systems involved in ODA, at all levels; ii) Ensure the transparency and accountability in utilizing ODA resources under the ODA specific agreements; iii) Enabling on a timely basis appropriate resourcing and effective implementation of projects; iv) Simplicity of structure giving clear guidelines for implementation; v) Use of local market conditions by application of qualitative standards that are linked to respective reference markets using an established methodology; vi) Adoption of best practices; vii) Facilitation of periodical review of rates with a minimum of annual review using the same methodology by the tripartite working group.*

[118] *Basic legal documents include the Basic Cooperation Agreement (BCA) concluded between the Government and UNICEF on 12 February 1979 provides the basis of the relationship between the Government and UNICEF. The Basic Agreement (BA) concluded between the Government and WHO on 6 February 1980 provides the basis of the cooperation and respective obligations of WHO and the Government. The Government and UNDP have entered into the Standard Basic Assistance Agreements (SBAA), signed on 21 March 1978, which governs UNDP's assistance to the country and which applies, mutatis mutandis to UNFPA, UNIDO and UNODC. UNAIDS has operated in Viet Nam since 1996 also under the UNDP SBAA. FAO operates on the basis of the agreement of representation signed with the Government on 27 January 1978. The ILO operates in Viet Nam under the Agreement on the establishment of an ILO office in Hanoi, concluded on 4 February 2002. UNV operates under the administration of the UNDP. UNIFEM operates in autonomous association with UNDP and started the CEDAW programme in Viet Nam in late 2004. UNESCO operates on the basis of the agreement concerning the establishment of a UNESCO Office in Hanoi, Viet Nam, signed with the Government on 13 September 1999.*

submit to the PM for the approval. This is an important issue but not one that need delay other practical aspects of reform including moving forward with the Green One House. Response from the UN side is largely determined by legal departments in the headquarters of the various agencies and cannot be solved by the UN at country level alone.

DEVELOPMENT OF COMMON SERVICES

7.31 Common services (CS) of the UN as mentioned above are the back office business/common services of UN internally which are essentially defined as joint operational arrangements of UN organizations that aim to improve efficiency and effectiveness. These cover areas such as travel and accommodation services, security, procurement, maintenance and supplies, joint training, some administrative services/processes, and IT support.[119]

7.32 Work under common services comprises 4 components: Direct Charge Services, Common Services, Facilities Services and Normative Services. The works under the Common Services component includes 3 group works: i) Harmonized approach to recruitment – common portal for vacancy management; ii) Vehicles Fuel and Maintenance Services iii) HIV & AIDS common training for all staff. At the time of the evaluation only the first one is behind schedule. The other two are on schedule.[120] Common Services were planned, according to the OPMP, to be fully implemented and devised around the One House. Since the House has been delayed the development of the programme support component (HPPMG, HACT, Cost Norms...) took priority so only a few objectives have been pursued up to 2009. In the Normative Services work, almost all work has been done according to plan, but this not the case with the facilities services and Direct Charge Services (Annex 2- Common Services Action Plan 2009-2010).

7.33 More specifically, some cost savings have already been identified in the areas of Long Term Agreements such as saving in printing, travel cost and pool of translation. Works on establishment of common services (common banking, travel, courier, pest control, vacancy management portal, vehicle fuel and maintenance contracts and cleaning, security that will be use by all agencies are under way. Those contracts and agreement are estimated to have the potential for significant cost savings (Table 8) as well as improving uniformity in doing business. For example, for the common banking, benefits in terms of cost and service is expected to bring a real cash saving of about USD50,000 per agency.

Table 8 Potential savings of some common services expected in the One Green UN House (USD)

	2012	2013	2014
Electricity	38,667.60		
Cleaning	157,537.86	173,291.65	190,620.81
Security	91,670.00	100,837.00	110,921.00

Source: Potential Saving Calculation for some common services, OMT March 2010.

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[119] *Additionally, being co located in the Green One UN house, additional components of common services could include common registry, common reception and switchboard, common IT facilities, common maintenance and office supplies, common library facilities, common medical dispensary, common security and cleaning arrangements, (including outsourcing), and possibilities to create a common car pool facility, or dedicated taxi services.*
[120] *Informed by the OMT staff- Common Service Coordinator/Advisor*

COMMENT ON THE LINK TO PARIS DECLARATION AND HCS

7.34 The HCS is the Paris Declaration localized. It includes joint GOV/Donor commitments in five areas/principles: ownership, alignment, harmonisation and simplification, managing for results and mutual accountability, with 28 indicators. The implications for the UN include pressure to reduce transaction costs, move towards use of GOV procurement systems, establishment of a track record in helping GOV implement the aid effectiveness agenda. As mentioned above, the GOV see the overall simplification and harmonization of the UN's business practices (in this case one set of management practices) as a core part of the One UN initiative since the start of UN reform and this ties in closely with government PAR reforms and simplifying administrative procedures of the Public Sector.

7.35 The HPPMG and HACT are a step towards promoting Government ownership. They are in line with Indicator 6 in HCS on Alignment and Indicator 10 on Harmonisation and Simplification.[121] It should be also noted the HPPMG and GoV/UN/EU cost norms are unique to Vietnam while HACT is implementing in about 100 countries.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

7.36 In comparison with programmatic activities, the One Plan Management Plan (with the exception of the SBA) appears to be under better support from the UN headquarters with GA Resolution 63-311 (on System-Wide Coherence), UNDG Guidelines (for OMT) and UNDG framework on HACT. The reform in the area of OPMP, particularly with Programme support work/Project Management (in HPPMG, HACT and Cost Norms) also show the unique success of the tripartite approach in the UN initiatives in Vietnam, particularly with active government participation in the reform process. This is an area where there has been quite a number of success stories achieved initially. However, as with implementation of GoV/UN/EU cost norms since last year a lot of challenges are still ahead with the actual implementation process.

7.37 It is difficult to measure exactly and quantitatively to what extent the harmonisation of UN business practices and development of common services increased efficiency so far. For the common services some efficiency gains are already indicated in direct cost savings. It is important not to overestimate potential saving without taking into account unforeseen costs associated with new ways of working in the One Green UN House. For the harmonisation of UN business practices: efficiency should already be gained by application of the GoV/UN/EU cost norms, but not yet for HPPMG, HACT and SBA.

7.38 Recently the OMT presented to the UNCT a plan of Next Step to implement change of the OPMP which is reproduced in Table 9.

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[121] *The Hanoi Core Statement , June 2005: Indicator 6- Donors progressively rely on the GOV public finance management system once mutually agreed standards have been attained; Indicator 10- Donors rationalize their system and procedures by implementing common arrangements for planning, design, implementation, M&E and reporting to GOV on donor activities and aid flows*

Table 9 One Set of Management Practices - Next steps to implement change

	ITEMS	NEXT STEPS TO IMPLEMENT CHANGES
Program support activities	• HPPMG • Cost Norms • HACT	• Definition of responsibility for implementation • Office-wide finalization, training + roll-out
Common Services	• Finance • ICT • HR; • Admin incl. Protocol • Procurement • Communications*	• Agreement on type(s) of services (out-sourced vs staff) • Procurement strategy + responsibilities • Management arrangements
Integrated Services	• Banking • Travel • LTAs • Cleaning • Security • Pouch • Transportation • Building maintenance	• Assessment of current staff capacity • Mapping of services currently provided • Decisions on level of integration for each service • Decisions on management of integrated services

Source: UNCT retreat, January 28, 2010

CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ONE SET OF MANAGEMENT PRACTICES PILLAR

ONE SET OF MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Conclusions

- Relevance. Rated as <u>high</u>. The reforms are focused on key areas of business and are well harmonised with government.

- Effectiveness. <u>Moderate</u>. Effectiveness limited so far because there has not been time yet to put the new systems into use. Potentially high when settled in.

- Efficiency. <u>Moderate</u>. Also limited because implementation is only just getting going. Potentially high.

- Sustainability. <u>Likely</u>. These reforms are strongly supported by all parties and tackle practical issues geared to improved ways of working. All parties want to see them succeed

Lessons

- The UNCT is aware that the area of harmonization of management practices presents the most daunting procedural challenges, but the potential benefits in the form of lower transaction costs are very large.

- The HPPMG and HACT are a step towards promoting Government ownership. They are in line with Indicator 6 in Hanoi Core Statement on Alignment and Indicator 10 on Harmonisation and Simplification. It is expected that the HPPMG will become a useful tool for daily work and contribute to simpler business processes and lower transaction costs with clear roles and responsibilities of those managing and implementing programmes/projects.

- The UN EU Cost Norms has created greater transparency and a basis for harmonization and alignment between donors and Government, in the spirit of the Hanoi Core Statement on Aid

Effectiveness.

- Harmonisation of Standard Basic Agreements is an important issue but not one that need delay other practical aspects of reform including moving forward with the Green One House. Response from the UN side is largely determined by legal departments in the headquarters of the various agencies and is an example of where support from headquarters has not kept pace with needs at country level. UN organisations are separate legal entities, hence it would be difficult to achieve a single SBA.

- In other respect, harmonisation of business practices appears to be under better support from the UN head quarters with General Assembly Resolution 63-311 (on System wide Coherence), UNDG Guidelines (for OMT) and UNDG framework on HACT.

Recommendations

- UNCT should press for all agencies to make plans to work under the HPPMG during the Next One Plan.

- In recognition of the spirit and nature of reform in Viet Nam and in response to leadership by GOV, those UN agencies concerned with renegotiating their SBA should commit to an agreed timetable that is aligned with the move to One Green UN House.

8 ONE GREEN UN HOUSE

OBJECTIVES OF ONE HOUSE

8.1 Donors and the government both consider that deepening UN Reform requires co-location in a One UN House and the TNTF considers the One UN House in Hanoi facilitates the full implementation of the One UN Initiative.[122] Given the current physical arrangement of 17 UN organisations in 10 separate locations in Hanoi, the co location in One House is seen as a necessary step to overcome the "silo mentality" of the organisations. Moreover, co location is expected to enhance development effectiveness through functional clustering of staff and improved interagency coordination, establishing a wide range of common support services yielding cost savings (see above about potential cost saving of common support services once in the House). In addition to 'Delivering as One', the UN is keen to implement the call of the UN Secretary General to 'Deliver Green'. So this One House is planned to be a Green building which potentially provides a wide range of opportunities to cut greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental impacts such as reduced waste and water use.[123]

ORIGINAL TIMELINE AND CURRENT PROGRESS

8.2 The project of One Green UN House started in December 2008 with an original timeline plan to build the One Green UN House by 2010.[124] [125] Prime Minister's approval was given by September 8, 2009, and the revised targeted completion is for the end of 2011, in time for the new One Plan to come into effect on 1 January 2012. The revised project document (PD) [126] serves two purposes: (i) to establish a funding mechanism to allow UNDP to serve as the Managing Agent for the project and to receive contributions from UNCT organisations as well as donors; and (ii) to facilitate management of the renovation process by UNDP in accordance with UNDP's regulations, rules, policies and procedures. Additionally, the revised PD also provides a revised master program draft for the work. Figure 3 presents the next steps in the development of the One UN House in Hanoi.

Figure 3 Next steps in the development of a One UN House in Hanoi

Source: Green One UN House, Amended version 4 January 2010.

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[122] *It should be noted that over the past eight years, two previous attempts to build a One UN House in Hanoi have failed.*

[123] **This is particularly important in Viet Nam's context of rapid urbanization and high vulnerability to climate change.**

[124] *UN Vietnam, October 2008: "The case for the Green One UN House in Hanoi"*

[125] *Experience from construction of One UN House in other countries suggest this original time frame was never realistic. A period of 5 years is a more reasonable target. (Interviews, UNDP)*

[126] *UNDP, Project Document, Amended version January 4, 2010*

PROVISION OF /COMMITMENT TO RESOURCES BY UN, GOV, DONORS

8.3   In comparison with other pilot countries, the One Green UN House in Vietnam received donor financial support and allocation of a building from the Government plus commitments from UN agencies. This support is unprecedented among the UN reform pilots and reflects the unique benefits that come from the tripartite arrangement.

8.4   Donors are keen to see UN reform succeed, and are firmly supportive of the green aspirations of the UN. The Green One UN House is considered a model to demonstrate the viability of innovative sustainable buildings and is an integral part of the UN's climate change advocacy. Besides fully funding the eco-design, donor commitments have been increased from 2008 to 2010 (Figures 4 and 5), and now more than 60% of the total budget for the refit works has been pledged.

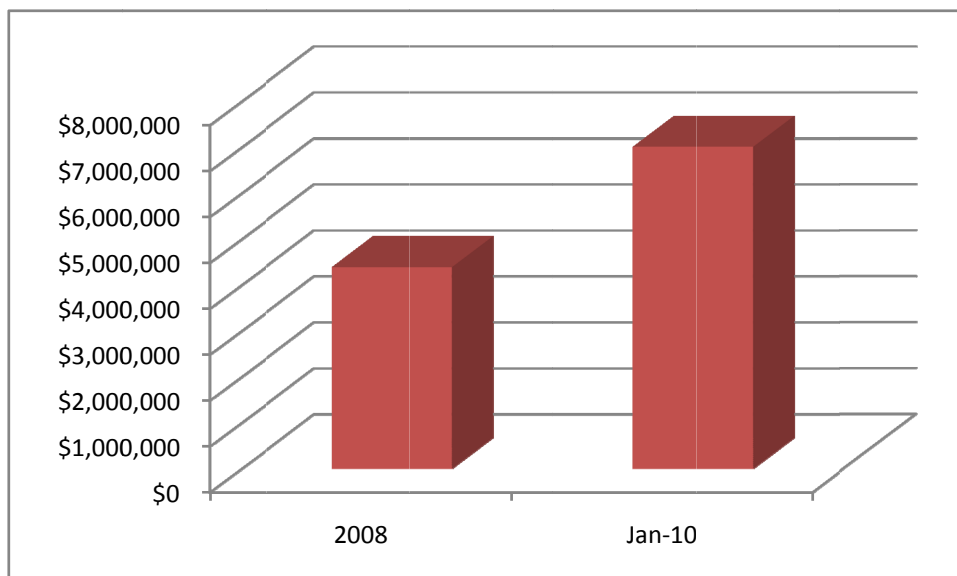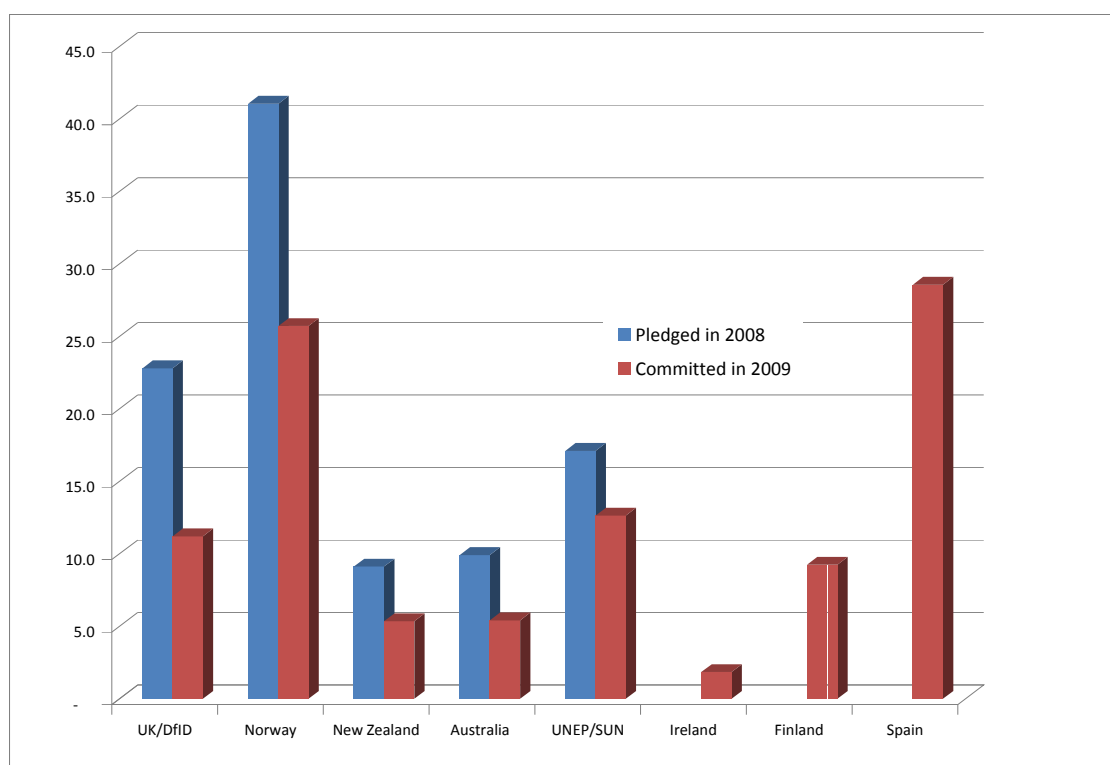**Figure 4 Commitment by donors to the One Green UN House**

Figure 5 Funding from donors as percentage of total donor funding

63

8.5   Government commitment is presented in three dimensions: i) a high value site of land and building to be refurbished; ii) financial contribution[127] by exempting those UN agencies that have not been exempted from office rental for area of approximately 2,000 sq m over the first 10 year and from land rental for the first 11 years; and iii) assistance in areas such as the provision of expertise on procurement review panels and technical assistance in relation to compliance with Vietnamese Building Regulations. Technical support by Dipserco (under MOFA) is provided under the project management structure (Figure 6).

8.6   The UN is committed to funding the balance of the retrofit budget (being the retrofit budget minus donor commitments received to date, and representing an additional amount in excess of the original USD1 million ExCom commitment). [128] The contribution of the UNCT organisations is USD3,906,701 and the revised project document mentioned that priority will be given to expenditure of donor funds over UN funds.

WORK DONE SO FAR

8.7   Commitment to green design of the One UN House is particularly important in Viet Nam's context of rapid urbanization and high vulnerability to climate change. As a demonstration example of the best possible eco-friendly and energy efficient office building in the region, the Green One UN House in Ha Noi will be a strong statement of the UN's commitment to environmental sustainability and addressing climate change.[129] (Table 10)

Table 10 Progress to date

STAGE OF WORK	PROGRESS
Site selection	UNCT and the office of Prime Minister (PM) inter-agency mission made an in-depth analysis of four potential sites for the House which resulted in the unanimous selection of a turn-key refurbishment of the current UN Apartment Building (UNAB) which met the UN's criteria for security, access, timeframe and infrastructure at minimum cost
Land	Obtained the PM approval for the continued allocation of the UNAB to UN agencies and for the renovation and expansion of these premises into the Green One UN House and for the method by which Government shall make a financial contribution to the project.
Size	Space Requirements: The UNCT has committed to a minimum growth in staff numbers over the next 10 years and an Area Calculation and Allocation for the One UN House of 7,347m^2 based on standards. However, UN agencies have not yet planned their forecast skills mix and staffing requirements under the Next One Plan.
Design	The Centre of Excellence, Faculty of Architecture, Chulalongkorn University in Thailand prepared preliminary concept design of a Green One House. The

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[127] *The Prime Minister further approved the method by which Government shall make a financial contribution to the project by exempting those UN agencies that have not been exempted from office rental, from paying such rental for area of approximately 2,000 sqm over the first ten years, as of the date on which the UN agencies move into One UN House. UNDP, PD, January 4, 2010*
[128] *Un Vietnam, The case for One UN Green House in Hanoi, October 2008*
[129] *The Green One UN House forms part of the wider effort to green the UN as per the call from Secretary General Ban Ki-moon in June 2007 of 'using energy more efficiently and eliminating wasteful practices' and the subsequent endorsement of the Chief Executives Board on 26 October 2007 which read: "We, the Heads of the United Nations Agencies, funds and programmes, hereby commit ourselves to moving our respective organizations toward climate neutrality in our Headquarters and United Nations centres for our facility operations and travel".*

| STAGE OF WORK	PROGRESS
	design proposes reducing energy and water use by more than 36 and 30 percent, respectively, and would significantly improve indoor environmental quality for UN staff. At the time of the evaluation, the design team selection was in progress.
Confirmed financial feasibility of project	Financial feasibility of project confirmed by Deloitte, which not including the as-yet unquantifiable benefits for the UN participating organizations of programmatic synergies, agency coordination, simplification measures and reduced transaction costs. Significant annual savings in building operating costs have been estimated, on top of which are significant expected savings on common services (such as reception, drivers, IT support, procurement and human resource management) but these additional savings cannot yet be quantified. A One UN House is also the most efficient and cost effective way of achieving the UN's Minimum Operation Security Standards (MOSS) compliance for all 17 UN organizations in Ha Noi
Established Project Management arrangement & structure	Arrangement of Project implementation was set up earlier in 2009 and with UNDP as management agent and Implementing agent as part of its support to the UN system-wide coordination and the Resident Coordinator system. Project organisation and structure is presented in figure below. The Design and Works Teams are shown below the dotted line in Figure 6 and are responsible for the project deliverables. All parties shown above the dotted line are responsible for project management and quality assurance. Dipserco (MOFA) is under this structure for providing technical support. The Project Board has approved a Design Brief which sets out the performance requirements and quality criteria for the design in December 2009, including quantifiable environmental and energy performance targets.
Funding obtained	Successful in attracting donor funds and government's contribution as mentioned above.
Security Risk Assessment Done	A Security Risk Assessment has been undertaken on the site providing mitigation measures to meet the minimum UN requirements for a UN office in a No-Phase country.
Green aspects	An environmental audit of all UN premises in Ha Noi was conducted. A Memorandum of Understanding signed with the Clinton Foundation Climate Initiative (CCI) to provide technical assistance and expertise on procuring energy-efficient equipment that could significantly reduce the greenhouse emissions from the One UN House; Received mission from UNEP Paris which reviewed and provided advice on the environmental performance targets of the One Green UN House as a case study in a UN sustainable Building Procurement Handbook; **Planned for April 2010:** *Evaluation of proposals from Design Teams according to the evaluation criteria and weightings published in the Request for Proposal procurement process for a biodiversity survey of the UNAB site – which is a prerequisite for LOTUS green building certification by the Vietnam Green Building Council and is highly relevant in 2010 as the International Year of Biodiversity*

8.8   In short, the considerable progress made to date by the One Green UN House project are:[130]

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[130] *Information from UNDP One Green UN House Project Staff*

- Signed donor agreements for 7 mill USD
- Signed letters from 15 of 16 UN agencies committing funds to the balance of USD3.6 million[131]
- Letter of approval from the Prime Minister
- The PM endorsement of the project
- Advisory Committees on Procurement of the Evaluation Panel's approval of the Procurement Strategy
- Request for Proposal for the Design Team and Cost Consultants
- Design Brief which sets out in detail quality and environment performance criteria of the project which has been approved by the Project Board

8.9 Additionally, during 2009, some preparation work for moving into the One Green UN House has been done. One of them is the identification of the three inter-dependent elements to prepare for the House. They are i) Building; where UNDP is responsible for managing the building process; ii) Business; where the OMT is responsible for the coordination of common services and facilities management and iii) Behaviour; which is dealing with organisational and change management aspects, e.g. deciding where staff will be located in the new building and preparing staff for a new way of working. The UNCT also recognised that the last project- People is considered the most complicated one, hence need for clear leadership and resource allocation to make this transition successful and more attention.[132]As noted elsewhere in this report, the timing by which the Next One Plan will see the main shift in programming towards a more strategic and outcome orientation will not be ready until 2011 which means the implications for a new skill mix of staff and reassessment of numbers will not occur until the same time.

Figure 6 Arrangement and structure for the building project
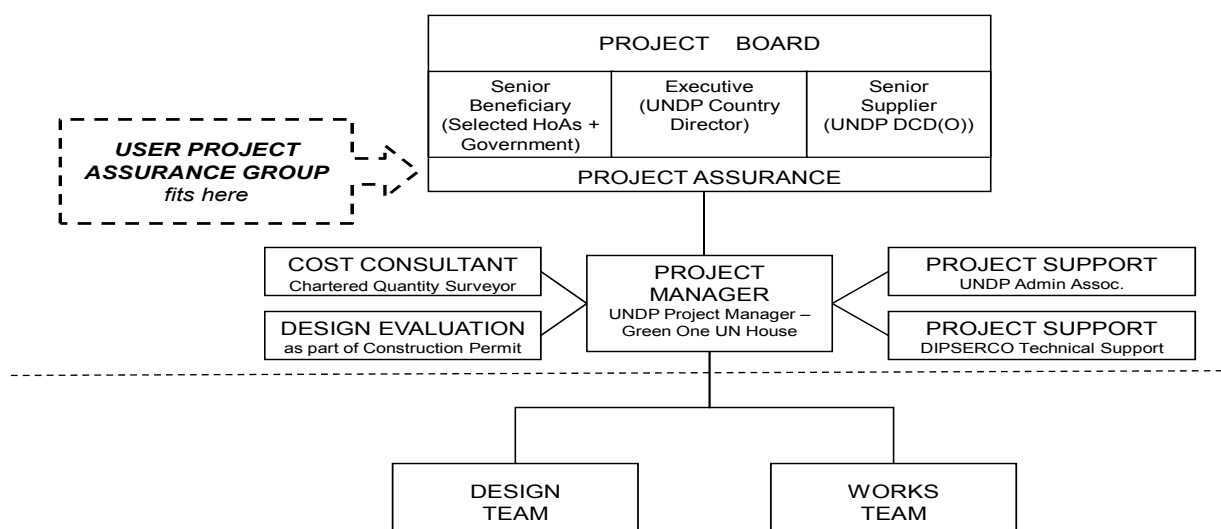
Source: minute of Project Board Meeting, December 2009[133]

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[131] *UNESCO has not committed to joining the House*
[132] *UN HOA meeting, May 2009*
[133] *see Annex 5- TOR of Project Board and Management Arrangement in Revised project document, January 2010)*

Current situation

8.10   The One Green House is a high visibility project that will bring credit to all parties if it can be seen to be managed efficiently. Generally every activity is on the critical path, but the project is currently running 6 weeks behind schedule on engagement of the Design Team which is of concern. The potential delay of the project is a concern of the Government, Donors and UN agencies. As mentioned by different parties, resolution of the legal agreements[134] is the greatest risk to a January 2012 completion as unless these are all signed within the next 6 months, UNDP will not be in a position to call for tenders for the civil works. The participating UN organisations also need to sign a MoU along with four other legal instruments, drafts of which were all shared in January 2010 following the approval of the renovation of the UN Apartment Building by the Government in September 2009. UNDP is currently seeking comments from the participating UN organizations. The MoU must be agreed to and signed by all the participating UN organizations to enable the participating UN organizations to make their contributions so that bids for civil works can be called.

8.11   Experience has shown that in Vietnam, delay of any construction project has became a normal event given the complication of legal framework and of administrative system in the construction field that any construction project need to follow. In this context, the One Green UN House project is required to follow not only UNDP procedures, but also Vietnamese building construction regulations. The standing position of DIPSERCO as technical support in the project structure is very helpful for the project to go smoothly, however it is clear that there are still communication issues on both sides for how to accelerate the process. Government view is that UNDP needs to process its procedures faster by decentralising more decision making to the UNDP at country level.

8.12   On the government side, responsibility for technical supervision has been given to DIPSERCO, which is a unit under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In view of the very heavy workload faced by DIPSERCO it is important that it can demonstrate that it has adequate capacity to deal with the complex legal and technical issues inherent in the One Green UN House. Various suggestions for support have been put forward to ensure the process keeps momentum and goes forward efficiently. One is to create a Project Management Unit that can deal with both legal and technical issues and work with all parties including the Hanoi People's Committee. Another possible solution is to appoint a firm of consulting engineers that are experienced in Viet Nam. A third is to provide technical assistance directly to DIPSERCO. The danger of delays is sufficiently great that this issue needs to be examined by the TNTF and consideration given to how MOFA can lead a process to provide the necessary support and establish a clear understanding with DIPSERCO on the project delivery mechanisms and timetable.

VIEWS OF UN HOA ABOUT DESIRABILITY OF WORKING IN ONE HOUSE

8.13   There are some differences among HOA in their views on moving to work in One House: The dominant view appears to be that the move is highly desirable and will bring many benefits in the form of new more collaborative ways of working and cost savings. But some HOA think they will face higher costs and that the combination of a more formal setting with the necessary security provisions will limit informality, ease of access and the friendly environment of their current office location. Some consider that full efficiency and effectiveness of the reform can only be realised once the agencies are co-located; others

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[134] *As mentioned by the UNDP, the legal agreements issues are: i) Rental on the UNAB from the end of the previous loan agreement (31 December 2008) to the start of construction on the Green One UN House. The case was forwarded to the HQ on 15 January 2010 and, and it was hoped to have a final determination by 31 March 2010 to clear the way for government to engage in providing comment on and agree on the MoA for all construction conditions. That determination has been delayed; and   ii) Resourcing for DIPSERCO's technical support of the project.*

say the One Green UN House is important but less important than the reorganised way of working through the PCG which have performed well as virtual teams without co-location.

CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ONE GREEN UN HOUSE PILLAR

One Green UN House
Conclusions • Relevance. Rated as <u>high</u>. The Tripartite National Task Force considers the One UN House a prerequisite to the full implementation of the One UN Initiative. Co-location from 10 different places for 17 UN agencies to one Green House with eco aspect has high potential to reinforce the One UN reforms. • Effectiveness. <u>Moderate</u>. External stakeholders (government and donors) are very committed to support the One Green UN House through resources, but risks are high and potential delays remain significant. The potential effectiveness of a working One Green UN House is high. • Efficiency. <u>Moderate</u>. Implementation is under experienced and professional management on the UN side who take an active approach to risk management. Arrangements are needed to support implementation on the government side. • Sustainability. (<u>Likely</u>). It is not possible to rate sustainability at this stage but if construction is completed close to schedule and the house is in use early in the NOP period sustainability is likely.
Lessons • The One Green UN House in Viet Nam has received donor financial support and allocation of a building from the Government, plus financial commitments from UN agencies. This support is unprecedented among the UN reform pilots and reflects the unique benefits that come from the tripartite arrangement. • As a demonstration example of the best possible eco-friendly and energy efficient office building in the region, the Green One UN House in Ha Noi will be a strong statement of the UN's commitment to environmental sustainability and addressing climate change.
Recommendation • The TNTF needs to support the One Green UN House process and help create a mechanism by which DIPSERCO receives adequate technical support to manage the complex legal and technical issues with the Hanoi People's Committee. Consideration should be given as to how MOFA can lead a process to provide the necessary support and establish a clear understanding with DIPSERCO on the project delivery mechanisms and timetable.

9 ONE VOICE

9.1   Similar to the other seven countries involved in the initiative, the One UN Reform Initiative in Vietnam was originally made up of five main pillars.*135* In Vietnam however, an additional pillar has been added: 'One Voice'. The rationale of having this extra pillar is that the process of reform and change must be effectively managed, explained and understood, therefore strong communications are essential for change.*136* As the UN in Vietnam moves to one coordinated operation, there is a need for clarity in its work under one voice and one image.

9.2   The concept of One Voice has a close link to One Leader. The One Voice is closely linked to the UN as a whole, with strong linkages to the UNCT, the RC, RCO and the PCGs. The One UN Communications Team takes the lead in development and the plan/strategy is approved by the Management Board for the Communications team, comprising of participating HoAs and Head RCO. The UNCT approves a common set of advocacy messages to be used on an annual basis.*137* The RC will take the lead on common issues that require the UNCT to speak with one voice, and present a common position and views, particularly through the UNDAF and One Plan.*138*

9.3   In December 2006 the UN Communications Team was officially formed with the participation of 5 agencies: UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNAIDS and UNV. As a result, One Voice is 'a pilot within a pilot'.*139* The reform is in itself a challenge, the pilot within pilot is an even more significant challenge in regards to decision-making on developing a strategy and a vision as well as how to work to meet this plan and vision.

9.4   The single Team has developed four main objectives for the period 2006-2011.

   (i)   Serve the UN in Viet Nam with strategic and effective communications that will raise awareness in Viet Nam on key development issues (based on UNDAF, the One Plan, and Joint Programmes), the MDGs and highlight the support provided by the UN to Viet Nam's socio-economic development

   (ii)   Support the UN Reform process in Viet Nam through the expression and promotion, both internally and externally, of a united UN

   (iii) Achieve the communications goals set for the individual agencies participating in the Team

   (iv)   Help establish the UN as a centre of excellence [resource centre – web-based and publications] on development issues in Viet Nam (to be implemented after One Green UN House has been established)

9.5   Before the introduction of the One Communication Team most UN communications activities in Viet Nam were undertaken by each specific agency from its own perspective. A Communications Working Group was established in 2004, but it was not very effective beyond the sharing of information. There was little accountability and no clear plans or structure for implementation. Communications work by UN Agencies was primarily agency-specific, often ad hoc and rarely coordinated or strategic.

9.6   The idea for a joint communication team emerged from UNDP and UNICEF. The Communication Managers and management of UNICEF and UNDP were interested in seeing how a joint UN communications response could best support the One UN Initiative

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[135] *Five main pillars include One Plan, One Budget/One Plan Fund, One Leader, One Set of Management Practices and One House*
[136] *One UN, One Voice, May 2006*
[137] *Memorandum of Understanding on 'One Leader', Resident Coordinator in Viet Nam, Oct. 2008*
[138] *One Plan 2 Document*
[139] *An interview with the Head of Agency*

and at the same time add value to the communications agenda's of the individual agencies (Box 13).

9.7   Bringing the major communications functions together will '*improve efficiency, present a UN-wide voice, take advantage of natural synergies, and help drive the change process. Communications efforts done in concert will help resolve the issues of competition for the same media space and the lack of coordination in event planning and campaign efforts. It will strengthen UN-wide messaging through the MDGs, focussing on issues and not organizations. Furthermore, it will bring a group of highly skilled individuals into one team, taking advantage of their diversity of backgrounds, experience and talents.*'[140]

Box 13 The evolution of the Communication Team[141]

Period of 2006: Setting up the team

Since March 2006, the Communication Working Group started meeting regularly and discussing how to take the plan forward. A quick bond was formed and they have benefited from a strong team working environment. With the formation of this team a vision of the future of the Communication Team started to take shape and the team started to look at concrete actions and ways of working. There were a number of early successes that show the potential of agencies working together with few barriers. The Team and its managers actively sought to do things differently and found that the existing structure of separate offices, focusing on each agency's own priorities with limited inter-agency communications was not consistent with their vision. In this phase, the Communication Working Group was officially dissolved, a new office was set-up in December 2006 and 11 communications staff from UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA came together as a single unit, sharing one office[142] and working from a joint work plan. A shared telephone line was installed, the team adopted joint business cards and agreed to only three titles (manager, officer and assistant) to help combat the challenges already presenting themselves by the different human resources standards in titles and levels. Task teams were established to break down agency barriers on tasks and team members were encouraged to challenge old ways and look for innovative solutions to existing problems.

Period of 2007: Getting to work

The so-called "Five Steps" forms were created to quickly clarify how the Team could provide support for media releases, speech preparation, event organization and in producing publications. A Team brochure with contact information was produced. A new UN website was also designed, built and launched, putting a united face forward to the UN family and public at large. This was done in phases, seeking input from agency Heads on what would be their website. Anxious to capitalize on the UN intranet, this was ambitious, requiring access to global intranets and introduced innovations such as "single sign-on" and making some areas of agency intranets shared.

During this period the Communication Team faced many challenges in human resources. *Firstly*, staff were continually asked to work on tasks far beyond their current job descriptions, but were limited by their current salaries and levels, which in many cases were not synchronized with each other.[143] *Secondly*, workload was highlighted as a major issue. Staff had trouble juggling their individual agency demands with the UN-wide tasks that they were now also responsible for. *Thirdly*, This had the effect of making them feel removed from the work of their home agencies and vulnerable to the possibility that the change progress to-date could be dismantled or not accepted. *Fourthly,* old habits also proved difficult to break with team-members inclined to work together most closely with staff from their home agencies and skepticism amongst some team-members persisted, initially at least. Just because staff were sitting in the same office did not mean they were effectively working as one. There were many other examples of challenge and progress, but eventually the Team began to work together and to see themselves as a joint

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[140] *From November 2006 paper, One UN Communication Team Plan*

[141] *Change management story Communication Team, June 2009*
[142] *Office space provided by UNICEF*
[143] *A UNICEF staff person doing the same or similar work was almost always paid more and ranked higher than someone of similar responsibility and experience at UNDP.*

team. Results emerged from this approach, to the extent that discussions began with UNESCO, UNV and UNAIDS to expand membership of the Team.

Progress in 2008: Expansion and human resource challenges

To confront the issues, the Guiding Team met together again with the Team. They heard the team's concerns while praising their professionalism and courage for continuing to inspire the rest of the UN Country Team. "*You are the pilot within the pilot*," said one Representative. The overall message was that the Team would be supported to go further, but "*It's up to you now how far you want to go*." The group was empowered to make strategic decisions and three main options were presented: To continue; To go back to the way things were or; To continue to push further.

The Communications Team worked in an unofficial matrix structure for more than 18 months,[144] relying on the goodwill and dedication of its staff to deliver an increased workload. Since the structure, reporting relationships, job descriptions and performance evaluation process needed to be formalized, the UN Viet Nam office requested an ExCom HR mission, comprising HR staff of UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA, to review those areas and make recommendations to the Heads of Agencies and the Resident Coordinator. In addition, a number of related human resources issues were identified and incorporated into the TORs for the mission team.

Progress in 2009: Moving forward and making changes stick

In 2009, the One UN Communications Team was able to contribute positively and substantively to the growing role of public and policy advocacy in the work of the UN in Viet Nam.[145] In some key development areas such as climate change, the social impact of the economic crisis, child poverty, corruption, HIV and others, the Team was able to support the UN with strategic communications advice, strong media outreach and high-quality briefing notes, policy papers, and related communication materials. At the same time, through internal and external support to the One UN Initiative, the Team also contributed to progress with the reform process, where outreach to key stakeholders and the UN's own staff is crucial.

SUMMARY OF KEY ACHIEVEMENTS.

Achievements in Human Resources:

9.8   The joint team now comprises 11 communications staff from five agencies[146] plus three externally funded under a single management board which consists of Heads of Agencies of UNICEF and UNDP and one rotating member of the other 3 agencies, and the Head of RCO.

9.9   The Communications Team worked in a matrix structure for the first 18 months and is now under single management. [147] The Team faced many challenges such as an increased workload, unclear structure,[148] issues relating to the generic job descriptions of the team, different job descriptions for essentially similar positions, concerns about staff capacity within the Communications Team, dual accountability ("One UN" and Agency-specific priorities) which impacted on performance planning and appraisal, and reporting relationships resulting from staff being supervised by managers from different agencies, etc.

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[144] *Human Resources Mission Report, Oct. 2008*
[145] *One UN Communications Team Annual Report 2009*
[146] *Some other agencies have dedicated communication capacity, but not embedded into the Communications team. Most other agencies do not currently have dedicated communications capacity or budget, but might have appointed focal points for communications.*
[147] *Human Resources Mission Report, Oct. 2008*
[148] *Inclusion of staff from three agencies and of 'non-staff' such as volunteers, short terms consultancy contract-SCs, SSAs (Human Resources Mission Report, Oct. 2008)*

9.10   As a result of the Human Resources Mission undertaken by HR staff from 3 Excom agencies the various human resource challenges were brought more in-line with the guiding vision of the team. The new organizational structure (see the Organigram Figure 7) has been selected by the team to reflect how best to organize the team to maximize efficiencies given the current staffing and skill sets available within the team. Staff roles have been clustered depending on the scope of their activities with three service lines as follows:

- Advocacy, Media & External Relations
- Content Creation & Internal Communications
- Online, new media & publications

9.11   The organigram presented indicates a matrix arrangement in reporting lines. The Agency Liaison roles (i.e. First Reporting Officers) report directly to the Communications Team Manager yet maintain linkages with their respective UN Agency focal point(s). The Communications Team Manager will be responsible for managing the Communications Team, including ensuring that the team can balance the strategic priorities set by the Management Board related to "One UN" with the regular day-to-day demands of the participating Agencies.

9.12   To follow-up, the HR Working Group provided guidance and expert advice to the Manager in the revision of job descriptions based on the agreed new organisational structure. It was proposed and agreed by the group to use UNICEF's job format for the revised and generic Job Descriptions for the Team. In total 11 Job Descriptions were revised or developed. It is proposed that the UNFPA performance assessment tool (PAD) is applied for all staff. So far they have introduced a single job format and a single PAD form. However, staff contracts have been handled and paid by each agency[149] and this results in the Communication Manager having less direct control over her staff.[150] Furthermore, most contracts are short term which limits the sustainability of human resource for a medium and long term development strategy and vision.

9.13   The set-up of the Team, with an appropriate skills mix, effective reporting lines, and a common workspace and work plan, has enhanced the ability of the Team to respond to communications needs in an integrated manner. The official structure of human resources has had the additional benefit of improving morale and helping the Team to feel that it has not been working alone, which is important given the general feelings of uncertainty engendered by the broad process of One UN reform.

9.14   While other pilot countries have joint communication under "Communicating as One" and strategic communications at the country level to communicate together and effectively about Delivering as One; Vietnam has the unique One UN Communications Team approach with a common strategy and vision, plan and outcomes, structure and management, and work space. The Vietnam Communication Team goes further than other pilots and a consensus has been reached among the pilot countries that there may be considerable advantages resulting from applying the Viet Nam model to other countries where suitable.[151]

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[149] *Four staff contracted by UNDP, five by UNICEF, three by UNFPA, one by UNV and other one by UNAID (Interviews with Communication Team and RCO)*
[150] *An interview with RCO*
[151] *One UN Communication Team Annual Report 2009, Communication Workshop in New York, Page 17*

Figure 7   Communications Team Organigramme
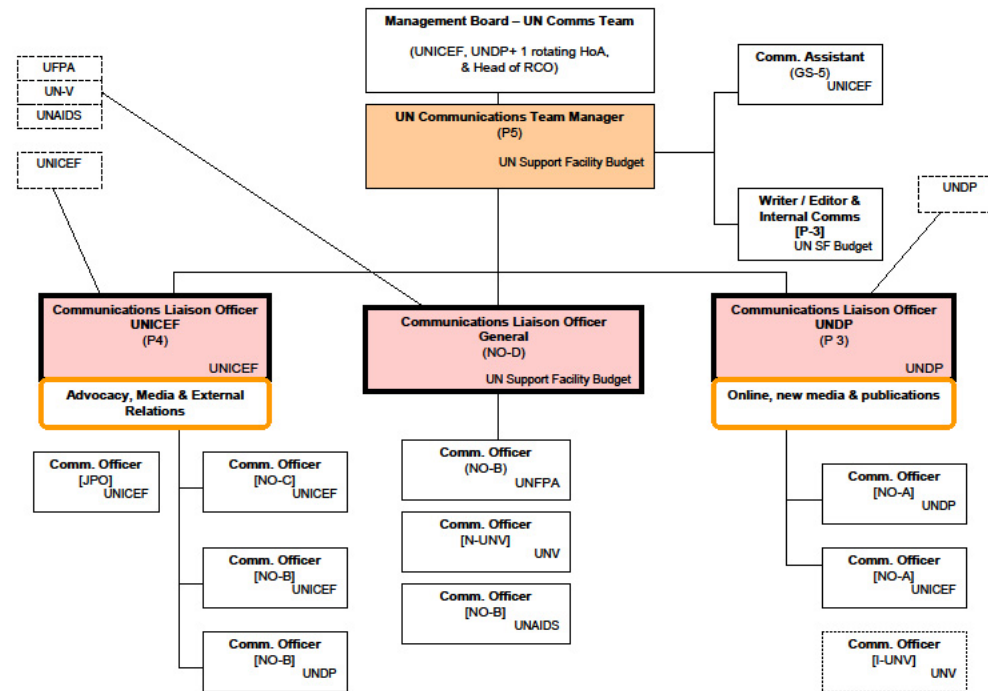
Achievements in Performance:

9.15   The achievements of One Voice's performance will be assessed in light of this study's TOR which focuses on external communication and internal communication and on the extent to which the UN is speaking with One Voice in a coherent way.

9.16   **Achievements in External Communication. Information flow provided for 'UN as a whole'.** One UN Communications Team has supported the One UN Initiative through effective communications on the progress and status of the initiative in Viet Nam, including regular updates and dissemination of public information materials on all five "One pillars" of UN reform in Viet Nam. The Team shared its experience and knowledge of UN reform with the wider UN in Viet Nam, other pilot countries and respective agency HQs, as well as facilitated the printing, branding and packaging of materials during visits, missions and presentations of the UNCT. In particular, the Team worked closely with the UN RCO to support its outreach activities to key stakeholders. The Team also worked closely with the various PCGs and individual agencies to ensure the distribution of clear and comprehensive information on progress and results achieved under the One UN Initiative.

9.17   Communication with the Vietnamese government and UN partners, the general public and other interested parties was also a focus in 2009. Team members helped write speeches and press releases, facilitated media and outreach events, and supported joint field missions, including writing/ documentation and photographic reporting. For example, the Communications Team provided support to various missions to Viet Nam (including Botswana and Indonesia country missions, an MDG-F visit, and visits of high-level staff from several UN Agency headquarters), and assisted with UN Viet Nam participation in international meetings such as the Delivering as One meeting in Kigali, Rwanda.[152] Support included development of specific materials, briefing notes, presentations and reports.

9.18   The One UN Communications Team also contributed greatly to key advocacy and policy initiatives to support the UN in achieving the results and outcomes of the One Plan. In the case of HIV, the One UN Communications team support to prevention of stigma and discrimination, as well as raising awareness of issues such a drugs use or HIV prevention through publications, relations with the media as well as communication support has been essential.

9.19   **Online as One.** The UN Viet Nam website (http://www.un.org.vn) has been developed by the UN Communications Team since 2007. A continuous effort was made to ensure the website was updated with the latest information and news, and improvements were made to both the content and functionality of the site during 2009. All external communication products have been posted online in English and Vietnamese and, where relevant, disseminated to key One UN Initiative stakeholders[153].

9.20   **Closer media ties.** Media contacts appreciated the consolidation of one main point of contact for UN communications and generally contacted the One UN Communications Team first (rather than individual UN Agencies) to request interviews, get answers to questions on key UN issues, or to inquire out about upcoming events. Messaging by the UN in Viet Nam was also more unified and

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[152] *One UN Communication Team Annual Report 2009*
[153] *One UN Communication Team Annual Report 2009*

comprehensive throughout the year, based on the identified priority advocacy themes for the UNCT as a whole, the Millennium Declaration and the MDGs. Rather than several messages sent to the media from different UN Agencies, the Communications Team coordinated and integrated the positions of various UN Agencies for key events during 2009, when appropriate, into one media release, press conference or article.

Some of the other **information materials** produced in 2009 include:

- One Plan Report 2008
- Regular updates on the One UN Initiative (June and October 2009)
- Thematic leaflets on the five One's and other unique features of the One UN Initiative (e.g. PCGs, Monitoring and Evaluation, One UN Communications Team)
- Information materials on UN engagement in key thematic areas: gender, climate change, disaster risk reduction, and the National Assembly
- Key reports/surveys, including One Plan Annual Report, Youth Position Paper, Climate Change Policy Paper etc.
- Green One UN House, update December 2009

9.21   Summary of main achievements of external Communication for the year 2009:

- Supported the strengthening of a common and clear UN image through improved consistency in branding, developing a concise editorial style guide, and disseminating guidance on workflows (3, 4, 5 step guides for UN staff relating to working with the Team)
- Produced common UN products such as 2009 UN Diary and One UN lunar new year (*Tet)* postcard pack
- Developed and disseminated One UN information materials such as updates on the reform process, UN website, 2-page information sheets, presentations, etc.
- Produced communication materials and branding for the Green One UN House
- Assisted in signing ceremonies, including for Joint Programmess (e.g. JP on Gender, signing support to Green One UN House)
- Developed materials and helped organize key events for UN Day (e.g. launch of One UN Intranet and dissemination of promotional intranet mouse pads, posters, user guides etc.)
- Facilitated the organization and documentation (video) of the talk for UN staff and key counterparts and development partners by Richard Jolly, which comprised part of the UN History Project.

9.22   During interviews with different stakeholders, most provided positive assessments on the performance of the team in external communication, such as diversified services, better response and good quality of performance (Box 14). Some feel that the current products have more of a public relations feel than with solid technical and there is always a need to focus on quality translation into Vietnamese, though interviewees felt standards were comparable with other international bodies in Viet Nam.

9.23 **Internal Communication:** In 2009, the UN Communications Team provided significant amounts of support to the UNCT in this field by ensuring regular information updates were provided to staff and information on the One UN Initiative was easily available, and by providing opportunities for staff to fully engage and participate in debates and discussions about the issue. This included the production of a weekly newsletter for all staff (The One To Know) and support for Town Hall Meetings.

9.24 **Stronger internal linkages:** Building on the activities in 2008, in 2009 the One UN Communications Team focused on the development and launch of the One UN Intranet which provides a cross-Agency platform for all staff to access important information on ongoing reform efforts, and to actively engage in exchanging ideas and thoughts, regardless of Agency affiliation. Launched in October 2009, the intranet electronically links, for the first time, all UN Staff in Viet Nam, providing a 'virtual Green One UN House', where inter-Agency thematic groups, in particular the PCGs and other Joint Programmes, can collaborate and share resources and information easier and faster, and contact and get to know colleagues in other Agencies better.

9.25 Summary of Internal Communication Achievements in 2009:

- One UN Intranet developed and launched
- Open House event held for Communications Team
- Brown Bag Lunches organized on intercultural communication, the intranet and communications and gender
- A/H1N1: development and production of a staff guide on *Pandemic Preparedness*
- Supported Town Hall Meetings and visit by UN Deputy Secretary-General
- Provided strong support to the Human Rights Technical Working Group, including

- the development and launch of the **Human Rights-Based Approach Toolkit** in both
- English and Vietnamese (available on the UN Viet Nam website and One UN Intranet)

PERCEPTIONS OF UN SPEAKING WITH ONE VOICE

9.26 Many different views on the performance of the One Voice were expressed by respondents to the consultant team. An interesting question is why do so many differing opinions exist? Primarily, it can be suggested that this results from the many different viewpoints and fundamentals of respondents, as well as which stakeholders or position of the respondent holds. For example, there are two different expressed by representatives of MPI; one assessing that the *"UN appears as One Voice"* (see Box 15) and the other arguing that *'One Voice has not been achieved yet'.* The difference can be traced to the contrasting objectives of One UN or Delivering as One.

9.27 A respondent provided an example: "*In General Forum between GoV and donors/ CG meeting there is only one rotated seat for whole UN, without seats for individual UN agencies like used to happen before. RC takes the UN seat for general discussion. When talking about technical issues such as Agriculture, Children, HIV... the Head of FAO, UNICEF,* UNAIDs will replace the RC". Respondents who support the original outcomes of the One UN Initiative argue that it has not happened yet. (See the interviewees quotes below for details in information.)

9.28 Others argue that achieving a consensus among UN agencies is the most important and difficult thing and if such a consensus inside the UN is achieved then One Voice will also be achieved. If this view is followed, One Voice has been achieved to the extent that the UN has reached a consensus on commitments and introducing the One Plan, One Budget, One Set of Management Practices and One House, and especially the hard work of agreeing fund allocations in OPF.

9.29 As mentioned above, One Voice has a strong link to One Leader. But it is important to stress the need for One Voice, many speakers. The joint and integrated communication from PCGs and the UNCT is equally important. Most interviewees have assessed that this has been achieved. Many examples indicate that the UN has appeared as One Voice such as '*In documentation/official letters to send to GoV only RC signs'* (A high level official from MPI). A further example is that the '*RC at meetings did not talk as UNDP but for UNIFEM and UNICEF and other agencies as well; they follow a united idea, collectively as One UN'* (MoJ).

Box 15 Interviewers quotes on effectiveness and coherence way of One Voice

- *One songsheet more important than one voice. (RC)*
- *Voice is the consequence of 5 main pillars and strong link to One Leader*
- *RC at meeting did not talk as UNDP but for UNIFEM and UNICEF and other agencies as well, they are united idea, collectively of One UN (MoJ).*
- *UN speaks One Voice at PCG level to deal with GoV (RCO).*
- *One Voice has not been achieved yet, RC could not manage the HoA, could not get consensus among UN agencies.(High level official from MPI)*
- *The Tet card illustrates the tension in trying for One Voice. Beside the RC's signature it includes signatures of all other Head of Agencies. As one Ambassador remarked – who do I reply to? Others argue that the most important thing is that in official documentation and letters to send to GoV only RC signs.*

Conclusions, lessons and recommendations for the One Voice pillar

ONE VOICE

Conclusions

- Relevance. Rated as <u>high</u>. Presenting One Voice is an integral part of the One UN reforms and this initiative was a bold and imaginative way to test more far-reaching ideas of institutional reform.
- Effectiveness. <u>High</u>. Arguable One Voice is the most developed pillar. There is good evidence from a wide range of stakeholders that the Communications Team provides an effective service – although arrangements need to be found to work with those agencies that do not yet contribute financially. The RC is recognised as the representative and Voice of the UN though some respondents would like to see that develop even further.
- Efficiency. <u>High</u>. Evidence from the pilot is that the team is able to work in a way that transcends individual agency procedures and systems.
- Sustainability. <u>Likely</u>. One Voice is strongly supported by all parties and the experience has provided support for closer integration of UN agency systems.

Lessons

- Experience shows that UN agency staff can work in an environment with common job descriptions, managed by staff from other agencies, under a common work plan, and assessed using a common performance assessment tool. Barriers between agencies can be overcome.
- The set-up of the Team, with an appropriate skills mix, effective reporting lines, and a common workspace and work plan, has enhanced the ability of the Team to respond to communications needs in an integrated manner.
- The RC is acknowledged as the voice of the UN, but the example of the Tet card with signatures of all agencies demonstrates the challenge still to be overcome in agency image and visibility.

Recommendations

- An approach needs to be developed such that the Communications Team service is available to all UN agencies, not only those that contribute directly. Funding from the One Fund might be the means to achieve this.
- In view of the successful experience with the Communications Team consideration should be given to expanding this arrangement to other core areas such as monitoring and evaluation of the One Plan.

C. CONCLUSION, LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

10 CONCLUDING ASSESSMENTS

IMPRESSIVE PROGRESS

10.1 The Country Led Evaluation of the One UN Initiative in Viet Nam has found that the achievements to date are highly relevant, high or moderately effective, moderately efficient and likely to be sustainable. The evaluation examined achievements under the six pillars of reform and the results are summarised at the ends of Chapters 4 to 9 and in Table 11.

10.2 There are limitations in some of the assessments. Progress towards effectiveness is constrained by the fact that the whole of the period evaluated falls within a single UNDAF cycle. Whilst there is evidence of improvements under the One Plan, agreements made with government at the start of the cycle before the reforms have limited the scope for the One Plan to adopt a more strategic and outcome oriented approach, drawing on the comparative advantages of the UN agencies and responding to their specific normative roles.

10.3 In a similar way, improvements in efficiency will be more demonstrable when reforms under the One Set of Management Practices and One Green UN House come into operation. In view of the constraints to improvements under One Plan, judgements on sustainability are particularly difficult. The evaluation team has assessed sustainability as 'likely' because there is clear evidence of strong support and commitment by the Government of Vietnam, which has been a leader in much of this process, and by the community of bilateral donors, who collectively form a tripartite structure with the UN.

10.4 The One UN initiative has tried to tackle fundamental problems with management and accountability that beset the UN agencies. Considering what might reasonably have been expected, the performance of the reform is remarkable and brings forward many lessons for expanding the initiative to other countries.

Table 11 Summary of evaluation assessments

	RELEVANCE	EFFECTIVENESS	EFFICIENCY	SUSTAINABILITY
One Plan	High-Moderate	Moderate-High	High	Likely
One Plan Fund	High	High-Moderate	Moderate	Likely with risks
One Leader	High	High	Moderate	Likely
One Set of Management Practices	High	Moderate	Moderate	Likely
Green One House	High	Moderate	Moderate	Likely
One Voice	High	High	High	Likely

10.5 The reforms make a specific contribution in progress towards the Hanoi Core Statement on Aid Effectiveness, especially through the work done under government leadership to prepare for harmonised project management guidelines. Cross cutting initiatives, especially gender, have benefitted from a higher profile under the reforms.

10.6 There still remain areas where progress is held back by the actions of the headquarters of UN agencies. The most visible is that a single format for reporting has not yet been approved, but other areas also need attention including more active engagement on revision of legal agreements, progress towards job descriptions that take account of new ways of working, more effective accountability systems and a rationalised approach to agency visibility at country level.

PROGRESS TOWARDS THE STRATEGIC INTENT

10.7 The evaluation team is charged with the task of assessing progress towards the 'strategic intent of the reforms. Strategic intent was analysed in the Inception Report to the evaluation and discussed again in Chapter 3 as being "*… to improve the effectiveness of the UN system to contribute to national development priorities and move towards providing high-quality policy advice and advocacy, focusing on the UN's normative role.*" The inception report put forward a set of hypotheses, arguing that progress towards these would be a plausible assessment of progress towards the strategic intent. These are reproduced in Table 12, together with description of findings and assessment.

Table 12 Strategic intent assessment

HYPOTHESIS ABOUT THE CRITICAL CAUSAL PATH	COMMENTS	ASSESSMENT
Plans under OP2 focus on outcomes rather than outputs;	The 2005 UNDAF was already a big improvement in quality over previous years. Subsequent consolidation under OP1 and OP2 have reduced duplication and fostered synergies. There is some evidence of more outcome focus in annual plans, but the UN is still involved in many fragmented projects.	Some progress
Development of the OP2 has led to improved resource allocations that reflect a clear and strategic plan for the UN to contribute to the attainment of national priorities;	Creation of the One Fund has created a key instrument for reform. Allocations under the Fund have been managed well and follow an elaborate procedure. Plans are in line with national priorities but there is little evidence of a more strategic orientation.	Some progress
The PCG structure is perceived by stakeholders to have improved the focus and implementation of programmes	The PCG structure is a radical and important part of the reforms that has the potential to shift programme management towards a focus on outcomes rather than on agency mandate. PCGs have stimulated greater synergy among the agencies and can act to hold agencies to account.	Good progress

HYPOTHESIS ABOUT THE CRITICAL CAUSAL PATH	COMMENTS	ASSESSMENT
The changing staff structure and competence in UN agencies reflects a move towards provision of high-quality policy advice and advocacy;	A good example exists of a 'pilot within the pilot' of a One Communications Team that demonstrates integrated working by staff from different agencies under common management procedures. Two agencies have started to implement revised staffing structures to reflect new programme orientation. This will be a major challenge for the NOP.	Some progress
Programmes developed and supported under the OP2 show evidence of a shift in orientation away from output delivery towards provision of high-quality policy advice and advocacy;	There are good examples of programmes that deliver high-quality policy advice and advocacy, but few examples were found of reorientation or closure of programmes that focus on output delivery.	Some progress
The OP2 is perceived by stakeholders to have led to reduced transaction costs for the UN, Government and donors;	The OP2 is welcomed by government and donors as an improved plan that communicates in a more effective way, the support from the UN.	Good progress
UN support is perceived by stakeholders to have made a more effective contribution to the attainment of national development results and priorities.	All parties consider that the reforms have change the scope and nature of engagement by the UN agencies and led to improved outcomes in some areas.	Good progress

10.8 As can be seen from Table 12, progress has been made in all areas so the evaluation concludes that progress has been made towards the strategic intent. The extent of that progress is relatively modest compared with the early expectations of the first One Plan, but more substantial when viewed from the perspective of the less ambitious 'Delivering as One' model. Fundamental changes have been achieved in the way UN staff work together, especially through the PCGs and One Communications Team; imaginative work is taking place under joint programmes; and there appears to be genuine acceptance that projects have to be designed and funded in the context of the UN support to Viet Nam as a whole, with programmes tested for their strategic fit, proven history of efficient implementation and contribution to cross-cutting objectives. These are all substantial achievements.

10.9 In some areas progress is slight and there is better evidence for taking on new functions than for abandoning old ways of working. The UN has been slow to undertake an effective review of capacity needs under the new way of working, and this is now a priority in advance of the Next One Plan and the need to have sound figures for planning the Green One UN House. There has been real progress towards One Leader with an innovative Viet Nam-specific Code of Conduct. But management arrangements still do not vest clear authority in the Resident Coordinator and consensual decision-making remains an obstacle to

further progress. The challenge for the Next One Plan is to continue the reform and demonstrate a substantial shift in the composition of UN-supported programmes away from many service delivery projects to fewer more influential projects that deliver strong outcomes that support national objectives in those areas of UN comparative advantage.

11 LESSONS

11.1 Lessons have been identified in the discussion of each reform pillar. They are brought together here.

One Plan

- A continuing process and succession of objective statements complicates judgements about the extent of change and creates a situation where different stakeholders hold varying expectations. New countries embarking on UN reform should endeavour to create clear and explicit objectives.

- The tripartite structure developed in Viet Nam has been an effective mechanism to ensure the reform process has been led by government and has facilitated close engagement with the UN by donors.

- It is preferable to time the start of reform either to coincide with a new planning cycle or towards the end of a cycle. Starting soon after the beginning of the UNDAF period in Viet Nam left the One Plan constrained by prior commitments and with less flexibility for reform for a prolonged period before the Next One Plan starts. The varying planning cycles of UN agencies is an impediment to greater coherence in planning.

- Plans need to be inclusive of all agencies in order to enable a PCG structure to be created. PCG should be implemented first in sequence, fitted as best as possible to existing plans, so that staff have some experience of new ways of working and the new planning cycle can be driven from a multi-agency, outcome orientation.

- Donor support can be used to stimulate more upstream ways of working but arrangements need to include plans for institutionalising the change.

- Existing work on support to policy can be retro-fitted into a typology of support. That analysis has the potential to help structure arrangements under the Next One Plan to ensure that the work reflects the comparative advantages of the UN and is planned to be measurable.

- PCG are the most important element of the One Plan pillar and have enabled an orientation towards outcomes, new collaborative ways of working and a changed awareness of accountability to be introduced.

- It is important to achieve a human resources capacity assessment early in the reform process to enable planning for future needs. The lack of progress in this respect in Viet Nam makes this a high priority for the run up to the Next One Plan.

- Joint programmes have clear potential to benefit from and reinforce the workings of PCG and will benefit from detailed evaluation of their outcomes.

- There is evidence of clear benefits in promoting gender equality through the Gender PCG. It is important that the structure of PCG reflects not only direct support to the national strategy but also global UN obligations such as for gender equality, HIV and others.

One Plan Fund

- The experience of going through the allocation process has been really important – perhaps more than the outcome. But the allocation mechanism has not really been tested as the Plan has been so fully funded.

- The One Fund is an important incentive for changing agency programmes in line with One Plan intentions. The One Fund should be used to bring funding up to an agreed budget amount and adjusted if Other Resources become available.

- Donor support for the One Plan Fund has enabled a more flexible source of funding to be available for allocation at country level. The fund allocation process has been developed with more objective criteria and has potential to be effective. But there is little evidence yet of allocation decisions being used to make difficult choices and prioritise for One Plan outcome objectives. If, owing to consensual decision-making by OPFMAC, the allocation process does not give rise to allocations in line with plan priorities and proven agency performance, donors will need to consider whether it would be more effective to fund specific outcomes.

One Leader

- The UNCT in Viet Nam has been able to achieve progress towards One Leader by a combination of vision and ambitions among UNCT members and the strong commitment shown by government and donors to the reform.

- The creation of a 'Code of Conduct and Terms of Reference for UN Country Team Viet Nam to implement the One UN Initiative' was an important innovation that enabled the UNCT to progress beyond system-wide arrangements through the UNDG.

One Set of Management practices

- The UNCT is aware that the area of harmonization of management practices presents the most daunting procedural challenges, but the potential benefits in the form of lower transaction costs are very large.

- The HPPMG and HACT are a step towards promoting Government ownership. They are in line with Indicator 6 in Hanoi Core Statement on Alignment and Indicator 10 on Harmonisation and Simplification. It is expected that the HPPMG will become a useful tool for daily work and contribute to simpler business processes and lower transaction costs with clear roles and responsibilities of those managing and implementing programmes/projects.

- The UN EU Cost Norms has created greater transparency and a basis for harmonization and alignment between donors and Government, in the spirit of the Hanoi Core Statement on Aid Effectiveness.

- Harmonisation of Standard Basic Agreements is an important issue but not one that need delay other practical aspects of reform including moving forward with the Green One House. Response from the UN side is largely determined by legal departments in the headquarters of the various agencies and is an example of where support from headquarters has not kept pace with needs at country level. UN organisations are separate legal entities, hence it would be difficult to achieve a single SBA.

- In other respect, harmonisation of business practices appears to be under better support from the UN head quarters with General Assembly Resolution 63-311 (on System wide Coherence), UNDG Guidelines (for OMT) and UNDG framework on HACT.

One Green One House

- The One Green UN House in Viet Nam has received donor financial support and allocation of a building from the Government, plus financial commitments from UN agencies. This support is unprecedented among the UN reform pilots and reflects the unique benefits that come from the tripartite arrangement.

- As a demonstration example of the best possible eco-friendly and energy efficient office building in the region, the Green One UN House in Ha Noi will be a strong statement of the UN's commitment to environmental sustainability and addressing climate change.

One Voice

- Experience shows that UN agency staff can work in an environment with common job descriptions, managed by staff from other agencies, under a common work plan, and assessed using a common performance assessment tool. Barriers between agencies can be overcome.

- The set-up of the Team, with an appropriate skills mix, effective reporting lines, and a common workspace and work plan, has enhanced the ability of the Team to respond to communications needs in an integrated manner.

- The RC is acknowledged as the voice of the UN, but the example of the Tet card with signatures of all agencies demonstrates the challenge still to be overcome in agency image and visibility.

12 Recommendations

12.1 Recommendations have been developed under each of the six pillars in a box at the end of each chapter. They are reproduced here, reorganised according to the different stakeholders to whom they refer. First are three overarching recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE GOVERNMENT OF VIET NAM.

12.2 Government leadership and support has been an essential factor in the progress that has been made with the One UN initiative. That support needs to continue with special emphasis on mechanisms to improve the planning and implementation of UN projects and programmes. Working through the TNTF, government should support the PCG arrangements, seeing them not as an extra layer between government ministries and UN agencies, but as a new and more effective way of obtaining better value from UN expertise and resources. To enable that to happen, the Next One Plan needs to be much more effectively structured to support the SEDP and designed with measurable outcomes that can be monitored. To ensure UN support is well prioritised to support national objectives, further reforms are necessary to improve the managerial authority of the Resident Coordinator. Government should advocate for those reforms through the UN Development Group and the Executive Boards of UN Agencies.

RECOMMENDATION TO BILATERAL DONORS

12.3 Direct support and involvement by bilateral donors through the Tripartite National Task Force has been a special feature of the One UN initiative in Viet Nam. There has been sufficient progress under the initiative for donors to continue their support by funding the One Plan Fund for the Next One Plan period. The mechanism of pooled funding under the One Plan Fund has provided a strong incentive for reformed ways of working within the UN. But further work is needed to ensure that funds are allocated in line with national priorities and UN comparative advantage. Allocations systems need to be improved to introduce clearer separation of functions and more objective assessment of priorities. Donor support has also helped initiate improved UN support to policy advice. Fund allocation and policy support are two areas where donors should continue to use their influence and technical expertise to help maintain the pace of reform and move further towards the strategic intent.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE HEADQUARTERS OF UN AGENCIES

12.4 Perceptions among UN staff at country level are that UN reform would proceed faster and more efficiently with better support from UN Agency HQ. There needs to be stronger and more demonstrative support by agency headquarters in several areas: working through UNDG to reform accountability arrangements and give the Resident Coordinator clear managerial authority in the UNCT; revision of job descriptions to take account of working through PCGs and other forms of joint programmes; rationalisation of agency identity at country level so that heads of agency work as a unified management team with less need for separate visibility; revision of legal agreements to enable faster progress with the Green One UN House. And last, but not least, agreement over a common format for agency reporting that can be used within PCGs and for reporting to headquarters.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SIX PILLARS

UN Country Team

- In recognition of the shift in accountability and central role of the PCG, these groups should have the lead role in working with government to define the scope of work and target outcomes for the Next One Plan, to which UN agencies will then be asked to deliver support.

- The plan for 2011 should be structured as much as possible to round off activities under the OP2 to enable a fresh start under the NOP.

- The Next One Plan needs to build on current achievements and demonstrate a more explicit approach to reform. Several key elements for the Next One Plan follow naturally from the experience under OP2:

  - Harmonisation of planning cycles with clear commitments from the headquarters of UN Agencies to work within a five-year cycle.
  - More explicit identification of UN comparative advantage and agency role in support of Viet Nam in the implementation of obligations from UN conventions, resolutions and treaties.
  - A more systematic approach to policy support.
  - Planning to measure outcomes of support for policy advice.
  - More explicit justification for service delivery work that demonstrates clear linkages to UN roles and comparative advantages or is used to gather data or pilot approaches in support of upstream policy support.

- Accountabilities for PCG need to be rationalised so that all UN staff are accountable for their delivery of outputs to the UN co-convenor of the PCG with which they work.

- In view of the central role of M&E to the success of the reform, consideration should be given to creating a One M&E team modelled on the experience with the One Communications Team.

- MPI has agreed to the Programmatic and Budgetary Framework for 2011. Actions needed now by the UN are to justify the plan and prepare the budget of the extension year. The envelope of OPF resources for the next OP is not yet known and there is a funding gap in 2011.

- The UNCT, working with OPFMAC should develop a new budget cycle process that brings a clear separation of function between submitting financial proposals, and reviewing and approving proposals, and improve the decision-making process to ensure fund allocation is driven by plan priorities rather than agency entitlements.

- The UNCT should revise the 'Code of Conduct' for the Next One Plan period to progress further towards the concept of 'unified management' in the 'Agreed Principles, Objectives and Instruments to achieve One United Nations in Vietnam'. Specifically, greater financial and programmatic management authority should be vested in the RC.

- UNCT should press for all agencies to make plans to work under the HPPMG during the Next One Plan.

- An approach needs to be developed such that the Communications Team service is available to all UN agencies, not only those that contribute directly. Funding from the One Fund might be the means to achieve this.

- In view of the successful experience with the Communications Team consideration should be given to expanding this arrangement to other core areas such as monitoring and evaluation of the One Plan.

UN Country Team/ Monitoring & Evaluation Working Group

- M&E is an essential aspect of the One Plan because it provides the evidence of performance that guides future work. Maintaining a record of activities and delivery of outputs may be useful within the PCG but for reporting to the UNCT the format needs to describe contribution to outcomes. This requires a change during planning so that results chains are described and adoption of a reporting approach that describes how outcomes contribute to outcomes. Examples can be found in the work of some bilateral donors and their governments.

RCO

- New allocation criteria are relatively comprehensive, but require further improvements for the Next One Plan such as with regard to indicator weight, some indicators being too general and difficult to assess, and performance indicators to provide more evidence of progress towards outcomes.

- Efforts should be made to try and identify those elements of funding that are being applied to cross cutting issues of gender and human rights, to link to reporting on cross cutting issues.

UN Agency HQ

- The job descriptions of all heads of agencies and relevant professional/technical staff should include their role in PCG and that role form part of annual performance assessment.

- The practice of double reporting through PCG and by agencies to their headquarters needs to stop. Whilst this is a decision for UN agency headquarters, the Government of Viet Nam can support the One UN process by declaring its wish to all agencies that in future all reporting should be based on a single common format.

- In recognition of the spirit and nature of reform in Viet Nam and in response to leadership by GoV, those UN agencies concerned with renegotiating their SBA should commit to an agreed timetable that is aligned with the move to One Green UN House.

Tripartite National Task Force

- The TNTF needs to support the One Green UN House process and help create a mechanism by which DIPSERCO receives adequate technical support to manage the complex legal and technical issues with the Hanoi People's Committee. Consideration should be given as to how MOFA can lead a process to provide the necessary support and establish a clear understanding with DIPSERCO on the project delivery mechanisms and timetable

Donors

- The One Plan Fund has been an effective mechanism and donors should support continuation of the Fund for the Next One Plan period, pending

more general review of donor funding for the UN at country level. However, donors should retain the option of earmarking by outcomes if there is no evidence of improvements in the allocation process.

UNDG

- The UNDG Management and Accountability Framework of 2008 needs to be revised and brought up to date to reflect the experience of the UN Pilots. Experience from Viet Nam calls for simpler statements of authority over resources, budget allocation and programming for the RC and clearer lines of accountability between agency members of the UNCT and the RC.

ANNEX A TERMS OF REFERENCE

COUNTRY-LED EVALUATION ONE UN INITIATIVE IN VIET NAM

BACKGROUND

In response to the 2005 Ha Noi Core Statement on Aid Effectiveness, the "One UN Initiative" in Viet Nam started in February 2006, focusing initially on five pillars of UN reform. The "Five Ones" included the One Plan, One Budget, One Leader, One Set of Management Practices, and One Green UN House. In May 2006 the "Agreed principles, objectives and instruments to achieve One UN in VN" were agreed by the UN and the Government of Vietnam.

The Report of the High-Level Panel on System-Wide Coherence issued by the UN Secretary General in late 2006 echoed the initiative taken in Viet Nam. The Report recommended, inter alia, the devising of more cohesive, effective and efficient UN business practices at the country level through the pursuance of the "Delivering as One (DaO)" initiative in eight pilot countries, including Viet Nam. **At the heart of the DaO initiative is the intent and resolve of the UN to achieve a more strategic and more effective contribution to the attainment of national development priorities, under national leadership.** This essential aim of the DaO initiative is the central reference for any related evaluations. The Report also brought to the fore the need for the UN to gradually move away from traditional service delivery and project implementation towards high-quality policy advice and advocacy.

On 20 June 2008, the One Plan 2 (2006-2010) was signed between the Government of Viet Nam (GoV) and the representatives of 14 UN Organizations in Viet Nam: FAO, IFAD, ILO, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNIFEM, UNODC, UNV and WHO. The One Plan 2 (hereinafter referred to as the One Plan) superseded the original One Plan 1 and brings together all the work in Viet Nam of these participating UN Organizations under five joint Outcomes. At the heart of the One Plan is the overall goal to enhance programmatic synergies among various UN interventions, eliminate any programmatic duplication and overlap, and deliver more effectively "as One". To meet these objectives, the UN has been repositioning itself in a number of critical areas and in doing so, is more effectively responding to the changing development environment and assisting the Government in meeting new challenges, attendant on Viet Nam reaching middle-income status.

The overall monitoring of the "One UN Initiative" in Viet Nam is done by the Tripartite National Task Force (TNTF) comprised of representatives of the four Government Aid Coordinating Agencies (GACA; Ministry of Planning and Investment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Finance, and the Office of Government), representatives from the donor community and the participating UN Organizations. The TNTF is charged with the responsibility of advancing UN reform by providing effective oversight of the "One UN Initiative". Progress regarding a set of *Critical Success Factors* classified under five Strategic Outcomes of the "Results Framework for the UN Reform Process" is reviewed every six months, most recently in May 2009.

The implementation of the One Plan itself is overseen by the One Plan Steering Committee (OPSC), which was officially inaugurated in October 2008. The mandate of the OPSC is to oversee and coordinate the implementation of the One Plan to ensure the achievement of its outcomes and its contribution to national development results, and to provide broad strategic advice on the allocation of resources from the One Plan Fund. The OPSC is co-chaired by the Vice-Minister of the Ministry of Planning and Investment and the UN Resident Coordinator and has eight members - four representatives of the GACA and four members of participating UN Organizations (on a rotating basis). Key to the implementation of the One Plan is the UNCT's establishment of 11 inter-agency Programme Coordination Groups (PCGs) responsible for achieving results in the five Outcome areas. The PCGs are essentially a modality to foster joint programming, and the objective is to facilitate the delivery of results in a more coordinated, effective and

accountable manner.

In 2007, the UN Chief Executives Board requested the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) to make arrangements for an evaluation of the eight "Delivering as One (DaO)" pilot countries. UNEG proposed a three-stage approach, comprising an evaluability study, an evaluation of process and an evaluation of results. Following the 2007 Evaluability Study undertaken in Viet Nam, a number of steps were taken in 2008 to address the key issues raised. In 2009, seven DaO pilot countries proposed to conduct country-led evaluations of the UN reform process, preceding and separate from the independent evaluation called for by the UN General Assembly and scheduled to take place in 2010.

The outcome of the Inter-Governmental Meeting of the DaO Pilots in Kigali (October 2009) constitutes an important reference for the country-led evaluations which are expected to generate a number of valuable lessons for moving UN reform forward. The findings and recommendations will be the major input for the DaO Conference in Ha Noi scheduled for June 2010. The consolidation of the evaluation results will provide an analytical statement of UN reform good practices and remaining obstacles, at both country and Headquarters' levels. The Ha Noi Conference is intended to devise a clear way forward for the further institutionalisation of the UN reform process in subsequent years.

The country-led evaluation will be conducted according to international standards of independence and quality. The UN Evaluation Group has developed a Framework Terms of Reference (FTOR) and will set up a quality assurance mechanism for all country-led evaluations. The country-specific Terms of Reference is based upon the FTOR adapted to the context of the "One UN Initiative" in Viet Nam.

The country-led evaluation, focusing primarily on reformed UN business practices at the country level, will take place at a medium point of the UN reform in Vietnam: initiated in early 2006, the reform is expected to reach a key milestone on 1 January 2012, marking both the start of implementation of the next One UN Plan (2012-2016) and the move of the UN into One Green UN House. As such, this evaluation is expected to review both the work accomplished at the country level since 2006 as well as formulate recommendations and inform the continued implementation of the UN reform agenda for the coming years.

1. PURPOSE AND USE OF THE EVALUATION

The country-led evaluation intends to inform decision-makers on how to enhance the role and contribution of the UN development system in support of national policies and strategies for the achievement of national development results. The evaluation will assess progress made against the strategic intent of Delivering as One, record achievements, identify areas for improvement and remaining challenges, and distil lessons to inform decision-making processes at national, inter-governmental and headquarters levels. The strategic intent of the "One UN Initiative" refers to the strategic goals and intentions as indicated in the "Agreed principles, objectives and instruments to achieve One UN in Viet Nam" (May 2006) and other key reference documents. The findings and recommendations of the country-led evaluation will be the major input for the DaO Conference in Ha Noi in June 2010, and intended to devise a clear way forward for the further institutionalisation of the UN reform process in subsequent years.

While this evaluation focuses primarily on reformed UN business processes and practices at the country level, rather than development results as such, the evaluation will nonetheless be guided by the following overall aim of the "One UN Initiative":

Overall DaO aim (Greater Why): The population and institutions of Viet Nam benefit from a more strategic and effective contribution of the United Nations to the attainment of national priorities, under national leadership.

The main objectives of the country-led evaluation are to measure the extent to which specific features of reformed UN business processes and practices at the country level contribute to the overall DaO aim, as follows:

a) Assess the extent to which the "One UN Initiative" has contributed to the attainment of national development results and priorities;

b) Assess to what extent the "One UN Initiative" in Viet Nam is on track to achieve the expected results against the strategic intent. Assess specifically the key mechanisms, processes and structures set up under the "One UN Initiative" to implement change and improve effectiveness;

c) Assess the extent to which the "One UN Initiative" is contributing to the principles and recommendations of the Ha Noi Core Statement on Aid Effectiveness;

d) Identify lessons learned from the implementation of the "One UN Initiative" in Viet Nam;

e) Make recommendations on which actions would be required by key stakeholders in order to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the "One UN Initiative" in Viet Nam up to and including the finalization of the next One Plan (2012-2016)

The main target audience for the evaluation includes the following stakeholders:

- Government of Viet Nam (GACA and other Ministries/Departments);
- UN Agencies participating in the "One UN Initiative" in Viet Nam (UNCT +);
- Senior Management at UN HQ level;
- Senior Management at UN Agencies HQ level;
- Donors in Viet Nam (representatives in Viet Nam and at HQ level);
- Other key stakeholders in Viet Nam (academia, civil society, etc);
- Other DaO pilot countries and self-starters implementing the DaO approach.

The findings and recommendations of the evaluation will be used by the key stakeholders to ensure further implementation of the UN reform process in the most efficient and effective manner in subsequent years. The intention is to consolidate the main findings and recommendations from all seven country-led evaluations as a basis for discussion and decision-making at the 2010 Ha Noi Conference. Following the conference, the UN, Government and Donors will formulate a management response including a clear timetable and responsibilities for tracking progress in the implementation of the agreed actions.

1. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation will assess the contribution of the "One UN Initiative" to national development priorities, strategies and plans. Both processes and results of the "One UN Initiative" under the Five Ones will be assessed. The evaluation will also assess compliance with UN normative frameworks and cross-cutting issues including gender and human rights, and their concrete translation in the "One UN Initiative". It will cover operational activities of all UN agencies under the One Plan.

The evaluation will cover the period between February 2006 and December 2009. It should be noted that the TNTF Results Framework for the UN Reform Process was only established in June 2008. Therefore, the evaluation will primarily focus on the Five Ones, taking into account the TNTF Critical Success Factors to the extent possible. The evaluation will use the following core evaluation criteria:

- Relevance (responsiveness to the needs and priorities of the country);
- Effectiveness (*progress towards* the achievement of development results and implementation of better processes to achieve those results)
- Efficiency (reduction of transaction costs for the country, the UN and donors in comparison to previous arrangements);
- Sustainability (the probability of benefits to continue over time).

In order to achieve the main objectives of the country-led evaluation, the following *specific evaluation*

questions would need to be answered:

1. One Plan

Relevance
- To what extent does the One Plan respond to national priorities and needs?
- To what extent does the content of the One Plan 2 in terms of development results and related resource allocations reflect a clear and strategic plan for the UN to contribute to the attainment of national priorities?
- To what extent does the content of the OP 2 reflect the move towards "upstream" work being called for in the Report of the High-Level Panel on System-Wide Coherence?
- To what extent does the OP 2 mainstream and reflect recommendations from UN conventions, resolutions and treaty bodies (e.g. CEDAW Committee, etc.) as well as national priorities on gender equality, women's empowerment and human rights?

Effectiveness
- What has been the progress so far towards the achievement of One Plan Outcomes? Focus on a general assessment of progress achieved rather than a detailed assessment of programmatic areas as this will be covered by the UN GA commissioned evaluation in 2010.
- To what extent is the current PCG coordination structure supporting both a) the implementation of the OP2, and b) facilitating and supporting joint programming. Such review of the PCG architecture should notably cover the following elements: i) structure and number of PCGs; ii) working modalities and accountability including PCG Co-Conveners arrangements; iii) track records in nurturing concrete tangible programmatic synergies among UN Agencies, reduction of duplicative work and reduced transaction costs; iv) interaction of PCGs with Government (line ministries and GACA), donors and other development partners (e.g. civil society); v) extent of reflection of contribution to inter-agency collaboration and UN Reform in individual job descriptions and performance appraisals; and vi) recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of PCGs in relation to their purpose as mentioned above. The UN Position Paper on PCGs (November 2009) and the evaluation of PCGs commissioned by MPI (November 2009) are to be taken into account as key reference documents.
- Is the current Monitoring and Reporting (M&R) system effectively supporting the planning, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of the One Plan and has it been used for evidence-based decision-making in the implementation of the One Plan? If so what has been the value-added of the M&R system? Such review should notably entail an examination of the PCG related working modalities (Annual Work Planning, Annual Reviews, Annual Reporting, etc.) and functioning of the M&E Working Group.
- To what extent have cross-cutting issues (gender, human rights, culture) been addressed and mainstreamed throughout the One Plan and in the work of all PCGs? To what extent has this been translated into results so far? To what extent do monitoring and reporting mechanisms track progress in terms of cross-cutting issues?
- Has the One Plan Steering Committee (OPSC) been functioning according to its mandate in terms of overseeing and coordinating the implementation of the One Plan?
- Has the Tripartite National Task Force (TNTF) been functioning according to its mandate in terms of providing effective oversight and guidance of the "One UN Initiative"?
- To what extent is the current staff capacity and skills mix of the UN in Viet Nam considered sufficient for the implementation of the One Plan?

Efficiency
- To what extent has the One Plan generated positive synergies beyond individual interventions to increase efficiency?

Sustainability
- To what extent has the One Plan been aligned to national systems to ensure sustainability of results?

2. One Budget/One Fund

Relevance
- To what extent has the configuration of the One Budget/One Plan Fund contributed to a more strategic and cohesive UN support to the attainment of national priorities?

Effectiveness
- To what extent have donors provided un-earmarked and multi-year resources to the One Plan Fund (OPF) in a timely manner as per the commitments expressed in the TNTF?
- To what extent do donors consider the One Budget/OPF a more relevant, effective, efficient and sustainable way of channelling resources through the UN System?
- To what extent has the One Plan Fund Mobilization and Allocation Committee (OPFMAC) functioned according to its mandate and ensuring a transparent allocation of OPF resources?
- To what extent has the OPF led to increased allocations for cross-cutting issues (gender, human rights, culture)?

Efficiency
- To what extent has the One Budget/OPF resulted in a more efficient use of resources, in particular of non-earmarked funds, and improved predictability of UN funding?
- Based on availability of data, has the One UN Initiative led to reduced transaction costs for the UN, Government and donors?

Sustainability
- To what extent is the One Budget/One Fund approach expected to be sustainable?

3. One Leader

Relevance
- To what extent has the institution of the Resident Coordinator improved and facilitated Government's and Donors' access to the UN system?

Effectiveness
- To what extent has the UN RC, as One Leader, been able to exercise enhanced authority, responsibility and accountability as envisaged in the MoU on One Leader?
- To what extent has the One Leader concept made a difference for the role of the UN in policy analysis, policy advice and policy dialogue with key national stakeholders?
- Has the firewall between the UN RC and UNDP been functioning effectively?
- Which actions would be required from UN HQ to further enhance the authority and accountability of the One Leader?

Efficiency
- To what extent have the coordination functions of the RC Office facilitated and reduced coordination and transaction costs for the UNCT, Government and Donors?

Sustainability
- Has any mechanism been put in place to ensure that the effectiveness of the RC Office survives the natural turn-over of UN staff?

4. One Set of Management Practices

Relevance
- Are the harmonization of UN business practices and the development of Common Services the most suitable way to enhance the operationalisation of the "One UN Initiative"?
- To what extent are UN business practices in line with key principles of Aid Effectiveness as contained in the Paris Declaration and the Ha Noi Core Statement on Aid Effectiveness?

Effectiveness
- To what extent have programme and project guidelines been harmonized among UN Agencies and with Government through HPPMG (Harmonized Programme and Project Management Guidelines) and what have been the results achieved so far?
- To what extent has the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) been implemented and what have been the results achieved so far?
- To what extent have Cost Norms been harmonized among UN Agencies and with Government and donors and what have been the results achieved so far?
- To what extent has there been harmonization of Standard Basic Agreements (SBA) between UN Agencies and Government?

Efficiency
- To what extent have the harmonization of UN business practices and the development of common services increased efficiency so far?

5. One Green UN House

Relevance
- To what extent does the One Green UN House display opportunities for greater effectiveness and efficiency to Deliver as One?

Effectiveness
- To what extent have UN Agencies, Donors and GoV provided resources for the One Green UN House and what difference has this made?
- To what extent is the development of the One Green UN House on track?

Sustainability
- To what extent is the co-location of UN Agencies in the One Green UN House expected to result in sustainable programmatic and operational efficiency?

6. One Voice

Relevance
- To what extent is the One UN Communications Team the most appropriate structure to communicate UN Viet Nam priorities and the "One UN Initiative" to external stakeholders?

Effectiveness
- To what extent is the UN speaking with One Voice in a coherent way?
- To what extent has the One UN Communications Team communicated effectively on the results of UN development interventions including in the area of policy advice and dialogue?
- To what extent has the One UN Communications Team contributed to the internal change processes under the "One UN Initiative"?

2. EVALUATION MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The management structure for the evaluation, including key responsibilities, are outlined below:
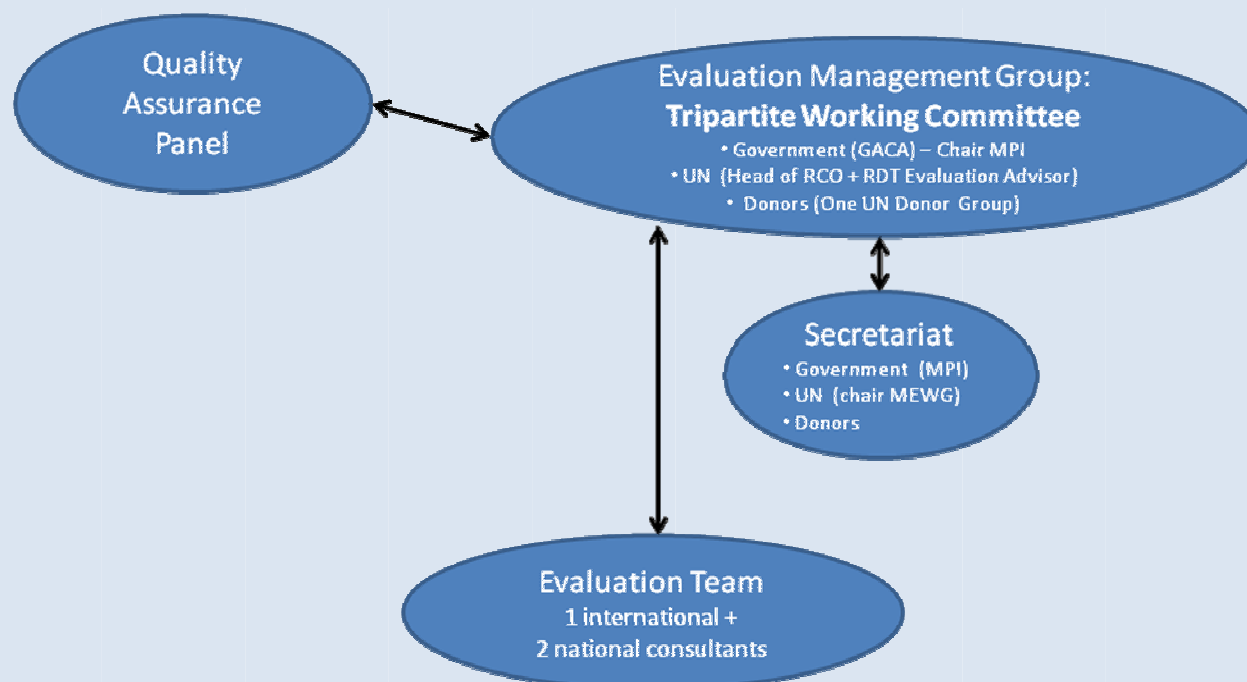
Evaluation Management Group

A Tripartite Working Committee (TWC), functioning as Evaluation Management Group, has been established to provide overall guidance, oversight and management of the evaluation. The TWC will be chaired by the Government of Viet Nam (Ministry of Planning and Investment, Foreign Economic Relations Department) and will be comprised of representatives of the following key stakeholders:

- Government of Viet Nam: Government Aid Coordinating Agencies i.e. Ministry of Planning and Investment; Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Ministry of Finance: Office of Government.
- UN: Head of UN RCO and Regional Evaluation Advisor UNDG Asia-Pacific.
- Donors: Chair One UN Donor Group and one other donor representative.

The TWC/EMG will be ultimately responsible for the conduct of a quality, timely and cost-effective evaluation. The EMG will commission and oversee the conduct of the evaluation, meeting at key points during the evaluation process. Responsibilities include approving the country-specific evaluation Terms of Reference, approving the selection of the evaluation team, reviewing key deliverables (inception report, draft report and final report), managing the evaluation process, assuring the independence of the evaluation and that the final products comply with the highest standards in evaluation.

The TWC/EMG will prepare a written management response to the evaluation report. The TWC/EMG will release the final report to the public domain (publication, dissemination) together with the comments from the Quality Assurance Panel and the management response.

Secretariat

The Secretariat will be of a tripartite composition, including one representative each from the Government (MPI), UN (chair of the M&E Working Group) and Donors (One UN Donor Group). Under the supervision of the Chair of the EMG, the responsibilities of the Secretariat will include:

- Supporting the implementation of the activities planned by the EMG.
- Adapting the draft UNEG Framework Terms of Reference to the specific needs of the country.
- Acting as liaison and focal point between the EMG, the UN Country Team, independent evaluation team, the Quality Assurance Panel, and equivalent Secretariats in other DaO pilot countries.

- Managing the evaluation budget including drafting financial reports as necessary.
- Managing the procurement process of the independent evaluation team, including the assessment of technical and financial proposals and making recommendations to the EMG.
- Facilitating the work of the independent evaluation team by ensuring that all relevant contacts and information are available.
- Coordinating the editing and publishing of the final report, and developing a communication and dissemination strategy as necessary.
- Coordinating stakeholder workshops in consultation with the evaluation team including, among other things: drafting the agenda, identifying materials for consultation and distribution, coordinating with participants; and drafting workshop reports.
- Performing other professional and administrative duties as required.

Evaluation Team

The evaluation team will be comprised of one international evaluation expert (Team Leader) and two national evaluation experts who, as a team, have a solid understanding of the national context, UN reform initiatives and a proven track record of conducting evaluations in a professional manner. The evaluation team will adhere to the UNEG Norms and Standards. The Team Leader is responsible for the division of tasks among the team and the timely and quality delivery of all expected outputs. More details on the required qualifications are provided in section 8 below.

Quality Assurance Panel

One external Quality Assurance Panel (QAP) will be established by UNEG to provide an independent quality assessment of the Terms of Reference, proposed methodology and evaluation reports of all seven country-led evaluations. The QAP will provide comments to the EMG, preferably within ten working days from the date of submission of the respective documents. The QAP comments will be presented to the EMG for consideration. If the EMG does not incorporate certain comments of the QAP, the reasons will be clearly documented to ensure maximum transparency. The structure, composition and purpose of the panel outlined in the Quality Assurance Panel TOR. Any costs associated with the QAP will be met by UNEG.

3. METHODOLOGY

During the inception phase, the Evaluation Team – will formulate in detail the methodology for the evaluation, informed by the following key methodological principles:
- The evaluation will be formative and forward looking and focus on the process aspects of the DaO initiative and results achieved since the start;
- The evaluation will adopt a highly consultative, iterative and transparent approach with stakeholders;
- Triangulation of information and data across groups of stakeholders and individuals will be the key methodological principle to validate evidence, throughout the whole evaluation process;
- The evaluations will adhere to the UNEG Norms and Standards.

The evaluation will use a wide range of methods and tools, fine-tuned to the national context and to the evaluation questions. The methodology would preferably include some or all of the following:

- Evaluation framework relating evaluation issues and questions to evaluation criteria, indicators, sources of information and methods of data collection (inception phase);
- Mapping exercise of the main focus areas of the DaO work (inception phase);
- Desk review of relevant reference documents. This should optimize the integration of findings, research and learning from other reviews and studies, e.g. stakeholder survey, staff survey, MIC study tour, etc. (inception and data collection phase);
- Individual and group interviews with key stakeholders including (but not limited to) representatives from Government, Donors, UN Agencies, UN Resident Coordinator's

        Office, UN M&E Working Group, Programme Coordination Groups (PCGs), One Plan Fund Administrative Agent, etc. Check-lists or semi-structured interview protocols will be used for each type of interview (both during inception and data collection phase);
- Establishment of historical causality: a time-line and narrative about the milestone events in the DaO process at country and international level (inception and data collection phase);
- Use of quantitative indicators and data that will allow comparison between the collaboration between the Government and the UN in the pre-DaO situation and the current context. Need to check where baseline information is available and consider the need to reconstruct it if not readily available (data collection phase);
- Thematic studies or case studies on specific focus areas of the DaO process, if appropriate and possible (data collection phase);
- Presentation/validation of preliminary findings and recommendations with key stakeholders (persons interviewed and other relevant stakeholders) to confirm facts and key findings.

Limitations of the evaluation

The 2007 evaluability assessment clearly pointed out that the DaO process cannot be evaluated against a clear coherent set of benchmarks given its nature of a country-specific process. For instance, the absence of clear quantification and benchmarks for transaction costs in the UN system will also affect the possibility of assessing progress on efficiency. Proxy indicators may need to be used to highlight certain trends and results. The evaluation would also need to take into account that the ability to achieve progress in various reform areas at country level has been - and still is - to a large extent dependent on the ability/willingness to change rules/procedures at HQ level. Other external factors that have limited or facilitated the DaO process may need to be explored as well.

4. TIMEFRAME, DURATION OF ASSIGNMENT AND DUTY STATION

The estimated timeframe including target dates for the evaluation process is as follows:

KEY ACTIVITIES	TIMEFRAME (BY DATE)	RESPONSIBLE
Approval of Evaluation Terms of Reference	By 1 December 2009	EMG/TWC
Selection of Evaluation Team	By 20 December 2009	EMG/TWC, Secretariat
Inception report (following desk review)	By 30 January 2010	Evaluation Team
Data collection (incl. stakeholder interviews) * - *estimated 3 weeks*	By 15 March 2010	Evaluation Team
Presentation/validation of preliminary findings to key stakeholders to confirm facts and key findings (consultation workshop)	By 25 March 2010	Evaluation Team
Draft evaluation report	By 10 April 2010	Evaluation Team
Final evaluation report	By 30 April 2010	Evaluation Team
Production of consolidated report of 7 DaO country-led evaluations	By 25 May 2010	To be confirmed
Discussion of evaluation findings and recommendations at Ha Noi DaO Conference	14-16 June 2010	Representatives from UN, Governments,

(incl. formulation of management response and follow-up actions)		Donors from pilot countries and HQs
Publication and dissemination of final report to key stakeholders (workshop)	By 30 June 2010	EMG/TWC, Secretariat Evaluation Team

* Note that data collection and interviews with national stakeholders will be difficult to conduct in the period 6-28 February 2010 due to the Vietnamese New Year (Tet) celebrations. UN and Donor counterparts would probably be available except from 12 to 20 February 2010.

The data collection and interviews are expected to be done in Ha Noi where all key stakeholders are located. The other phases of the assignment (desk review, inception report, draft report, final report) are expected to be done mostly home-based.

5. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

The consultants will be expected to produce the following outputs:

1. An inception report outlining the evaluation team's understanding of the issues under evaluation including an evaluation framework and a detailed work plan (by 30 January 2010);
2. A presentation with preliminary evaluation findings to be shared for validation in a stakeholder consultation meeting (by 25 March 2010);
3. A draft report for circulation and identification of factual corrections from stakeholders and the external Quality Assurance Panel (by 10 April 2010);
4. A final evaluation report (by 30 April 2010).

All reports will be made available in electronic format to the EMG/TWC and Secretariat.

6. EXPERTISE AND QUALIFICATIONS

The evaluation team will consist of one international evaluation expert (Team Leader) and two national evaluation experts.

The international consultant - Team Leader (max. 40 working days) will be fully responsible for the timely and quality delivery of all the outputs expected of the team. He/she will be responsible for the appropriate division of tasks among the team members depending on area of expertise. He/she will coordinate the team and act as the focal point in terms of communication with the Evaluation Management Group, the Secretariat and others. The international consultant (Team Leader) should have the following qualifications:

- Master's degree in international development, public administration, evaluation or related field.
- A minimum of 7 years of professional experience specifically in the area of monitoring and evaluation of international development initiatives and development organizations.
- Substantial international track record of conducting various types of evaluations, including process, outcome and impact evaluations in different countries and organizations.
- Experience as team leader of complex evaluations.
- Experience in M&E of cross-cutting issues including human rights, gender and culture.
- Knowledge and experience of the UN System and the UN Reform process.
- Understanding of the development context in Viet Nam and/or other 'Delivering as One' countries would be a clear advantage.
- Excellent communication and interview skills.
- Excellent report writing skills.

- Demonstrated ability to deliver quality results within strict deadlines.

The national consultant – programmatic issues (max. 35 working days) is expected to focus primarily on the programmatic evaluation questions as outlined in section 3 – Scope of the Evaluation. He/she should have the following qualifications:

- Master's degree in international development, public administration, evaluation or related field.
- A minimum of 5 years of professional experience specifically in the area of monitoring and evaluation of international development initiatives and development organizations.
- Track record of conducting various types of evaluations, including process, outcome and impact evaluations in Viet Nam. Regional experience is an added advantage.
- Experience in evaluating programmatic areas of development interventions (e.g. strategic planning, implementation structures, management structures, budgets for development interventions).
- Experience in M&E of cross-cutting issues including human rights, gender and culture.
- Knowledge and experience of the UN System and the UN Reform process.
- In-depth understanding of the development context in Viet Nam.
- Excellent communication and interview skills.
- Ability to accurately interpret/translate from Vietnamese to English and vice versa during interviews with national stakeholders.
- Excellent report writing skills.
- Demonstrated ability to deliver quality results within strict deadlines.

The national consultant – operational issues (max. 35 working days) is expected to focus primarily on the operational evaluation questions as outlined in section 3 – Scope of the Evaluation. He/she should have the following qualifications:

- Master's degree in international development, public administration, evaluation or related field.
- A minimum of 5 years of professional experience specifically in the area of monitoring and evaluation of international development initiatives and development organizations.
- Track record of conducting various types of evaluations, including process, outcome and impact evaluations in Viet Nam. Regional experience is an added advantage.
- Experience in evaluating operational areas of development interventions (e.g. business practices, financial/funding modalities, implementation structures).
- Experience in M&E of cross-cutting issues including human rights, gender and culture.
- Knowledge and experience of the UN System and the UN Reform process.
- In-depth understanding of the development context in Viet Nam.
- Excellent communication and interview skills.
- Ability to accurately interpret/translate from Vietnamese to English and vice versa during interviews with national stakeholders.
- Excellent report writing skills.
- Demonstrated ability to deliver quality results within strict deadlines.

9. ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT AND REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

The Secretariat will be able to provide all necessary reference documents to the consultants and facilitate interviews with stakeholders through a letter of introduction if necessary. The consultants will be expected to be fully self-sufficient in terms of IT/office equipment, stationery, communication, office space, accommodation, transport and any other logistics.

10) REVIEW TIME REQUIRED AND PAYMENT TERMS

The time required for the EMG to review reports submitted is estimated at 15 working days.

Proposed payment milestones:
-   20% advance payment upon signing of the contract;
-   20% payment upon submission of the inception report;
-   25% payment upon submission of the draft report;
-   35% payment upon acceptance of the final report.

11) CONSULTANTS PRESENCE REQUIRED ON DUTY STATION/UN PREMISES

□ NONE   X PARTIAL   □ INTERMITTENT   □ FULL-TIME

ANNEX B LIST OF PEOPLE MET

NO	NAME	TITLE	AGENCY/ ORGANIZATION
GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS			
1	Cao Viet Sinh	Deputy Minister, Co-Chair of One Planning Steering Committee	Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI)
2	Ho Quang Minh	Director General	Foreign Economics Relations Dept. (FERD), MPI
3	Luu Quang Khanh	Former Deputy Director General	FERD, MPI
4	Nguyen Yen Hai	Deputy Director General	FERD, MPI
5	Dao Trinh Bac	Head of International Institutions and NGOs	FERD, MPI
6	Nguyen Van Thuong	Senior official, TNTF	FERD, MPI
7	Nong Thi Hong Hanh	UN Desk Officer	FERD, MPI
8	Dao Xuan Quang	Senior Officer	FERD, MPI
9	Nguyen Manh Hoa	Deputy Director, External Financial Relations and Debt Management Dept.,	Ministry of Finance (MoF)
10	Do Cong Thanh	In Charge of Intern. Institutions and NGOs, External Financial Relations and Debt Management Dept.,	MoF
11	Le Hoai Trung	Director General, International Organisations Dept.	MoFA
12	Mr. Do Hung Viet	Assistant Director General, International Organisations Dept.	MoFA
13	Nguyen Kim Phuong	Deputy Director General, International Cooperation Dept,	Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA)
14	Nguyen Ba Ngoc	Deputy Director, Institute of Labour Science and Social Affairs	MOLISA
15	Nguyen Thi Hai Van	Deputy Director, Bureau of Employment	MOLISA
16	Le Minh Giang	Senor Specialist, Dept. of Social Protection	MOLISA
17	Ms. Hong	Umbrelar Joint Programme	MOLISA
18	Nguyen Thi Yen	Specialist, International relations Dept.	MOLISA

NO	NAME	TITLE	AGENCY/ ORGANIZATION
19	Pham Thu Hang	Senior Official, Foreign Relations Dept.,	MOHA
20	Mr. Long	Deputy Director, Planning and Financial Dept.,	Ministry of Health (MoH)
21	Nguyen Thi Tuyet Hoa	Deputy Director General, International Cooperation Dept., (ICD)	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD)
22	Bui My Binh	Senior officer	ICD, MARD
23	Ms. Huyen	Senior officer	ICD, MARD
24	Le Thi Van Anh	Programme Officer, Influenza Joint Programme	MARD
25	Mr. Toan	Manager of Influenza Joint Programme	MARD
26	Ms. Ha	Head of Foreign Relations Dept.,	MONRE
27	Tran Tho	Head of IMHEN, NPD	MONRE
28	Nguyen Minh Phuong	Head of Division on Mutual Judicial Assistance, ICD	MoJ
29	Dang Nguyen Anh	Director of International Cooperation Dept.,	Vietnam Academy for Social Sciences (VASS)
30	Tran Thi Lan Anh	Head of General Section, ICD	VASS
31	Nguyen Hien Thao	Reporter, News Department	Hanoi Radio and Television
32	Doan Le Hoa,	Head of Housing Management and Rental Section of DIPRESCO	MOFA
	Pham The Hung-	Vice- Head of Housing Management and Retal Section of DIPRESCO	MOFA
DONORS			
34	Andrew Smith	Head of Aid, Counsellor (Development)	CIDA
35	Brian Allemekinder	First Secretary (Development)	CIDA
36	Renwick Irvine	Governance Advisor	DFID
37	Phil Harding	Former Deputy Head of DFID (2004-2009), Former Chair of Donor Group (2006) - transferred 2009	DFID
38	Sean Hoy	Former Head of Irish Aid (2006-2009), Former Chair of Donor Group (2008) -	Irish Aid

NO	NAME	TITLE	AGENCY/ ORGANIZATION
		transferred 2009	
39	Benito Alvarez Fernandez	Resident Representative	Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID)
40	Antonio J. Pelaez	Programme Manager - Multilateral Cooperation and Governance	AECID
41	Max Von Bonsdorff	Counsellor, Head of Development Cooperation	Embassy of Finland
42	Jean-Pierre Bardoul	Institutional Support and Governance	EU Delegation
43	Jean Hubert Lebet	Ambassador	Embassy of Switzerland
44	Gabriella Spirli	Deputy Country Director, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation	Embassy of Switzerland
45	Snofrid Emterud	Former Chair of Donor Group (2007) - transferred 2009	Embassy of Norway
UN OFFICIALS			
48	John Hendra	UN Resident Coordinator	RCO
49	Francois Reybet-Degat	Head of RCO, Senior Advisor UN Reform	RCO
50	Peter Reeh	UN Reform Specialist	RCO
51	Vu Thuy Huong	Strategic Advisor	RCO
52	Setsuko Yamazaki	Country Director	UNDP
53	Christophe Bahuet	Deputy Country Director, Head of UNDP's Policy Advisory Team	UNDP
54	Nilgun Tas	UNIDO Representative	UNIDO
55	Earmon Murphy	Country Director	UNAIDS
56	Suzette Mitchell	Country Representative	UNIFEM
57	Dr Jean-Marc Olivé	Country Representative	WHO
58	Jesper Morch	UNICEF Representative	UNICEF
59	Andrew Speedy	Representative	FAO
60	Rie Vejs Kjeldgaard	Country Representative	ILO
61	Bruce Campbell	Country Representative	UNPFA
62	Urmila Singh	Deputy Representative	UNPFA
633	Graham Harrison	Technical Officer Health	WHO

NO	NAME	TITLE	AGENCY/ ORGANIZATION
		system Development	
64	Wu Guogao	External Relations Officer	WHO Western Pacific Regional Office
65	Alwin Nijholt and M & E working group	Focus Group Discusion	M & E working group
66	Alexa Hough	Administrative Agent OPF	One Plan Fund Team
67	Caroline den Dulk	One UN Communications Manager	One UN Communication Team (One Voice)
68	Rafael Ramirez	OMT Chair/ UNICEF Head of Operations	Operation Management Team (OMT)
69	Bharadwaj Harrichand	Common Services Advisor	Operation Management Team (OMT)
70	Vanessa de Mestre	Project Manager.	One UN House Team
71	Barnaby Jones	Deputy Country Director Operations	One UN House Team, UNDP
72	Louise Nylin	UN Coordination Specialist	Human Rights Technical Working Group:
73	Ingrid Fitzgerald	UN Gender Advisor:	
74	Geetanjali Narayan	PCG Social and Development Policies; Chief, Planning and Social Policy	UNICEF
75	Alex Warren Rodriguez	Economic Policy Advisor Country Economics Unit	UNDP
76	Kathleen Selvaggio		UNIFEM
77	Jean Dupraz	Deputy Representative	UNICEF
78	Patricia Barandun	Deputy Head of Governance Cluster	UNDP
79	Pham Thi Lan	Programme Officer	UNICEF
80	Nguyen Tuong Dung	Programme Officer	UNODC
81	Nguyen Bich Ngoc	Natural Disasters and Emergencies PCG	UNICEF
82	Thowai Zai	Natural Disasters and Emergencies PCG	UNICEF
83	Katherine Fleischer	Natural Disasters and Emergencies PCG	IOM
84	Miguel Coulier	Natural Disasters and Emergencies PCG	UNV-UNDP
85	Ian Wilderspin	Senior Technical Advisor (Disaster Risk Management	MARD-UNDP

NO	NAME	TITLE	AGENCY/ ORGANIZATION
		Project)	
86	Patricia Barandun	Deputy Head of Governance Cluster	UNDP
87	Aya Matsuura	Gender Specialist	Gender Joint Programme
88	Rajen Kumar Sharma	Chief, Provincial Child Friendly Programme	UNICEF
89	Pham Nguyet Linh	Finance Manager, One Plan Fund	UNDP
90	Joaquin Gonzalez-Aleman	Former M&E Adviser RCO	UNICEF
91	Jonathan Pincus	Former Senior Economist at UNDP, involved in the beginning of the One UN Initiative	
OTHERS			
93	Steve Price Thomas:	Country Director	Oxfam Great Britain
94	Apiwat Thamviwatnukul	Regional Programme Funding Manager	Oxfam Great Britain
96	Paul Balogun	Consultant worked on M&E system	

ANNEX C LIST OF DOCUMENTS

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ANNEX D STATEMENTS CONCERNING STRATEGIC INTENT

The text selected here has been chosen to illustrate the evolution of policy statements over the period. The sources are varied and were produced for different purposes. Their reproduction here does not imply they are being given equal weighting of importance by the evaluation team.

Box 1 United Nations Reform: A Country Perspective 2005

The UN system at country level remains programmatically fragmented and administratively profligate

The main reason for the failure of UN reform to extend beyond the *rhetorical* to achieve *operational* unity is that the agencies all maintain separate governance structures and budgets.

Pressure for change has built up from three directions: the government of Viet Nam, which is committed to the aid effectiveness agenda and takes the ideas of reducing transaction costs and government ownership very seriously; the bilateral donors, many of which see no role for the UN at the country level in the post-Paris world; and the World Bank, which is increasingly a grant-making institution encroaching on terrain that had previously been considered the natural domain of the United Nations.

We argue that in order to achieve these objectives UN agencies[154] must pool their resources and establish a unified management structure at the country level. We must slim down administration and management of our county representation and establish governance structures that emphasise accountability and professionalism. Agencies should redirect technical capacity from agency headquarters and regional centres to country offices. We must focus our activities on core UN values and goals and not compete with donors and government in areas in which we have no comparative advantage. In short, we need One United Nations at the country level.

… country office reform cannot take place without radical change in both regions and headquarters.

The experience of United Nations reform thus far suggests that change at the country level must be guided by three core principles. These principles are i) the organisation must establish clear lines of accountability and governance structures conducive to efficient and effective management; ii) country office finances must be unified; and iii) technical capacity must be concentrated in developing countries and not in headquarters or in regional offices. We believe that each of these principles is vital to successful reform, and compromising any of them would reduce the effectiveness of the reformed country programme.

Authors: Jesper Morch & Jordan Ryan, Representative, UNICEF Viet Nam and United Nations Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative, Viet Nam, respectively

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[154] *We include Funds and Programmes of the United Nations under the term agencies.*

Box 2   Report by the High Level Panel "Delivering as One" 2006

(***Covering letter***) Our proposals encompass a framework for a <u>unified and coherent UN structure</u> at the country level. These are matched by more coherent governance, funding and management arrangements at the centre.

One UN for development - at country level
We recommend the establishment of One UN at country level, with <u>one leader, one programme, one budget and, where appropriate, one office.</u>
To bring about real progress towards the MDGs and other internationally agreed development goals, we believe that the UN System needs to "deliver as one" at the country level. To <u>focus on outcomes and improve its effectiveness</u>, the UN should accelerate and deepen reforms to establish unified UN country teams—with <u>one leader, one programme, one budgetary framework and where appropriate one office</u>. To deliver as one, UN country teams should also have an <u>integrated capacity</u> to provide a coherent approach to <u>cross-cutting issues</u>, including sustainable development, gender equality and human rights.[155] [156]

Box 3 Harmonisation of UNDG Agencies: Towards One United Nations in Viet Nam (February/June 2006)

Two or more tracks
This proposed approach applies at the moment to UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF only. These represent the UNDG ExCom agencies represented in Viet Nam. These three agencies are already joined by a set of shared UNDG procedures and practices. However, the approach is broadly supported by the UN Country Team as a whole. Non-ExCom agencies that are unable to participate in the first stages of this roadmap recognise the benefits for their agencies and for the objectives of the UN as a whole of a more consolidated UN Country Team. They have stated their hope that at a later stage they might be in a position to join with the ExCom agencies in a harmonised structure.

Components of the roadmap
There are four main areas in which harmonisation will be pursued, leading to the <u>transformation of the three agencies into one agency</u> by the end of 2007. These four areas can be described succinctly as <u>one plan, one budget, one management and one set of management practices</u>.

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[155] *"*Delivering as One*" Report of the High Level Panel on System-Wide Coherence to the UN Secretary General 2006*
[156] *The TOR for this evaluation commented further that 'This essential aim of the DaO initiative is the central reference for any related evaluations. The report of the High Level Panel also brought to the fore the need for the UN to gradually move away from traditional service delivery and project implementation towards <u>high quality policy advice and advocacy</u>.' (Background, second paragraph)*

Box 4 Agreed Principles, Objectives and Instruments to achieve One United Nations in Viet Nam (May 2006)[157]

Objectives

The main objectives of One United Nations in Viet Nam are:
1. To increase the <u>capacity of the United Nations ExCom agencies</u> in Viet Nam and the <u>efficiency and efficacy of its development activities and initiatives</u>, and to enable these UN agencies to fulfil its mandate more effectively.
2. To establish One United Nations in Viet Nam based on <u>the unification of management, budgets, programmes and management practices</u>.
3. To achieve one management structure in the second half of 2006; one programme and one budget preferably by the end of 2006; and one set of management practices to be introduced immediately and concluded preferably by the end of 2007.
4. To have a <u>single physical location</u> for the United Nations in Viet Nam as desired by the United Nations agencies preferably by the end of 2007, contingent upon the necessary financial, technical and administrative conditions.
5. To carry out the commitments contained in the UNDAF and the CPDs and CPAPs of the individual agencies, achieving synergies and efficiencies through the unification of governance structures and procedures.
6. To establish <u>unified management practices</u> to simplify planning, reporting and evaluation, and increase accountability.
7. To review the legal documents governing the relationship between the Government of Viet Nam and the United Nations Development Group Executive Committee members represented in Viet Nam.

The three UN Development Group Executive Committee (ExCom) agencies represented in Viet Nam—UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF—felt that a unified management structure and programme was within reach. In early 2006 the UNCT agreed on a 'two track' approach, in which agencies ready to join the unified structure could do so immediately, while the specialized agencies would opt in or out depending on their specific circumstances and within their own time frames.

Box 5 UNDG Website, 1 February 2007

Announcement of the eight 'One UN Pilots' by Kemal Davis in his role as the Chair of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG).

The "One UN" pilots will test how the UN family can <u>deliver in a more coordinated way</u> at the country level. The objective is to ensure <u>faster and more effective development operations</u> and accelerate progress to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by establishing a <u>consolidated UN presence</u> - with <u>one programme</u> and <u>one budgetary framework</u> and an <u>enhanced role of the UN Resident Coordinator</u> - while building on the strengths and comparative advantages of the different members of the UN family.

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[157] *Approved by the Office of the Government Ref. No.: 2749/VPCP-QHQT, 24 May 2006*

Box 6 Agreed Principles, Objectives and Instruments to achieve One United Nations in Viet Nam (January 2008)

Objectives

The main objectives of One UN Initiative in Viet Nam are:

1. To increase the <u>effectiveness and efficiency of the UN participating organisations</u> in Viet Nam and the quality of its development activities and initiatives to promote value added, and a cohesive policy voice in the social economic context Viet Nam faces.
2. To provide the highest quality policy, economic and technical advice to the Government and people of Vietnam using all the available resources of the UN system and respecting the particular stated mandates of the UN Organizations and thereby avoiding overlap and duplication of action.
3. To achieve <u>harmonisation of management, budgets, programmes and management practices</u>.
4. To finalise the draft One Plan 2 and draft One Budget 2 for 14 Participating UN Organisations within the first quarter 2008.
5. To finalize the Harmonized Programme/Project Management Guidelines (HPPMG) by UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA, which is part of the One set of Management Practices, within the first quarter 2008. Other participating UN Organisations are invited to join as observers and requested to consider joining (elements of) HPPMG over time.
6. To refurbish the UN Apartment Building as an eco-friendly UN House – <u>a single physical location</u> for the United Nations in Viet Nam by mid 2009, contingent upon the necessary financial, technical and administrative conditions.
7. To carry out the commitments contained in the SEDP, UNDAF and the programmes of the individual participating UN organisation, through the implementation of the One Plan, and to maximise synergies and efficiencies through harmonisation of governance structures and procedures at country level.
8. To <u>establish harmonised and ultimately unified management practices</u> that will simplify planning, reporting, monitoring and evaluation, and increase accountability.
9. To review and update the basic legal documents governing the relationship between the Government of Viet Nam and the UN organisations represented in Viet Nam as many of these documents were dated many years ago.

Box 7 One Plan 2 June 2008

[Introductory text (page 7)] Five pillars of the UN reform process in Viet Nam
(a) the formulation of <u>one programme</u> and
(b) <u>one budget</u> (together called "One Plan") in order to <u>promote greater synergy and complementarity</u> among the Participating UN Organizations;
(c) <u>unifying management</u> for <u>greater coherence</u> and <u>strengthened accountability</u>;
(d) developing a <u>harmonized set of management practices</u> to simplify planning, reporting and evaluation, and increase accountability; and
(e) ascertaining a <u>single physical location</u> for the UN Organizations in Hanoi;

[Section IV.1 Core Functions of the One UN] (*extracts*)

72. The UN has a convening role which will only be enhanced by a harmonized United Nations. This role contributes substantially to operationalizing the Ha Noi Core Statement and ensuring a broad basis for the development process in Viet Nam. The One UN will particularly step up its role in aid coordination, including helping to strengthen national capacity for a more nationally-driven aid effectiveness agenda and support for implementation of the Ha Noi Core Statement.

73. In addition, the impartial nature of support provided by the UN allows assistance to be targeted to more sensitive areas of Viet Nam's transition to middle-income status.

74. Helping Government agencies to strengthen capacity to implement the SEDP and (some) related sector and local strategies and plans is a shared objective of all UN Organizations in Viet Nam. The One UN will identify synergies and opportunities to work together and focus efforts.

75. At the country level, the Participating UN Organizations have a role in <u>promoting global norms and standards</u>, and in supporting monitoring and implementation of these standards in accordance with national laws and international laws and Conventions to which Viet Nam has acceded. As One UN, <u>this role will be enhanced</u> as UN Organizations will be better able to work together to improve advocacy and capacity development efforts at brokering the attainment of global norms and standards at the country level.

76. The One UN will also be a more effective participant in providing support to policy discussions in Viet Nam and a more powerful advocate of UN principles and values if its efforts are better harmonized. Increasing the consistency and coherence of policy advice and advocacy will enable the UN to speak with one voice, and will also create space for individual UN Organizations to take a more proactive approach in agency-specific policy areas.

ANNEX E TIMELINE AND KEY DOCUMENTS

	EVENT	DOCUMENT
2005		
September	Initiated the One UN Discussion in Viet Nam	'UN Reform: A Country Perspective'- Paper by Jordan Ryan and Jesper Morch (16/09/2005) Avian And Human Pandemic Influenza Joint Government/United Nations System Programme Phase I (10/2005-7/2006)
December	Consultative Group Meeting, 6-7 December, Hanoi	Statement by the United Nations Country Team
2006		
January		
February	Roadmap towards One UN (21/02/2006 –revised 23/06/2006	Vietnam SEDP 2001-2010
March	Tripartite National Task Force (TNTF) established in early 2006	
April		
May	Approval of the agreed principles of 2006… The agreement by the Prime Minister issued in May 2006 that UN reform is a voluntary process that started with UNDP, UNPFA and UNICEF, later joined by UNV, UNAIDS and UNIFEM	Agreed principles, objectives and instruments to achieve One UN in Viet Nam (18/05/2006) Letter DPM Vu Khoan re: Approval of the 2006 Agreed Principles (24/05/2006).
June		
July		
August		Avian And Human Pandemic Influenza Joint Government/United Nations System Programme- Phase II
September		
October		
November		
December	One UN Communications Team (initially for 3 agencies: UNDP, UNPFA and UNICEF)	One UN Comms Team- One One Voice ;

2007		
January	9/1/2007- confirmation of Vietnam selected as 'One UN' pilot by Mr. Kemal Dervis, Chair of UN Development Group	
February	UNCT retreat resulted in a broad roadmap for an inclusive One Plan with empowered RC as CEO	
March		
April	UNAIDS and UNV joined the One UN Communications Team	
May		
June	One Plan Fund established June 12 2007, a special session of the Tripartite National Task Force took place to discuss the One Plan Regular Townhall meetings as a forum for dialogue are planned. The first Townhall meeting in Viet Nam, in which several hundred staff participated, took place in June 2007. Mid-term Consultative Group Meeting, June 2007	One UN Initiative in Viet Nam, Success Criteria Joint Statement of the United Nations Country Team
July	One Plan 1: 2006-2010 In partnership with UNEP and UNDG WGCP, a joint mission mid 2007 established the technical feasibility of One UN House	MEWG Meeting (Hanoi Club Retreat-Suggested M&E mechanism for reporting lines and review meetings)
August	One Plan 1 signed by GOV and UN rep, August 23, 2007	One Plan 2006-2010 (for 6 UN Agencies) signed OPSC TOR approved by PM on 15 July 2007 – PM Decision no. 916 QD/TTg]
September	Decision to enlarge One Plan 1 with additional UN Agencies (IFAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, FAO, WHO, UNODC and UN Habitat) Decision to develop One Plan 2 (for all 14 UN agencies)- September 2007 UN Retreat	Letter Vice Minister MPI to UNDG Chair (15/06/2007 UN Delivering as One: -Capacity Assessment for Viet Nam
October		MEWG Meeting MoU and TOR for one leader (RC)
November	UNEG Evaluability study mission; TNTF meeting on implementation of One UN	UNEG Report; minutes of the meeting of the TNTF MEWG meeting (Moon River Retreat)
December	UNCT retreat in early December 2007	2007 One Plan Annual Report (Implementation of One Plan from

		August 23- December 31)
		UN Communications Team -1-Year Retreat – Summary Note, 5-6 December 2007
		2007 Annual report of One UN Communication team- With one voice;
		Code of Conduct and Terms of Reference for the UNCT
2008		
January	Agreed principles, objectives and instruments to achieve One UN in Viet Nam (2008-2010)	Final draft 24/01/2008 (This revision was prepared as a step in a process but not officially approved by GoV).
		Minutes Meeting of MEWG
		UN Consolidated Programme of Action on HIV in Viet Nam 2008 - 2010
February	HPPMG second draft with only 3 agencies (UNDP, UNPFA, UNICEF)	Light Review of PCGs Meeting Minutes of MEWG
March		
April	MoU for RC signed and reviewed by October	Final OPMP, 2007-2010- 16 April 2008;
May	UN communication change proposal	Continuing change: 18 months taking the next step with purpose –April 2008
	May 2008, the Joint Donor Assessment of the One Plan	
	Staff Survey	Staff Survey Report
June	One Plan 2 (2006-2010) signed by GoV and UN	One plan, 2006-2010 Between GOV and 14 UN agencies, June 2008
	Results Framework for the Reform Process final draft (13 June 2008);	Report of One plan Annual 2008;
		Tripartite Meeting on the One UN Initiative Success Criteria
July		
August		The Management and Accountability System of the UN RC system, including the Functional Firewall for the RC system
September		2007 One Plan Annual Report (September 2007-June 2008), dated Sept 2008;
		First Meeting of the Delivering as One M&E Network (Tam Dao, Viet Nam)
October	Establishment of ÓPSC	Guidance Note PCG Annual Review and Planning Process 2008-2009

November		Delivering as One on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, Workshop 11/2008
December	Consultative Group Meeting, 6-7 December, Hanoi	2008 One Plan Annual Report One Plan Fund Mobilisation and Allocation Committee Terms of Reference Gender Audit Report, 4/12/2008 Sustaining and Furthering Social Development
2009		
January		
February		
March	Signing of MDGF-1694 Joint Programme on Gender Equality	Stocktaking report 2008
April		MEWG Meeting Minutes One Plan Steering Committee (OPSC) strategic criteria and guiding principles for allocation from One Plan Fund (OPF) – approved 13/4/2009
May	TNTF Meeting (visit UN DSG)	Stakeholder survey (final report) Tripartite Meeting Presentation - Results Framework for the Reform Process Annual Workplan 2009 and revised TOR of MEWG MEWG Meeting Minutes Climate Change and Gender
June		Change management story of communication team in Viet Nam UN Comms workplan and Strategy, Mid-Year Review reports of PCG MEWG Planning Meeting Report, Presentation
July	Gender Mainstreaming Report approved by UNCT	2008 One Plan Annual Report UNCT Gender Main streaming Strategy, 2009-2011
August		MEWG Meeting Minutes
September	RBM Trainings for PCGs (21-24 Sept 2009) UNCT meeting on PCGs Meeting, 25 September 2009	RBM training outline, program and list of participants PCG review meeting documents (including presentation at the meeting; PCG TORs (2009 and 2008)

		PCG 3, 4, 6 ,10 reports in 2009
October	UNCT workshop on OPF allocation model (23/11/09)	GUIDANCE NOTE- PCG Annual Review, Reporting and Planning Process 2009-2010
November	GACA-UN Meeting on PCGs (25 Nov 2009)	Independent Evaluation of PCG; SEDP, 2011-2015 draft document? MEWG Meeting Minutes
December	OPFMAC 2010 allocation meeting (15/12/09) Signing of MDGF-2007 Joint Programme on Integrated Nutrition and Food Securities Strategies for Children and Vulnerable Groups in Viet Nam and MDGF-2065 Joint Programme on Green Production and Trade to increase Employment Opportunities to for the Rural Poor	Joint Programme on Food and Nutrition (PD) MDG Joint Programme on Green Production and Trade MDG Gender Equity

Annex F PCG Structures

Original structure for 11 Programme Coordination Groups 2008-2009

ONE PLAN OUTCOME	PROGRAMMATIC-RESULTS CLUSTERS (ONE PLAN)	PCGS	CO-CONVENERS
1	1. Social Policy & Social Security 2. Public Financial Management 3. Population and Development Policies	1. Social and Development Policies	UNDP UNICEF
1	4. International Trade Policy 5. Employment and Enterprise Development	2. Trade, Employment and Enterprise Development	ILO UNIDO
1 2	6. HIV Policy 7. HIV Services	3. HIV	UNAIDS
1 2 4	(1) Social Policy & Social Security (7) HIV Services (19) PAR and Legal Capacity Building	4. Gender	UNFPA UNIFEM
2	8. Non-communicable Diseases, Injury Prevention and Health Promotion 9. Family Health and Nutrition 10. Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights 11. Environmental Health 12. Health System Strengthening	5. Health and Reproductive Rights	UNFPA WHO
2	13. Protection Services	6. Protection	UNICEF UNODC
2	14. Education	7. Education	UNESCO UNICEF
3	15. Sustainable Development policies and Institutional Development 16. Natural Resource Management 17. Rural Development 18. Energy and Environment	8. Sustainable Development	FAO UNESCO
4	19. PAR and Legal Capacity Building 20. Representation & Democratization 21. Local Integrated Services for Children	9. Governance	UNDP UNODC
5	22. Disaster Risk Reduction, Emergency Preparedness and Response	10. Natural Disasters and emergencies	UNDP UNICEF
5	23. Communicable Diseases, Zoonoses and other Animal Diseases	11. Communicable diseases and animal diseases	FAO WHO

Revised structure for eight Programme Coordination Groups 2010-

PCGS	PROGRAMMATIC-RESULTS CLUSTERS (ONE PLAN)	ONE PLAN OUTCOME	GOV CO-CONVENERS	UN CO-CONVENERS
Social and Economic Development Policies	• Social Policy & Social Security • Public Financial Management • Population and Development Policies • International Trade Policy • Employment and Enterprise Development • Protection Services: Social Welfare Policies	1	MPI	UNICEF
Health	• Non-communicable Diseases, Injury Prevention and Health Promotion • Family Health and Nutrition • Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights • Environmental Health • Health System Strengthening • Communicable Diseases, Zoonoses and Animal Diseases	2, 5	MOH	WHO
Education	• Education	2	MOET	UNESCO
Sustainable Development	• Sustainable Development policies and Institutional Development • Natural Resource Management • Rural Development • Energy and Environment	3	MONRE	FAO
Governance	• PAR and Legal Capacity Building • Representation & Democratization • Local Integrated Services for Children • Protection Services: Drug Prevention and Treatment	4	MOJ	UNDP
Disaster management	• Disaster Risk Reduction, Emergency Preparedness and Response	5	MARD	UNDP
HIV	• HIV Policies • HIV Services	1,2	OOG	UNAIDS
Gender	• Social Policy & Social Security • HIV Services • PAR and Legal Capacity Building • Representation & Democratization	1,2,4	MOLISA	UNIFEM

ANNEX G OPF PROGRAMME ALLOCATION

Table 1 One Plan Fund allocation criteria 2010

A. ELIGIBILITY				
6-7				
3-5.5	ASSESSMENT			
0-2.5				

Quality of analysis and programming		Indicator	Points	
1	The Funding Request supports results that are part of the One Plan 2006-2010 and are based on sound analysis.	The Funding Request links proposed deliverables directly to the One Plan 2006-2010 Results and Resources Framework within a timeline and including programme indicators with available baselines, targets and means of verification.	1	1
Financial considerations		**Indicator**	**Points**	
2	The Funding Request is realistic and based on earlier delivery experiences.	The Funding Request does not exceed 120% of the planned expenditure of the previous year.	1	2
3		The Funding Request includes financial and human resources allocation for operational, quality assurance and monitoring and evaluation activities and costs.	1	
Capacity		**Indicator**	**Points**	
4	UN Agencies and the Implementing Partner responsible for the achievement of outputs have the capacity to deliver on the funds	The Funding Request outlines contribution to policy development to address issues concerning Viet Nam's emerging MIC status.	1	4
5		The Funding Request includes 'readiness to implement' evidence including: from the UN - sufficient current expertise to deliver projected results and implementation structure in place; and from the Implementing Partner/s - confirmation of project/programme approval as appropriate.	1	
6		The Funding Request clearly articulates collaboration with other UN agencies, including, where applicable, technical division of labour.	1	
7		The Funding Request does not include additional UN regular staff costs.	1	
Total number of Eligibility points:				**7**

B. PROGRAMME PRIORITY		
8-10		
4-7.5	**ASSESSMENT**	
0-3.5		

National priorities		**Indicator**	**Points**	
8	The Funding Request supports deliverables that are explicitly tied to national development priorities and those highlighted by the OPSC; and clearly identifies the manner in which the UN plans to support these priorities.	The Funding Request links the proposed deliverables directly to priorities identified in national development strategies (including sub-national and sectoral plans), the MDGs, other international treaty obligations, and highlighted by the OPSC.	1	2
9		The Funding Request clearly outlines the UN's role in supporting the Government to realize its development priorities.	1	

UN's comparative advantage and cross-cutting issues		**Indicator**	**Points**	
10	The Funding Request is based on areas of UN comparative advantage and key cross-cutting issues in Viet Nam.	The Funding Request supports identified gaps towards achieving the MDGs, particularly at sub-national levels.	1	8
11		The Funding Request supports emerging areas not being addressed by Government and donors.	1	
12		The Funding Request supports institutional, organizational or human capacity development initiatives.	1	
13		The Funding Request supports deliverables aimed at environmental sustainability (including climate change).	1	
14		The Funding Request includes an analysis of the gender differentials for target beneficiaries and a strategy to promote gender equality.	1	
15		The Funding Request complies with the Human Rights Based Approach, identifying and targeting rights holders and duty bearers.	1	
16		The Funding request demonstrates support for Viet Nam's cultural heritage.	1	
17		The Funding Request demonstrates alignment to the Hanoi Core Statement on Aid Effectiveness.	1	
Total number of Programme Priority points:				**10**

C. PERFORMANCE	
4	
3-3.5	**ASSESSMENT**
0-2.5	

Financial Resources		Indicator	Points	
18	Annual Deliverables	For ongoing programmes, at least 80% of outputs in the previous year have been 'completed' as evidenced in timely results reporting by Agencies.	**2**	**2**

Annual Deliverables		Indicator	Points	
19	Delivery rates of previous programme cycle	Previous year reporting indicates a consistent delivery rate with >40% of the available annual work plan budget delivered by the end of June and forecast delivery to exceed 90% by the end of December.	**2**	**2**
Total number of Performance points:			2	

Table 2

One Plan II funding framework (2008-2010) - Regular, Non-OPF and OPF Resources

Figures as at 31 Dec. 2009 (updated at 17 May)

Unit: USD

AGENCY	Actual 2008			Best estimate 2009			Planned 2010			Total (2008-2010)			
	Regular	Non-OPF	OPF	Regular	Non-OPF	OPF	Regular	Non-OPF	OPF	Regular	Non-OPF	OPF	Total
FAO	421,431	4,342,572	0	1,301,707	5,259,785	560,213	523,669	11,716,687	2,094,198	2,246,807	21,319,044	2,654,411	26,220,262
IFAD		30,000	0		653,000	0		810,000	0	0	1,493,000	0	1,493,000
ILO	495,268	2,824,969	0	470,000	6,060,000	176,330	405,000	8,975,000	3,149,670	1,370,268	17,859,969	3,326,000	22,556,237
UNAIDS	115,000	450,000	707,270	109,000	635,000	572,450	116,975	630,625	393,118	340,975	1,715,625	1,672,838	3,729,438
UNDP	5,481,151	10,431,635	4,157,390	6,562,657	6,436,349	5,783,864	6,330,050	7,337,506	9,585,871	18,373,858	24,205,490	19,527,125	62,106,473
UNESCO	246,872	834,379	0	367,047	1,467,467	369,733	319,000	849,469	1,402,447	932,919	3,151,315	1,772,180	5,856,414
UNFPA	3,497,896	920,969	2,508,882	3,809,587	1,246,889	2,333,080	4,000,000	1,661,752	2,681,881	11,307,483	3,829,610	7,523,843	22,660,936
UNHABITAT	547,160	150,000	0	753,363	20,000	104,117	963,075	345,000	845,883	2,263,598	515,000	950,000	3,728,598
UNICEF	3,739,222	7,765,675	4,925,282	3,922,024	5,670,258	8,000,235	3,610,000	7,544,124	10,660,497	11,271,246	20,980,057	23,586,014	55,837,317
UNIDO	647,096	5,049,986	0	66,433	3,601,698	535,507	0	5,626,521	2,374,493	713,529	14,278,205	2,910,000	17,901,734
UNIFEM	20,000	324,250	0	106,000	350,407	0	140,000	372,291	550,000	266,000	1,046,948	550,000	1,862,948
UNODC	145,300	1,455,400	0	94,274	1,735,488	29,091	82,400	2,319,600	2,284,341	321,974	5,510,488	2,313,432	8,145,894
UNV	717,449	122,795	61,893	708,180	237,401	214,099	849,930	77,500	347,466	2,275,559	437,696	623,458	3,336,713
WHO	1,155,644	6,895,323	0	3,410,419	11,018,418	1,006,812	2,178,600	10,570,615	4,491,592	6,744,663	28,484,356	5,498,404	40,727,423
TOTAL	17,229,489	41,597,953	12,360,717	21,680,691	44,392,160	19,685,531	19,518,699	58,836,690	40,861,457	58,428,879	144,826,803	72,907,705	276,163,387

Source: Administrative Agent, "One Plan II funding framework (2006-2010) - Table A and Table B".