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UNEG Evaluation of the Pilot Initiative for Delivering as One

Evaluability of UN Reform Process in Viet Nam

Evaluability Assessment Mission (29.10.-2.11.2007)

Final Report

21 December 2007

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Acronyms

CEB	Chief Executive Board
DaO	Delivering as One
GACA	Government Aid Coordinating Agencies
GOVN	Government
HPPMG	Harmonised Programme/Project Management Guidelines
HoA	Heads of Agencies
UNCT	United Nations country team
DaO	Delivering as One
LMDG	Like Minded Donor Group
Loa	Letter of Agreement
MEWG	Monitoring and Evaluation Working Group
MTR	Mid-term Review
NRA	Non-resident UN agencies
OB	One Budget
OP 1	One Plan 1
OP 2	One Plan 2
OPF	One Plan Fund
OPMP	One Plan Management Plan
RC	United Nations Resident Coordinator
RCO	Resident Coordinator Office
TCPR	Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities of the United Nations Development System
TNTF	Tripartite National Task Force
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
VTN	Viet Nam

Executive Summary

1. This report presents the first evaluability assessment of UN reform, which is taking place in the eight countries designated as pilot countries under the "Delivering as One" initiative. It is based on a desk study and a subsequent mission, which visited Viet Nam from 29 October through 2 November 2007 where the mission had an intensive series of meetings with the Government, the UN country team, Heads of Agencies, staff of the Resident Coordinator's office, and donors. Moreover, the chief of the mission visited Bangkok where he met with UNICEF Regional Directors and Deputy Regional Directors (based in Bangkok and Nepal respectively), with the Regional Director of FAO and with the evaluation section of ESCAP. The mission consisted of two consultants, Ms. Alison King and Mr. Kees Tuinenburg. Mr. Jean Quesnel, Director of the UNICEF Evaluation Office and Co-Chair of the UNEG Management Group, overseeing the evaluation of the "Delivering as One" pilots, joined the mission towards the end. The mission was fortunate to be invited to participate in the meeting of the Tripartite National Task Force, which met Friday afternoon, 2 November. During the meeting, Mr. Jean Quesnel presented the overall context and design of the evaluation carried out by UNEG as well as on change management. The mission made a power point presentation of its preliminary observations about UN reform in Viet Nam as well as of evaluability.

2. The mission wishes to convey its sincere thanks to Ms Kitty van der Heijden, Head of the RCO and Senior Adviser on UN Reform and Mr. Joachim Aquino-Aleman, Planning and Development Results Officer (RCO), for the outstanding support they provided during a very intense period. We also thank Mr. John Hendra, UN Resident Coordinator, and all the Heads of Agencies and their staff for the precious time they gave to the mission. We hope that our contribution will be useful to the UN reform process in Viet Nam.

3. Since the " Delivering as One" initiative was initiated early 2007 only, the crucial question facing the evaluability mission was to assess whether there was sufficient progress made in Viet Nam to allow for a meaningful evaluation of process, planned to take place as from mid-2008. As defined in the TORs for this report, evaluability is a "technical assessment of the basic parameters that will make it possible to fully evaluate at a later stage both the results of the programmes and of the pilots, and of the processes that will lead to these results", and should include an "initial appraisal of processes".

4. As the report will show, the short answer is that progress in Viet Nam has been impressive, that the process is well documented and that many of the parameters are or will be in place to allow for a meaningful evaluation of process and the drawing of important lessons for the evaluation of Delivering as One which is expected to start in mid-2008. However, as the mission witnessed, the further operationalization of reform was encountering major challenges now that 8 new agencies were joining the initiative. While there was clarity of intent among the three ExCom agencies (UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF) and the three agencies (UNIFEM, UNAIDS and UNV) that subsequently joined the initiative in 2007, it was realized that what prevented the UN system in Viet Nam from agreeing on important issues was the lack of a common vision among all 14 agencies of what the end product of the reform would look like. Intensive discussions are now taking place in order to agree on a common vision, a prerequisite for achieving substantial further progress.

5. Regardless of the above, the mission has observed the beginnings of different ways of programmatic collaboration between agencies in some thematic groups that have already been set up, through several joint programmes (AIDS, Avian influenza, the JP on Kon Tum, gender, and youth) as well as in the newly set up UN Communication Team. On the funding side, a number of donors, the so-called "like-minded" donors are now financially supporting the One Plan Fund, rather than funding individual projects and agencies.

6. UN reform in Viet Nam, which predates the "Delivering as One" initiative, has its origins in the March 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and particularly in the Hanoi Core Statement on Aid Effectiveness of July 2005, bringing together the Government and its development partners. In September 2005, the then Resident Coordinator and the current UNICEF Representative presented a visionary perspective on reform in Viet Nam. The One UN Initiative effectively started in February 2006 with a road map calling for One Management, One Plan, One Budget, and One set of Management Practices, to which the One UN House was later added.

7. While all UN agencies in Viet Nam signed the UNDAF 2006-2010, not all agencies were ready to collaborate and coordinate their efforts in the formulation of a One Plan. The One Plan finally only brought together UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA which were later joined by UNV, UNAIDS and UNIFEM. Given the political momentum following the publication of

the HLP report and the designation of Viet Nam as one of the pilot countries, time was ripe for the other agencies (mainly the specialized UN agencies) to join the UN reform process as full partners. At this moment, all agencies in Viet Nam (with the exception of UNHCR and IOM) are engaged in the reform efforts, including in the formulation of an enlarged One Plan. As it transpired during the week the mission was in Viet Nam, progress seems to be stalled because in elaborating the necessary instruments it became clear that there was no consensus about what the end product would be. At the risk of simplification, the mission concluded that while the original six agencies were aiming at One UN, the agencies joining later were thinking of "Delivering as One". While it is possible for an evaluation to undertake an assessment of progress (on a number of accounts considerable progress as been made), the ultimate question for an evaluation to answer is whether the process is on track and whether progress is being made towards a clearly identified end result, specified in time. Moreover, if UN reform is to engage all UN agencies in Viet Nam, it is, therefore, crucial that there will be clarity of intent of what the UN reform in Viet Nam is about that is subscribed to and owned by all UN agencies. In the absence of this, it is difficult to make substantial progress with the elaboration of an operational Plan.

8. An important aspect of reform is change management. This applies to attitudes of the people engaged in reform but also to whether agencies and New York (i.e. UNDG and the CEB and its working groups) are willing to change and/or to allow the countries the necessary space for piloting. It is also possible that those engaged in UN reform on the ground have not given themselves the sufficient space for piloting either. The evaluation should certainly assess the parameters for piloting, which implies that things are being done in new unexplored ways. References have been made of decisions made late or not at all that were beyond the authority of (members of) the UNCT and depended on HQs, UNDG and the CEB,   In terms of evaluability, it would be useful to record these events. It would be equally useful for the UNCT to map the key decisions that have to be taken by agencies and at the systemic level over time. An important issue that was mentioned and which should be assessed is the extent to which knowledge of UN reform and willingness to change within that context is a criterium in the selection process of staff.

9. All stakeholders interviewed made reference to the extraordinary investments in staff time involved in the reform process (which raises the question of opportunity costs), which as was reported must have come at the expense of something else. Smaller agencies were receiving

support in the form of short- and long-term staff to work on UN reform. A reduction in transaction costs and efficiency gains have always been at the centre of UN reform and figured highly in the Government's comments during the mission. This subject was also raised by donors and Heads of Agencies, the latter being afraid that there was a risk of transferring transaction costs from the Government to the UN.

10. While it would be too early for the evaluation to fully assess the occurrence of savings resulting from doing business in a different way, at some point in the future the evaluation will have to assess investment costs, ideally in relation to a future pay-off when the new management practices are in place, hopefully reflected in lower and sustainable transactions costs. The mission observed that the subject of efficiency gains was not prominently present in the documentation reviewed or in the design of the M&E. It is suggested that the M&E system keeps track of the investment costs, i.e. opportunity costs and additional costs (staff time) as well as support missions irrespective of which budget provides for these missions and missions undertaken by staff in Viet Nam related to UN reform, perhaps on a trimestrial basis including surveys. Part of the costs of the RCO should also be included. Regarding targets, it would be opportune to try to quantify future savings in overhead and administration, based on a cost-benefit study as is being done for the One UN House. It is suggested that to develop a suitable methodology for measuring benefits is a useful area for support from UNDG.

11. Regarding the M&E system for the monitoring of progress in terms of programmatic impact and of the reform process itself, the mission has noted that good progress is being made. A One Plan 1 (2006-2010) Monitoring and Evaluation Framework has been developed, the MEWG has been expanded to include the new 8 agencies, the RCO has been strengthened with a Planning and Development Results Officer, process indicators for the One UN initiative have been identified, in addition to several other elements, including roadmaps, an action plan to deliver management results, and success indicators, as well as the Ha Noi action plan, some of them with benchmarks, targets, and timelines, but certainly not all. It is strongly suggested that time has come to prepare a comprehensive paper incorporating all the above elements. Apart from specifying indicators, targets and timelines for the five "Ones", two overarching issues could be mentioned upfront, i.e. the overall objectives of UN reform in Viet Nam, and secondly the matter of efficiency and cost savings.

12. Given the short duration of the mission and the meeting of the TNTF, it was not possible to meet with the MEWG or to arrive at a considered conclusion about when the M&E system would be fully operational, but it is expected that this will be in time before the DoA process evaluation beginning mid 2008. It is understood that UNDG will provide further support to M&E in January 2008.

FULL REPORT – MAIN TEXT

Chapter 1.   Introduction

In November 2006, the UN Secretary-General's High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment published its report entitled "Delivering as One" (DaO). Building on the 2004 TCPR, the report recommends that, in order to become more coherent, effective and efficient in the area of development, the UN system needs to "deliver as One" at the country level, "with one leader, one programme, one budgetary framework and, where appropriate, one office".

The report goes on to recommend the establishment of 5 One UN country pilots by 2007, and, subject to "continuous positive assessment, demonstrated effectiveness and proven results", 20 by 2009, 40 by 2010 and, where appropriate, expansion to all others by 2012. By February 2007, 8 countries, which had voluntarily expressed their intention to participate, were officially designated at pilot countries: i.e. Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uruguay and Viet Nam.

Two months later, in preparation for the recommended roll-out, the Chief Executive Board (CEB) called on the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) to undertake an evaluation of the eight pilots, which, in the first instance, would focus on progress, to be followed at a later date by an evaluation of results and impact on the ground. Subsequently, the UNEG decided on a three-phase approach: (i) an assessment of the evaluability of DaO by March 2008 at country and UN systemic levels; (ii) an independent process evaluation of the pilot experience to be completed by September 2009[1]; and (iii) an independent evaluation of the results and impacts of the pilot experience by September 2011 (see Annex I for more details).

The UNEG launched the first phase of the evaluation – the evaluability assessment – in October 2007 with the fielding of a first evaluability assessment mission to Viet Nam (see Annex II for assessment mission ToR[2]). Serving as a test case, the three main purposes and objectives of the mission were to:

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[1] The Synthesis Report due in September 2009 will contribute to the preparation of the TCPR in 2010.
[2] The present ToR may be revised in the light of results from the first evaluability assessment mission.

(i)   assess whether and to what extent the DaO process in Viet Nam (VTN) can be meaningfully evaluated in 2008/2009;

(ii)   identify any shortcomings in order to inform corrective measures and improve readiness for the process evaluation; and

(iii)   learn from the VTN experience in terms of assessing the evaluability of the other pilot countries and designing the process evaluation.

A team of two consultants, Ms. Alison King (Zurich) and Mr. Kees Tuinenburg (Rome) prepared this report. It is based on a desk review of relevant documents (see Annex VI attached to this report) , followed by a mission to Viet Nam from 28 October through 2 November, which met with nearly all members of the UNCT[3], the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and like-minded donors (see Annex III for the mission programme). The mission concluded with a brief presentation of the UNEG evaluation and the assessment mission's preliminary findings to the Tripartite National Task Force (TNTF), a joint Government-UN-Donor Task Force on the One UN Initiative in VTN, which met on Friday 2 November (Annex IV).

We wish to convey our sincere thanks to Ms. Kitty van der Heijden, Head of the Resident Coordinator Office and Senior Advisor UN Reform, and Mr. Joaquin Gonzalez-Aleman, Planning and Development Results Officer, Office of the Resident Coordinator, for the outstanding support that they gave to the evaluability mission in a very intense week and period. We also thank Mr. John Hendra, UN Resident Coordinator, and all the HoA and UN reform focal points, for the precious time they gave to the mission. We hope that our contribution will be useful to the reform process.

The present technical report responds to the first two objectives of the mission (see above). At the outset, it considers the VTN specific context in which UN reforms are being pursued (Chapter 2). Chapter 3 then goes on to assess the evaluability of the VTN pilot in terms of four basic parameters that the UNEG has so far established to guide the evaluability assessment, i.e.:

a)   Quality of the conceptual design of the pilot for enhanced effectiveness and efficiency;

b)   Readiness of the M&E system;

c)   Optimal involvement of relevant national and international stakeholders; and

d)   Adequacy of information sources to evaluate the reform process.

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[3] The mission could not meet with IFAD and UNODC.

In doing so, the report presents the main strengths and suggests possible shortcomings in terms of preparing the One UN Initiative in VTN for the process evaluation in 2008/2009 and improving the One UN Initiative itself. Based on the findings in Chapter 3, Chapter 4 assesses whether there is an overall clear and sufficient basis for a future evaluation of the reform process (and effectiveness) in VTN.

Chapter 2.   Country Context

In Viet Nam (VTN), the Government (GOVN) clearly originated UN reforms, well before the Delivery as One report was published. The GOVN of VTN strongly promotes the aid effectiveness agenda and is a leader among developing countries in implementing the March 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness: Already in July 2005, the GOVN and its development partners agreed on the Hanoi Core Statement on Aid Effectiveness. Early this year, VTN joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) and, very recently, it was nominated to the UN Security Council. Viet Nam is expected to acquire low-level middle-income status within the next 2 years.

The GOVN of VTN has historically attached great importance to the country's relationship with the UN and has placed great trust in the organization's work and advice. The GOVN perceives a continued role for a strengthened UN to play in a developed VTN. In addition, it is very keen to reduce its transaction costs associated with aid delivery by 15 UN organizations present in Viet Nam, which count for a combined contribution of less than 2% of total ODA to the country.[4]

Those donors that make up the Like Minded Donor Group (LMDG), and who in view of VTN's rapid development and graduation to MIC status are gradually scaling back their presence, have shown a strong willingness to invest in the UN reform process in VTN, both in substance and financially. In doing so, they have been very clear that they "want to see a UN doing better with the same resources, not to enhance programme and staff levels".[5]

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[4] According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and WHO together are the financially strongest UN organizations in VTN. In recent years ODA has been averaging around 4 % of GDP in Viet Nam (World Bank); total ODA in 2006 amounted to US $ 4.5 billion.
[5] One UN in Vietnam, Donor Joint Assessment of the One Plan/One Plan Fund, Final Version, 12 June 2007.

Both the GOVN and the LMDG have clearly communicated that without successful and speedy reforms, the UN will cease to play a role in VTN, and that there will be no going back to "business as usual" in a fragmented and scattered way, based on individual project funding.

Chapter 3.   Main Mission Findings on the Evaluability of the Viet Nam Pilot

When assessing the evaluability of the VTN pilot, it is important to note that the ongoing UN reform process is not a consequence of the November 2006 High-level Panel Report. Rather, it dates back to the Hanoi Core Statement on Aid Effectiveness of July 2005, which was further elaborated in September 2005 in the context of the 2005 World Summit, when the then UN Resident Coordinator (RC) and the current UNICEF Representative presented their - visionary - perspective of United Nations reform in the country.[6]

The One UN Initiative in VTN effectively started in February 2006 with a Road Map[7] outlining the vision for the One UN reform process, and calling for One Management, One Plan, One Budget and One Set of Management Practices. The newly established TNTF, established for the purpose of monitoring and guiding the implementation of the One UN initiative, endorsed the Road Map, and used it as the basis for a set of Agreed Principles, Objectives and Instruments of One United Nations in Viet Nam[8]. According to the Agreed Principles, the GOVN intends to "strengthen the UN as a competent and effective partner of the GOVN of VTN in support of national development for the benefit of the people of VTN". This being said, the comparative advantages of the United Nations as formulated in 2006, and signed off on by the Prime Minister, are recognized to lie 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". This document also included the fifth objective of One House at the request of the GOVN.

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[6] Jorden Ryan & Jesper Morch: United Nations Reform: A Country Perspective, 16 September 2005.
[7] Harmonisation of UNDG Agencies: Towards One United Nations in Viet Nam, February 2006.
[8] Agreed Principles, Objectives and Instruments to Achieve One United Nations in Viet Nam, Final Version, 18 May 2006, established by the GOVN of VTN and UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA and approved by the TNTF and the Deputy Prime Minister in May 2006.

The One UN Initiative was initially confined to UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA, but open to others to join on a voluntary basis. UNV, UNAIDS and UNIFEM joined the One Plan late 2006. The remaining resident agencies (with the exception of UNHCR) joined the reform efforts during 2007 following the release of the DaO Report.

It is certain that UN reform in Viet Nam would have been vigorously pursued irrespective of the publication of the High-level Panel Report on "Delivering as One" and Viet Nam's designation as one of the 8 pilots[9]. In fact, while the HLP Report identifies four Ones, UN reform in Viet Nam is based on five elements i.e. One Plan, One Budget, One Set of Management Practices, One Leader and One UN House (see above). This mission report will, therefore, assess progress made in VTN in the light of UN reform as it has been defined within the country by Government, donors and the UN, rather than as described by the HLP.

Chapter 3 maps measures taken to support UN reform in VTN as well as observed strengths of the process in VTN for the forthcoming process evaluation. It also suggests possible shortcomings that the UNCT could address in preparation for the evaluation. The mission findings are grouped around the four above-mentioned basic parameters that the UNEG has so far established to guide the evaluability assessment.

a)   **Quality of the conceptual design of the pilot for enhanced coherence, effectiveness and efficiency**

Key Process Indicators	*Main Findings*
Strategic intent of the pilot	In order to be able to measure the success of the One UN Initiative in VTN, to agree upon what changes are required to deliver more coherently, effectively and efficiently and what that means for each UN agency, there needs to be one concise statement of intent. With 8 new agencies joining the original six, this does not seem to exist in VTN. When asked, different stakeholders referred to different documents. Moreover, there appeared to be two visions, i.e. "One UN" ("being One") and "Delivering as One" (a strategic alliance of individual agencies respectively). It was also the mission's impression that a number of interlocutors had personally diverging, and to some extent confuse (if not non-existent) views of the strategic intent of UN reforms in VTN.

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[9] The future evaluation should try to establish the impact of the publication of the „ Delivering as One" Report and the designation of Viet Nam as one of the 8 pilots on the reform process in Viet Nam as it evolved, also regarding the inclusiveness of the process.

	In terms of preparing for the UNEG process evaluation, we suggest that the UNCT (in consultation with others) take the necessary time to formulate a consolidated statement of intent going beyond 2010, which can be articulated both internally and externally.
One Plan	Stakeholders in VTN do not perceive the conceptual design of the original One Plan (OP1) 2006-2010[10] (a legally binding document) to have made a great deal of change in *what* the 6 originally participating agencies do in VTN since it combines the Country Programme Action Plans and Country Programme Documents as they had just been approved by the Boards of the three Excom agencies. Currently, the UNCT is working on a second version of the One Plan (OP2) to integrate the programmes, results and resources of the newly joining 8 agencies. In doing so, OP2 is not expected to become more strategic (views differ as to how strategic it already is), not to speak of more focused on system-wide priority areas and comparative advantages of the United Nations in view of VTN's rapid development. To measure development impact, the One Plan M&E Working Group has drafted a comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (MEF). In terms of the forthcoming process evaluation, we suggest that the One Plan in VTN (which the six original agencies are now beginning to implement) can surely be seen as one step towards greater coherence, but that, regarded as a transition document, it may not warrant an evaluation in 2008/2009 of whether the UN is doing the right things. This having been said, it will be important to monitor, and at some point evaluate, the flexibility of the system to – if and when necessary – include and reallocate existing resources for new priorities outside the context of the OP. Also, since the One UN Initiative deals only with the operational activities for development of the UN system in VTN, it may also be worthwhile, for learning purposes, to evaluate systems put in place to ensure coordination of the OP with the UN's humanitarian response as appropriate.
Strategic planning cycle	Both the UNDAF and the OP are aligned with the GOVN's planning cycle, 2006-2010. A Mid-Term Review of the UNDAF is tentatively scheduled for 2009. In terms of preparing for the forthcoming process evaluation, we suggest that the TNTF first focus on finalizing the OPMP (see below) and revising the Road Map and, but that it agree as soon as possible on a strategic planning process for the next cycle, including, most importantly a common situation analysis and a strategic refocusing of the UN mission. In this connection, we also suggest that the TNTF determine whether a need remains for having both an UNDAF and an OP as parallel planning instruments.
One Plan Management Plan (OPMP)	Whereas the OP defines *what* the UNCT in VTN is delivering, the One Plan Management Plan (OPMP) defines *how* it delivers the OP coherently, effectively and efficiently, and is important to understand how the UN will manage resources in future. The drafting of the OPMP has been a long and difficult process starting out with the original 6 agencies, and since very recently trying

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

	to link up to the newly joining 8 agencies, with the understanding that they should adhere to a (yet to be defined) "minimum compliance package". However, since the incoming agencies are not a homogenous group in terms of their understanding of the One UN Initiative, their expectations, real and perceived constraints, HQs support, degree of flexibility, etc., their involvement has inevitably delayed the finalization of the document. Running out of patience, the GOVN, at the 2 November TNTF meeting, therefore suggested that the OPMP at last be finalized for the original six. The successful translation of the OP into a Management Plan (OPMP) and into Harmonized Programme/Project Management Guidelines (HPPMG) is a crucial phase in the conceptual design of the VTN One UN Initiative. It is expected that important lessons can be learned, and the 2008/2009 process evaluation will give particular attention to the fundamental reasons why the reform process (temporarily) stalled in this regard and to the practical solutions that the UNCT will have found in the meantime. In terms of the OPMP and HPPMG making a future difference in how the UNCT works on the ground, this depends on how far the UNCT is willing to challenge the status quo, and how fast the agencies will achieve consensus on a minimum compliance package and start implementation..
Change management	The OPMP is about (difficult) organizational change (e.g. new work processes, new tools, and new technologies). However, successful change and UN reform requires more than this in order for the UN not to fade into irrelevance. Successful change combines organizational change with cultural change through the engagement and participation of the individual people involved. DaO also challenges existing longstanding protective institutional paradigms and the mindsets and motivation of individuals. In terms of readiness of the VTN pilot for the process evaluation, we suggest that it is crucial to develop – and start implementing – a change management strategy aiming at a significant change in organizational culture and individual behaviour leading to greater system-wide ownership and reinforcement of the One UN Initiative in VTN. It is equally suggested to include among the criteria for selecting new staff members, knowledge of UN reform and open to change within that context. Annual staff surveys could be undertaken to monitor motivation over time.
Joint Programmes	The UNCT has designed (and begun implementing) several joint programmes, both before the publication of the HLP Report, e.g. the Joint Programme on AIDS and on the Avian Influenza[11], and after, e.g. the Joint Programme on Kon Tum[12], the Joint Programme on Gender and the Joint Programme on Youth. In terms of reform, and whether behaviours have changed, leading to enhanced coherence,

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[11] Government-UN Joint Programme to Fight Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), 2005-2010.
[12] Addressing Disparities in the Ethnic Minority and Mountainous Regions, Kon Tum Joint Programme, 2007-2010.

	programme effectiveness and efficiency, we suggest that these elements of the UN reform process could be evaluated in 2008/2009 in a meaningful manner (and compared with other pilot countries). In preparation for the evaluation, we encourage the UNCT to enhance its efforts to deliver as one in pursuit of the commonly agreed goals within the framework of these joint programmes, including further harmonizing systems and procedures, joint visibility (One Voice), as well as reflecting on the number and composition (mandates) of agencies participating in individual joint programmes. It is understood that early next year an external review of Joint Programmes will be undertaken, to assess whether joint programmmes are an effective way to bring about UN reform in the Vietnamese context.
One Leader	The One UN Initiative in VTN experienced an important setback when the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) having considered 17 drafts of the "RC Note", failed to reach agreement on a formula based on a far-reaching but logical interpretation of the One Leader concept (the RC as CEO of the UN system in VTN)[13]. The RCO, in consultation with the UNCT, is currently drafting a local MoU between UNCT members and the RC, which seeks a workable consensus regarding representational functions, lines of reporting and decision-taking authority on financial and policy matters. A draft Code of Conduct for the UNCT is intended to complement the MoU.

In terms of how the One Leader concept works in practice today, it is too early to say, as the formal agreement is not yet in place. However, we do expect it to be working by early next year, thereby providing for sufficient experience to be able to evaluate the difference this element of DaO makes. Moreover, in this context, UNDP in VTN has established an institutional firewall between the management of its programmatic role and management of the RC system, including a physical separation of the two. We suggest that the redesign of UNDP's organizational structure and the implementation of the firewall in VTN could provide for a meaningful evaluation in 2008/2009. |
| *One Budget (OB)/One Plan Fund (OPF)* | The One Budget (OB), linked to the One Plan 1, is currently in place for the 6 original agencies. The corresponding One Plan Fund (OPF), the vehicle for new resources pooled by donors at country level to support the unfunded portions of the OP, was finalized in June 2007. Several donors[14] have signed the Letter of Agreement (LoA) and transferred their contributions to it, covering the unfunded resource requirements for implementing OP1 during the first 18 months. Currently, both the OB and the OPF are being revised to include the funding needs of the incoming agencies as per OP2. Since the OP1 is now fully funded, it is not expected that the empowered RC will be faced with difficult decisions in allocating funds among the six agencies. |

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[13] This long and inconclusive debate raises a number of questions (why so many drafts, what was the essence of disagreement, etc.), which should be answered by the systemic part of the evaluation.
[14] Norway, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Luxemburg, Ireland, Canada, and New Zealand.

	There is a certain risk for agencies at the start of their planning cycle to inflate their budgets (and accordingly the unmet needs) in order to have a greater stake in the OPF2. In addition, differences in the way agencies traditionally develop their respective budgets (resource-based versus needs based) could be potentially controversial. Although the mission has understood that the preparation of budgets has (in the case of OP1)) and will be guided by past performance[15], it is strongly suggested that the evaluation of process will assess (in the case of OP2, incorporating eight new agencies) whether it has been possible to adhere to the principle of realistic budgeting which should be in line with delivery capacity. Moreover, it may be useful to define who mobilizes resources for the OPF (only the RC?) as well as the space for agencies to engage in resource mobilization among donors not subscribing to the OPF, as this did not seem clear to a number of the interlocutors.
One UN House	As the mission has experienced, 15 agencies are currently spread all over Hanoi in 10 different locations. Only UNDP, UNIDO, UNV and UNODC share common premises – so do UNFPA and UNHABITAT as well as UNICEF and part of WHO. Plans are underway to establish joint premises housing all UN agencies resident in VTN in the current UN Apartment Building. Agreement on the potential benefit of a UN House is widespread. However, financial feasibility concerns exist, especially for those UNCT members currently housed in free (GOVN subsidized) or low-rent offices. Innovative funding arrangements are needed, and additional external support from donors and the GOVN will be essential. In addition, in VTN, the notion of a One UN House has been enriched by an additional objective, i.e. to make it an eco-friendly office premise as part of the overall drive towards "greening" the UN. The RCO is currently recruiting a UN House Project Manager to supervise the design, budgeting and refurbishment/construction phases. The estimated costs, which need to be monitored in terms of investment/transaction costs, range between USD 7 and 8 million. The UN House is scheduled to be completed in 2009. The mission has noted that several donors are ready to contribute substantial funding towards the realization of the One UN House, but are unwilling to transfer these funds if a 7% overhead charge is applied[16]. In terms of evaluating the contribution of the UN House to an enhanced role of the UN in VTN and more efficiency, it is therefore too early to do so meaningfully in 2008/2009.
External communication & corporate design	Many interlocutors from within the UNCT (especially the initial 6 organizations) referred to the UN Communications Team as an important element of change since the inception of DaO. The Team has been operating since mid-December 2006 as a single unit, with staff members currently

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[15] UN reform is not about mobilising more resources but about strategic reform and greater effectiveness and efficiency (see e.g. the Tam Dao agreement).

[16] In the meantime the mission has undertsood that an offer has been made to reduce this percentage.

	from UNFPA, UNDP and UNICEF sharing a single office and working from a joint work plan. In June 2007, the members of the Team reviewed their work.[17] In terms of the forthcoming process evaluation, we consider the UN Communications Team to be an interesting model in terms of the UN becoming more coherent, effective and efficient. In preparation for the evaluation, we suggest that the Team clarifies to the UNCT how it relates to the newly joining agencies and their agency-specific communication work, in order for it to be truly a One UN Communications Team. We also suggest that the UNCT, as was done by the six OP1 agencies for the RCO and the One UN Communications) agree on a corporate design for the One UN, showing how the members (with their own respective identities) connect, e.g. via business cards and websites.

b)   Readiness of the M&E System

M&E of the reform process	As part of the evaluability assessment, the mission was asked to review the M&E system of the reform process that is being put in place. According to the TORs for this first assessment, the mission should assess "the basic parameters that will make it possible to fully evaluate at a later stage both the results of the programme and of the pilots, and of the processes that will lead to these results". In the absence of centrally produced guidelines and without the benefit of the experience of other pilots, the mission would like to venture the following observations: − Regarding the M&E system for the monitoring of progress in terms of programmatic impact and of the reform process itself, good progress has been made. A One Plan 1 (2006-2010) monitoring and evaluation framework has been developed, the MEWG has been expanded to include the eight incoming agencies, and the RCO has been strengthened with a Planning and Development Results officer. − An impressive amount of work on M&E issues has been undertaken, albeit at various points in time, most dating back to the period before the initiative was joined by the eight new agencies, prepared from different perspectives, inspired by different actors, and according to different formats regarding benchmarks, indicators, targets and timelines. Elements feeding into M&E were found in a number of documents brought to the attention of the mission, including in no particular order the M&E system developed under the auspices of the Hanoi Core Statement on Aid

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[17] Review of the UN Viet Nam Communications Team, June 2007.

Effectiveness; the M&E framework of the One Plan 1 2006-2010; success criteria developed in collaboration with donors and the Government for the One UN Initiative covering the period July 2007-2008; roadmaps; an action plan to deliver management results on the Five Ones; critical elements of change management; and last but not least, indicators for the One UN Initiative in Viet Nam that were prepared recently .

- It is strongly suggested that for the sake of operational clarity time has come to prepare a self-standing comprehensive operational M&E paper incorporating all the above elements, specifying benchmarks, indicators, targets and timelines. That paper should not just be centered around the five "Ones" but be preceded by two important overarching issues, the overall objectives of UN reform in VTN which are currently being revisited, and secondly the matter of efficiency and cost savings. The objective of reform is not to achieve the five "Ones" – they are just instruments to reach the ultimate objectives of UN reform, i.e. a strategic repositioning of the UN within the Vietnamese context, greater coherence, effectiveness and efficiency not only in conceptual terms but finally in terms of delivery.

- Of course, the M&E system should not just be seen in terms of evaluability in the context of the DoA evaluation, but in the wider context of the need for regular feedback to the RC, the UNCT, and the TNTF. M&E systems should establish whether (intermediate) targets have been met on time in order to assess whether the process is on track and to understand the reasons for any slippage that may occur in order to take action, which may in turn lead to a revision of timelines.

- This raises the question of proper intervals for reporting. Given management needs for regular feedback, it is suggested that some sort of stocktaking should be done every six months. The first systematic reporting could perhaps be done by mid-2008 as an important building bock for the evaluation.

- As indicated elsewhere in the present report, the mission is of the opinion that it is important to come to grips with efficiency issues and investment costs. As concerns opportunity costs, to retro-actively establish benchmarks dating back to the time the reform process was put on the agenda is obviously hardly an option. However, it would not be impossible to try to capture these through a survey going back to for instance mid-2007, and to follow up with regular intervals every three months.

- Given the short duration of the mission and the preparations for the TNTF meeting

	during the last day of the visit, and not having met with the MEWG, it was not possible to arrive at a considered conclusion about the feasibility of collecting the large amount of data implied in the documentation (over 40 indicators were identified in a recent document) nor of the date when the system would become fully operational.
Investment and transaction costs	- All UNCT members confirm that their investment costs are extremely high, e.g. opportunity costs as well as additional costs, i.e. designated additional country level focal points for UN reform and those of missions and other UN reform related travel. The question of costs and benefits was raised.
	- The MEWG has not yet come to grips with efficiency issues. Surely, some savings will occur because of integrated services,[18] but particularly as far as savings are concerned connected with the successful introduction of One Set of Management Practices, the expectations seem more to reflect an act of faith rather than something built on financial and/or economic analysis. Will UN reform in VTN indeed result in efficiency gains, have they been quantified and when would they materialize? Investment costs are high and it remains to be seen whether future transaction costs (in terms of staffing but not exclusively so) under new operating regimes would be lower – the fear is they may be higher, and that while there may very well be a reduction in transaction costs on the Government's side, they would de facto be transferred to the UN system. It should be borne in mind that e.g. the recommendations of the 2004 TCPR emphasize the need for the continuous evaluation of transactions costs and for an analysis and assessment of costs compared with total programme expenditures. In the absence of cost-benefit analyses, it is difficult to determine targets at this moment and this essential work remains to be done.
	- At the current phase of UN reform, and for some time to come, it is more appropriate to refer to investment costs rather than to transaction costs. The M&E system should be equipped to capture them. Regarding benchmarks, it will be very difficult but not impossible to reconstruct these retroactively since the process was started some two years ago. Investment costs should include the following main elements:
	i) the opportunity costs in terms of staff time (pro forma salary costs) spent on reform regardless of which budget is being charged;

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[18] Baseline data are available to monitor savings as a result of long-term agreements with suppliers, as well as for energy savings in the future, new One UN house.

ii) the pro forma costs of additional short and long term staff mobilized by the CT and agencies in VTN;	
	iii) the direct costs of support missions as well as pro forma salary costs, again regardless of which budget (in VTN or elsewhere) has provided the funds;
	iv) the costs of travel (and salaries) undertaken by staff in VTN related to UN reform;
	v) all other (future) investment costs for new information technology connected to putting in place the "One Set of Management Practices;
	- The M&E system should keep track of this on a very regular basis. To quantify opportunity costs of staff, regular surveys (on a trimestrial basis?) would provide the necessary data.

c) Optimal involvement of relevant national and international stakeholders in the UN reform process

Key Process Indicators	*Main Findings for VTN*
Country leadership	In VTN, the GOVN clearly originated UN reforms, well before the DaO Report. UN agencies joined the process on a voluntary basis. UNCT members feel that GOVN leadership is very strong with clear expectations, particularly on the part of the 4 Government Aid Coordinating Agencies (GACA). It is, however, unclear how the concerned line ministries are involved in reforming the UN. This would seem particularly important to understand better the role of and working relations with the UN specialized agencies. In terms of establishing a clear basis for evaluating government ownership, we suggest that this particular aspect be addressed in a short note.
HQs level support	Most CT members expressed satisfaction with the continuous support and interest from their respective HQs/Regional Offices for the One UN Initiative in VTN, including, for instance, HQ-level focal points and task forces or mechanisms (e.g. intranet) for sharing information between the 8 pilot countries. However, pending endorsement/decisions by agency HQs on the one hand and by the UNDG/CEB on the other on UN-systemic matters, have caused delays in the reform process at country level. In terms of evaluating support from the HQs level, we suggest that the UNCT prioritize and map key decisions that the HQs level (agency HQs as well as CEB/UNDG) needs to take, including decisions to take certain matters to their respective governing bodies. In doing so, it could set up a

	light monitoring system to keep track of which decisions were delayed, at which level and for how long.
Inclusion of non-resident UN agencies (NRA)	Certain UN agencies (e.g. UNIFEM, UN-HABITAT and IFAD) strengthened their presence on the ground early on in the UN reform process. On the other hand, the OP and the OPF currently do not reflect the potential contribution of those agencies that are not resident in the country, and which did not sign a letter of intent to join the One UN Initiative. According to Box 1 of the High-level Coherence Report, the One Programme should "draw on all UN services and expertise, including those of non-resident agencies, in order to effectively deliver a multi-sectoral approach to development …". In terms of evaluating the optimal involvement of NRAs in the UN reform process in VTN, we suggest that the UNCT (together with other stakeholders), in preparation for the next strategic planning cycle (UNDAF/OP), develop a process for jointly identifying and approaching NRAs whose participation is considered essential for the UN to deliver a strategic multi-sectoral approach to development in the Vietnamese context. Mobilising essential contributions by NRAs does not imply the opening up of new offices, something that would be met with widespread hesitation among all partners.
Involvement of national staff	In terms of job satisfaction and sustainability of the One UN Initiative in VTN, it would seem important to consult and engage UN national staff members in the design process. The UNCT has taken a number of important steps in this regard, e.g. a recent UN Staff Town Hall Meeting, the participation of a UN Staff Association representative in HoA and OPMP meetings and the weekly newsletter "The One to Know". In terms of the forthcoming process evaluation, we suggest that a change management strategy should define milestones and timelines for greater involvement of national staff, not only in terms of classical staff interests, but also in terms of empowering them as architects of change.

d) Adequacy of information sources to evaluate the reform process

	Main Findings for VTN
Interviews	The evaluability mission interviewed almost all UNCT members, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, donors from the LMDG and representatives of Regional Offices based in Bangkok. In terms of the forthcoming process evaluation (and further evaluability assessments in early 2008), we would also suggest interviewing national staff representatives, non-resident UN agencies (NRA), other GACA agencies (notably MPI which was not available at the time of the

	mission), concerned line ministries, donors who do not belong to the LMDG, as well as other multilateral development partners (such as the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank).
Documentary review	The UN reform process and progress made in VTN is well documented. With the launching of a new UNCT website (www.un.org.vn) in October 2007, which also features key UN reform and reference documents, the former document sharing website (http://unvietnam.wordpress.com) has been phased out. Annex V of this report provides a selection of key reference documents, which are essential for the successful conduct of the evaluation of process.
Other monitoring exercises	VTN has undergone/is undergoing similar exercises in the context of aid effectiveness and UN reforms (e.g. Independent Monitoring of the Hanoi Core Statement, UNDG-led stocktaking exercise, External Stakeholder Perception Survey, Staff Survey, UNDAF MTR, etc.) In terms of other sources of information for the 2008/2009 evaluation, these exercises would be important building blocks for the 2008 evaluation. To the extent possible, the evaluation of the VTN pilot should be timed in such a way that maximum benefit can be drawn from these undertakings.

Chapter 4. Readiness of the Viet Nam Pilot for Process Evaluation in 2008/2009

The process of UN reform in VTN, initiated well before the publication of the "Delivering as One report" and the designation of Viet Nam as one of the eight pilot countries, has arrived at an important juncture. Tremendous efforts by the GOVN, donors and (initially six of the now) 14 agencies have been invested. Although basic issues (clarity of intent is the crucial example) have to be revisited in order to reform the whole UN system in Viet Nam rather than just part of it, the mission's entire interlocutor confirmed that the landscape has irreversibly changed. It was reported to the mission that agencies, which in the past tended to work exclusively with (different) partners outside the UN system, are now getting to know one another's programmes and are engaged in programmatic collaboration – some joint programmes and the elaboration of the One Plan 2, integrating the mandates of all 14 agencies, are cases in point. Largely, virtually all agencies subscribed to the five "Ones" in general terms, although there remain important differences about precise interpretation, operational tools, steps to be taken and timelines. Full integration of agencies and programmes under the leadership of the RC as Chief Executive Officer, has turned out to be a bridge too far. This can be illustrated by the discussions around the position and status of the empowered Resident Coordinator that have remained unresolved (for

too long). While virtually all interlocutors subscribed to the formula of an empowered Resident Coordinator, there remain different views of what would constitute an appropriate enhanced authority and accountability framework for the RC. Following the mission and the meeting of the TNTF, intensive discussions are ongoing in the full UNCT about the end product of UN reform in VTN with the aim of achieving clarity of intent, from which the operational steps would then logically follow.

Regarding evaluability, the question put to the mission was whether the parameters were in place to allow for a meaningful evaluation of the pilots as from mid 2008. Without clarity of intent, and a clear articulation of the comparative advantage of the UN in VTN, it was assumed that this would be difficult. This report would beg to differ since an important output of the "Delivering as One" evaluation would be to draw lessons based on progress assessed in all eight pilot countries, which vary greatly in terms of size, economic status, origins, design and start-up date of the reform process, be it as a result of the "Delivering as One initiative" or of earlier UN and other initiatives, including the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. It was understood that the GOVN would be in the drivers seat, that each pilot country would be unique and that the process would resemble a journey into un-chartered territory. Not pre-empting the outcome of evaluability studies in other pilot countries, the history of UN reform in VTN, which like elsewhere is also conditioned by UN-systemic constraints, will have a lot to offer in terms of lessons learned. In spite of the absence of clarity of intent shared by all agencies concerned, important progress has been made, and the experience gained and preparations undertaken should accelerate the process of implementation once the vision is shared and owned by all agencies.

Are the necessary parameters in place to allow for a proper monitoring and for the evaluation of progress as from mid 2008? The mission has found that the reform process has been particularly well documented, transparent and not shying away from listing and analyzing set-backs or difficulties encountered, as was also illustrated and documented during the TNTF meeting of 2 November 2007l . As mentioned earlier, the landscape of UN reform has changed and there are a number of new programmatic intitatives, which are clearly a departure from business as usual. While important work has been and is being undertaken to put into place a monitoring system, the challenge is to agree on targets and timelines, and secondly to make that system operational in order to permit a first systematic reporting, if possible before the process evaluation of "Delivering as One" is scheduled to begin. This in turn depends to a large extent on achieving a new consensus among the now 14 agencies regarding clarity of intent, which is subscribed to and

owned by all UN agencies and which should be based on a clear articulation of the comparative advantages of the UN in the Vietnamese context.

EVALUATION OF THE PILOT INITIATIVE FOR DELIVERING AS ONE UN

1.   **Request to UNEG for the evaluation:** The Chief Executives Board (CEB) endorsed the recommendation of the High Level Committee on Programme (HLCP) for an evaluation of the Delivering as One Pilots. The CEB called upon UNEG to urgently establish the substantive parameters and process for the evaluation of the pilots, and requested to be kept informed. The evaluation results are to be reported to and considered by both the UNDG and CEB. In its recommendation the HLCP noted that dedicated resources would be required for the evaluation.

2.   **UNEG's management structure to conduct the evaluation:** UNEG has established a management structure for the evaluation with Heads of Evaluation providing strategic guidance and oversight and supported by a Management Group co-chaired by the FAO and UNICEF heads of evaluation and having as members IFAD, ILO, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UNDESA, UNFPA, UNIFEM, UNODC, WFP and WHO. UNEG Secretariat will manage a trust fund and hire temporary evaluation staff and consultants for the conduct of the evaluation.

3.   **The scope of the evaluation:** UNEG's proposed course of action presented below recognizes the experimental nature of the Pilots and the need for i) the independence and credibility of the evaluation; ii) evaluation to feed into decision-making processes; and iii) national authorities in each country to be full partners. A process evaluation has been structured, which is designed to support inter-agency and inter-governmental decision-making and provide accountability on the efficiency of processes and in due course on results and impacts. The scope of the evaluation will take in all phases of the process, the experience of the pilots and the global experience, examining the interests of partners and stakeholders. Selected experiences in non-pilot countries, also working for more effective and coherent UN delivery will be examined both to draw additional lessons and supplement the before and after information on the pilots themselves in making comparative judgments.

4.   **Approach and deliverables recommended by UNEG:** UNEG would provide the following deliverables to the CEB through the HLCP (with reports also available to the HLCM for discussion). In the interests of full transparency and accountability in their final form these deliverables would also be public documents:

   a) *An assessment of the evaluability of delivering as One (For Delivery to the HLCP in March 2008).*

       Guidelines are being developed for evaluability both at the level of the system as a whole and for the individual pilots. These require clear statement of objectives for the One UN pilot country initiative at the UN system and individual country levels and of indicators. Individual pilots will need to be evaluated against both the intent set for country specific objectives as well as for the One UN pilot country initiative as a whole. UNEG proposes i) to carry out a study of the evaluability of each pilot as soon as their strategic intent and benchmarking are enunciated and at the latest for all pilots by February 2008; and ii) prepare a synthesis report on the evaluability of the pilots and learning, and on the evaluability of the UN system guidance and support to the initiative;

b) *A process evaluation of the pilot experience (For delivery to the HLCP in September 2009)*

The process evaluation would make use of the self assessments carried out in country by the national governments and UN Country teams and country studies and analytical work by UNEG to assess such factors as the progress in implementing change, the extent of ownership by the system as a whole, the contribution of the various UN Agencies to Delivering as One", and the potential for efficiency gains and improved effectiveness. It would draw lessons for good practice from both pilot and non-pilot countries and draw lessons for overall adjustment of the initiative and the scope for extended implementation. It would also provide a base-line of information for further evaluation. The report would inform the process of the Triennial comprehensive policy review of 2010.

c) *An evaluation of the results and impacts of the pilot experience (For Delivery to the HLCP in September 2011)*

During 2009, UNEG would assess the plans developed by the national governments and UN country teams and by UNDGO and UN agencies to inform them if the preparatory measures being taken are sufficient to provide the information required for the conduct of the results and impact evaluation of the pilot experiments as well as the initiative as a whole.

5.   Throughout the evaluation UNEG will provide the CEB through the HLCP, HLCM and UNDG, as appropriate, progress reports on the work undertaken and particular issues arising from the country evaluation work and global analysis which may be useful to management in making programme adjustments and for application in individual pilot countries.

6.   It is assumed that, as is normal evaluation practice, national governments, UN country teams, and UN agencies will undertake the necessary work in support of the evaluation. It is also assumed that the necessary objectives and indicators will be specified at country and global levels and the Pilots will undertake self-assessments as envisaged.

7.   **Resources required for the evaluation:** UNEG is the network of Heads of Evaluation of the UN System. It operates in a voluntary fashion and has no resources. It has begun initial work drawing on the resources of individual agencies. It will require funding for the evaluation, which is estimated as US$ 1.6 million over the period 2007-2009:

Deliverables	2007	2008	2009	Total
Evaluability assessment	200,000	28,000		228,000
Process evaluation		471,000	421,000	892,000
Scope of impact evaluation			210,000	210,000
Guidance materials and reports		55,000	35,000	90,000
Contingencies 10%	20,000	55,000	67,000	142,000
Total	220,000	609,000	733,000	1,562,000

8.   The proposed budget includes a senior evaluation manager (L6) for two years, the allocation of an L4 evaluation staff/consultants, a full time G4 research assistant and expenses for travel & report publication. UNEG will provide management oversight through the voluntary contribution of the participating UNEG members. The budget covers the full costs of evaluation.

**Terms of reference for the evaluability assessments
of Delivering as One Pilot Initiative**

Visit to Vietnam

Background

1.   In November 2006, the Secretary-General's High-level panel on UN system-wide coherence published its report "Delivering as One". It put forward a comprehensive set of recommendations including the establishment of One United Nations at the country level, with one leader, one programme, one budget, and where appropriate, one office. The report recommended that 5 One United Nations country pilots be established by 2007 and subject to satisfactory review, 20 One United Nations country programmes by 2009, 40 by 2010 and all other appropriate programmes by 2012. The recommendations to establish pilots at the country level were met with great interest in the UN system and by the end of December 2006 eight Governments had expressed interest to join this initiative. By February 2007, the following eight countries were officially designed as pilot countries: Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uruguay and Viet Nam.

2.   Following discussions by the High-Level Committee on Planning (HLCP) on 20-21 March 2007, the Chief Executive Board (CEB) on 20 April called on the United Nations Evaluation Group[19] (UNEG) to undertake the evaluation of the pilots which in the first instance would focus on progress, to be followed at a later date by an evaluation of results and impact[20]. To this end, UNEG established a management group to oversee the design and implementation of the evaluation, co-chaired by the Director/Chief of Evaluation of UNICEF and FAO respectively. A comprehensive process of consultations was initiated which resulted in the basic design of the evaluation as summarised in a proposal produced on 7 September 2007. This proposal was discussed and endorsed in a number of meetings dealing with different aspects of UN reform and "Delivering as One" including the UNDG[21] management group meeting of 19 September, the HLCP meeting of 20-21 September and meetings of ADGs/ASGs[22] of September and October 2007.

3.   The Chief Executive Board[23] is the commissioner of the evaluation conducted by UNEG. The evaluation aims at providing relevant and useful information and lessons for

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[19] UNEG is the network of Heads of Evaluation Units of the UN System
[20] Exact phrasing "called upon UNEG to urgently establish the substantive parameters and process for the evaluation of pilots, and requested to be kept fully informed of progress".
[21] UNDG is the United Nations Development Group
[22] Assistant Secretaries General of the UN and Assistant Directors General of Specialised Agencies
[23] The CEB is chaired by the Secretary General and the members are the Heads of UN organisations

decision making by the key stakeholders: pilot countries, UN Country Teams, UN organisations and UN decision making bodies.

Evaluation of the Delivering as One programme and pilots (2007-2011)

3.   The main elements of the evaluation design are:

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

b) in 2009 a synthesis of the self assessments done by the pilots during 2008 and a UN systemic process evaluation of the pilot initiative for delivery to the HLCP (the synthesis report is due in September 2009 and will contribute to the preparation of the TCPR[24] of 2010);

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

First step: conduct of an evaluability study (November – March 2008)

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

a) quality of the design for the achievement of results, i.e. the existence of clear objectives and indicators to measure results at a later stage;

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

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

d) national ownership and leadership in the evaluation process, identification of independent and credible evaluators in pilot countries who can be involved in

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[24] TCPR is the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review undertaken by the Economic & Social Committee of the United Nations.

the evaluation of process and results of the Delivering as One pilots at a later stage.

5.   The purposes and objectives of the evaluability study are:

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

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

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

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

e) Allow UNEG to compile information from all eight pilot countries and to synthesize information as part of a comprehensive evaluability study that will facilitate the planning of subsequent stages of the overall evaluation.

Conduct of evaluability study field missions to pilot countries (November 2007 – February 2008)

6.   The field missions to pilot countries will take place within a very short timeframe (November 2007 – February 2008). Due to time constraints, some will have to take place in parallel. The first mission will be to Vietnam which will serve as a test case. The present terms of reference may be revised in the light of results from this first mission.

7.   The field missions to pilot countries will be consultative of the national government, other national and external stakeholders, all members of the UN country team and, where possible, non-resident agencies, and funding agencies.

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

9.   The reports of the missions will be provided to the UNEG management group within ten days of the completion of the country visit (period to be adjusted where country visits are organized back-to-back). The reports will basically be structured

around the parameters of the evaluability study described above. UNEG will share as soon as possible the reports with concerned stakeholders.

10.   Requests from UN Country Teams to address weaknesses and shortcomings in the design and process of the Delivering as One will be shared with appropriate support mechanisms, e.g. UNDGO.

Conduct of the evaluability study of the UN System support to Delivering as One (December 2007 – February 2008)

11.   There will be a mapping of the measures taken by the UN organisation to support to the Delivering as One initiative. A review will be made of the evaluations done by UN organisations in order to distil lessons and best practices. The information gathered will enable UNEG to prepare the evaluation design of the process evaluation to be conducted during 2008-2009 on the readiness of the whole UN System to support the Delivering as One Initiative.

12. The report to be submitted in March 2008 will cover the adequacy of the scope of the plans drawn by the UN country teams and the UN System as a whole. It will include the criteria indicated by HLCP (e.g. : response to national priorities, inclusiveness, diversity and openness of the process)

Mission checklist and coverage of the reports of the field missions

A. Basic facts - brief history of the Delivering as One pilot

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

    b) When and how was the Delivering as One pilot conceptualized?

    c) What has changed since the pilot started?

    d) Which organizations are members of the UN Country Team?

    e) What is the role of Non-Resident Agencies?

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

B. Assessment of the design of the Delivering as One pilot for the achievement of results

    i) How "SMART"(specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound) are the objectives and indicators of the Delivering as One Pilot?

    ii) How are the four dimensions of the Delivering as One pilot conceptualized: One programme, One budgetary framework, One leader and One Office?

    iii) What is the relationship of the Delivering as One pilot with national development plans and strategies (including poverty reduction strategy papers, sector-wide approaches etc.)

    iv) What is the relationship of the Delivering as One pilot with other forms of external aid (e.g. budget support)?

C. Initial assessment of processes for the optimal involvement of relevant national and international stakeholders

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

    b) What is the process in place at the national level to plan and develop the pilot concerning, for example, interaction between various levels of government

and the UN system, interaction of the UN system with other national stakeholders (civil society, private sector), interaction between the UN system and other external aid agencies?

c) How needs and priorities of the countries are reflected? What needs to be responded to by Non-Resident Agencies of the UN development system?

d) What support has there been to the process from UNDG / DGO and from UN Regional Teams and Headquarters?

e) What are the basic parameters that need to guide an ulterior evaluation of process?

N.B.   The present missions will not result in a full-fledged assessment of processes, but only collect basic information that will allow to define the basic parameters that will guide self-assessments by pilot countries themselves as well as the process evaluation scheduled to take place during 2009.

D.   Assessment of the adequacy of sources of information

a) Which are the key documents that guide the Delivering as One Pilot (government policies and strategies, UN programme documents, budgetary frameworks, documents of individual UN organizations etc.)?

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

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

E.   Views of Stakeholders on the Start-up Process

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

Objectives and strategic intent of the One UN Pilots and the coordinated or joint programme:
1. are all agencies and the government well aware of the objectives and strategic intent?
2. do all agencies and the government agree on what the objectives of the pilot are?
3. if not, what are the divergent views?
4. do all partners fully subscribe to the objectives?

With respect to plan(s) for achieving the Objectives of the Pilot; the coordinated or joint programme, Budget and Relationship to Government and UN priorities, etc:

1. are all partners fully aware of the content and the implications,
2. do all partners subscribe to the plans, budgets, etc.,
3. if any, what are the divergences of view?

One Leader - how is this working in practice?

Participation and process –

1. What is the level of participation as viewed by each of the stakeholders,
   - for their own participation;
   - the participation of others

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

Support – What is the level of satisfaction with:
    Central UN system:
        - guidance,
        - support with tools and methods,
        - monitoring and reporting requirements;
    Individual agencies of the UN system?

How do concerned government departments view their roles in the Pilot?

F.   **Identification of national evaluators**

a) Are there independent and professional evaluators / evaluation institutions in pilot countries that could be involved at a later stage in the evaluation of process and results of the Delivering as One pilots?

b) How could cooperation be established between UNEG and national evaluators/ evaluation institutions?

Visit of the UN Evaluation Group Mission (29 Oct – 02 Nov 2007)
Tentative Programme

Time	Activity	Location	Remarks
TUESDAY 30 OCTOBER 2007			
9:30-10:30	Meeting Mr. Andrew Speedy/FAO Rep	FAO Office (tel: 84-4-9423239 ext 12) 3 Nguyen Gia Thieu Str., Hanoi	Ms. Oanh (Andrew's Secretary)
10:45-11:45	Meeting with Mr. Eamonn Murphy/UNAIDS Country Director	UNAIDS Office (tel: 84-4-7342824 ext. 101) No. 24, Lane 11 Trinh Hoai Duc Str., Hanoi	Ms. Chau (Eamonn's secretary)
13:30-14:30	Meeting with Ms. Nilgun Tas/ UNIDO Rep.	UNIDO Office (tel: 84-4-9421495 ext. 127) 72 Ly Thuong Kiet Str., Hanoi	Ms. Van (Nilgun's Secretary)
15.00-16.00	Meeting with Mr. Le Hoai Trung/ General Director of International Organizations – MOFA	MOFA Office 6 Chu Van An Str., Hanoi	Mr. Hai (Assistant) tel: 84-902008263
WEDNESDAY 31 OCTOBER 2007			
8:30-9:30	Meeting with Mr. Andrew Bruce/IOM Chief of Mission	IOM Office (tel: 84-4-7366258 ext. 111) Ground Floor, Horison Hotel, 40 Cat Linh Str.,	Ms. Oanh (Andrew's Secretary)
10:00-11:00	Meeting with Dr Olivé/WHO Rep.	WHO Office (tel: 84-4-9433734 ext. 83821) 63 Tran Hung Dao Str., Hanoi	Ms. Van (Olive's Secretary)
11:15-12:15	Meeting with Mr. Christophe Bahuet/UNDP Deputy Country Director (Programme)	Christophe's office (tel: 84-4-9421495 ext. 280) 72 Ly Thuong Kiet Str., Hanoi	Ms. Thinh (Christophe's secretary)
13:30-14:30	Meeting with Mr. Nguyen Quang/UNHABITAT Programme Manager	UNHABITAT Office (tel: 84-903279363) Room 501, 2E Van Phuc, Hanoi	
15:00-16:00	Meeting with Ms. RoseMarie Greve/ILO Director	ILO Office (tel: 84-4-7340902 ext. 201) 48-50 Nguyen Thai Hoc Str., Hanoi	Ms. Nga (RoseMarie's Secretary)
THURSDAY 1 NOVEMBER 2007			
9:30-10:30	Meeting with Ms. Suzette Mitchell/UNIFEM Country Programme Manager	UNIFEM Office (tel: 84-4-7345391) Room 317, No. 11 Le Hong Phong Str., Hanoi	Ms. Tra (Suzette's Secretary)
13:30-14:30	Meeting with UNESCO O.I.C.	UNESCO Office (tel: 84-4-7470275 ext. 21) 23 Cao Ba Quat Str., Hanoi	
16.00-17:00	Meeting with Mr. Jesper Morch/UNICEF Rep.	Jesper's Office (tel: 9425706 ext. 220) 81A Tran Quoc Toan Str., Hanoi	Ms. Tu (Jesper's secretary)
FRIDAY 2 NOVEMBER 2007			
10.45-11.45	Meeting with Donors	UNDP Conference Room 72 Ly Thuong Kiet Str., Hanoi	Ms. Trang - RCO tel: 84-4-9421495 ext 244
14:00:1700	Tripartite National Task Force Meeting	Sofitel Plaza Hotel No. 1 Thanh Nien Road, Hanoi	Ms. Trang - RCO tel: 84-4-9421495 ext 244

Evaluation of the 'Delivery as One" Initiative
Presentation to the Tripartite National Task Force
Ha Noi, November 2007

UNEG
United Nations Evaluation Group

1

Evaluation of the "Delivering as One" (2007-2011)

Evaluation commissioned by CEB
1. Evaluability study
   - Each pilot
   - UN System
   - Synthesis report (March 2008)
2. Self-assessment by each pilot
3. Independent process evaluation (December 2008)
   - Synthesis report (input to TCPR 2010)
4. Independent results evaluation (2011)
   (Pilot and selected Non-pilots & UN systemic)

2

Evaluability mission (28.10-2.11)

Working methods:

▪ Desk review

▪ Meetings with GOVN, UNCT, RCO, individual agencies, donors

▪ Not met with National staff and line Ministries

3

Evaluability mission (28.10-2.11)

▪ Viet Nam among first pilots

▪ First for evaluability assessment

▪ Process well documented

▪ Important documents prepared and plans well aligned with GOVN priorities

4

Evaluability mission (28.10-2.11)

▪ GOVN in driver's seat

▪ Expectations from GOVN and donors clear

▪ Reform taken very seriously by UN Viet Nam as well as by agencies HQs

▪ Implementation in early stages

▪ Important issues unresolved

5

Evaluability mission (28.10-2.11)

▪ Reform open for all

▪ Process established by 6 agencies

▪ Following HLP report 8 other agencies joined

▪ Inevitable slowing down of the process

▪ Clarity of intent?

6

Complexity of decision-making in the UN:

- National level: HoAs

- HQs of individual agencies

- Governing bodies of different agencies

- Collective decisions by UNDG and/ or CEB

7

Summary:

- High investment by agencies in VTN, in HQs and UNDG / CEB

- Progress influenced by two-phased approach

- Progress on key issues outside control of UNCT in VTN

- Early indications of new ways of working

8

- Process evaluation starts mid-2008

- Evaluation of progress is feasible

- Allowing for evaluation of elements of change

- Lessons can be drawn

9

Further work to be done at country level:

- Finalization of monitoring system of One UN initiative (Five Ones): benchmarks, indicators, targets and timeline (particular attention to transaction costs)

- Clarity of intent of UN Reform in VTN subscribed to and owned by all agencies

10

Change management (I)

- De facto the "Delivering as One" initiative is a fundamental change management endeavor challenging existing institutional paradigms
- In terms of evaluability it is crucial to go beyond result-setting and management processes, and aim at a significant change in the systemic & organizational culture and behavior
- To be successful the initiative needs an explicit strategy for change management

11

Change management (II)

Change management strategy should include:
- Mapping of key decisions to be taken at different levels
- Milestones and timeline
- Greater involvement of National staff

12

Selected Key Reference Documents

Global

- The UN Secretary-General's High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment published its report entitled "Delivering as One", November 2006.
- UNEG Evaluation of the Pilot Initiative for Delivering as One.
- GA/RES/A/59/250 Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities for Development of the UN System

Viet Nam specific

- ToR for the Evaluability Assessments of Delivering as One Pilot Initiative, Visit to Viet Nam.
- Hanoi Core Statement on Aid Effectiveness, 2 July 2005.
- Jordan Ryan & Jesper Morch: United Nations Reform: A Country Perspective, 16 September 2005.
- Harmonisation of UNDG Agencies: Towards One United Nations in Viet Nam, February 2006.
- Agreed Principles, Objectives and Instruments to Achieve One United Nations in Viet Nam, Final Version, 18 May 2006.
- The One Plan in Viet Nam: One Step towards Greater Coherence, A Background Paper, May 2007.
- One UN in Vietnam, Donor Joint Assessment of the One Plan/One Plan Fund, Final Version, 12 June 2007.
- Review of the UN Viet Nam Communications Team, June 2007.
- One Plan, Common Action Plan, 2006-2010, July 2007.
- One UN Initiative in Viet Nam, Success Criteria, Version 1, 4 July 2007.
- Agreed Conclusions UNCT Vietnam Retreat, Tam Dao, 13-14 September 2007.
- Process Indicators for the One UN Initiative in Viet Nam.

> **Synopsis,** prepared by Anna Guerraggio,UNEG research assistant as backgroud material for the mission **-** updated 5 December 2007

- The One Programme in Viet Nam started out before the recommendations of the High Level Panel on System-wide Coherence (HLP) Report were publicized. It was actually in 2005 that the UN Resident Coordinator and the UNICEF Country Representative wrote a paper on UN reform for Vietnam, which lay the foundation for the One UN initiative, which effectively started in February 2006.

- The One Plan (Common Action Plan 2006-2010) was approved in July 2007 and signed soon after (August 23rd, 2007), thus becoming a binding document for the six signatory agencies (UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNIFEM, UNV, UNAIDS).

- It is expected that by early 2008 a revised One Plan will be finalised with all 15 UN agencies operating in Vietnam fully integrated. .

- At the moment the internal debate seems to focus on three issues: i) the official acknowledgement of the One Leader's authority and accountability; ii) the financial feasibility of the UN House; iii) the Monitoring and Evaluation of the reform process.

- The UN participating agencies are reporting greater support from HQ. Together with the UNEG mission on evaluability assessment, they expressed satisfaction for the recruitments of the Advisor on Non-Resident Agencies (UNDP funded) and the UN Gender Adviser (co-funded by UNDP and UNIFEM Regional Office). Moreover, the WFP Deputy Executive Director went to Vietnam as Observer, as the UNDG Adviser on Change management did, being a facilitator to UNCT retreat in Tam Dao.

> **UNDAF**

- The UNDAF formulation process got its analytical inputs from the Common Country Assessment for Vietnam, published in 2004, and the Government's Five-Year Strategy for Socio-Economic Development (SEDP). Both the CCA and UNDAF adopted a rights-based approach to development.

- The current UNDAF (2006-2010) was signed in June 2005 by Ho Vong Phuc (National Government), Jordan D. Ryan (UN Resident Coordinator), Anton Rychener (FAO), Thomas Elhaut (IFAD), Rose Marie Greve (ILO), Andrew Bruce (IOM), Nancy Fee (UNAIDS), Subinay Nandy (UNDP), Chiu Shiu Kee (UNESCO), Ian Howie (UNFPA), Vu Anh Son (UNCHR), Anthony Bloomberg (UNICEF), Philippe

Scholtes (UNIDO), Koen Van Acoleyen (UNV), Narumi Yamada (UNODC), Hans Troedsson (WHO).

- The UNDAF document develops three main themes and outcomes: quality of growth, i.e. government economic policies supporting a more equitable, inclusive and sustainable growth; improved quality of delivery and equality in access to social and protection services; and, policies, law and governance structures conducive to the promotion and protection of human rights for development. Crosscutting issues include equity and the inclusion of vulnerable groups; Vietnamese youth in transition; participation for empowerment and accountability; the challenge of HIV/AIDS; and gender mainstreaming.

- The UN Country Team estimates that approximately US$ 425 million is required for the United Nations contribution to the achievement of the UNDAF outcomes (38%, 30% and 32% to be respectively allocated to the three outcomes).

- The UNCT proposed the formation of three Technical Working Groups, one for each of the UNDAF outcomes. Joint programming is also facilitated by the appointment of lead agencies to manage specific Country Programme Outcomes. Although the resources to these Outcomes will not necessarily be allocated through the lead agency in every instance, the lead agencies will take primary responsibility for technical matters in their respective spheres of operations. Moreover, a number of coordination mechanisms exist in Viet Nam to facilitate the exchange of information among development partners, e.g. the Consultative Group between the Government and donors, the Monthly Donor Group Forum organized by UNDP, and the Inter-Agency Programme and Administrative Groups among UN Agencies Heads.

- An UNDAF evaluation framework is established to provide up-to-date and reliable information on progress and challenges without imposing an undue reporting burden on the UN Country Team or on Government. Please note that it is stated that M&E should not divert human and financial resources from the main development tasks of the UNDAF and country programmes. An independent assessment of progress towards the UNDAF outcomes will come in the form of a joint Gov/UN mid-term review to be held no later than end 2008. The mid-term review will be synchronized, to the extent possible, with the midterm reviews of individual UN agencies to save time and money. The UNCT and the Government will also jointly organize a final evaluation as input into the formulation of the subsequent UNDAF.

One UN

General

- The One Programme in Viet Nam started out before the recommendations of the High Level Panel on System-wide Coherence (HLP) Report were publicized. It was actually in 2005 that the UN Resident Coordinator and the Country Representative of

the UNICEF wrote a paper on UN reform for Vietnam, which lay the foundation for the One UN initiative, which effectively started in February 2006.

- The country specific objectives of the One UN reform initiative are clearly stipulated in the *Agreed Principles, Objectives and Instruments to achieve One UN in Vietnam*, signed by the Vietnamese Prime Minister in May 2006. This document clearly states that the One UN initiative strives for inclusion, but on a voluntary basis, with UN agencies joining "if and when they choose".

- The One Plan (Common Action Plan 2006-2010) was approved in July 2007 and signed soon after (August 23rd, 2007), thus becoming a legally binding document for the six agencies which signed up to it (UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNAIDS, UNV, UNIFEM). The Plan comprises of five elements: <u>One Plan, One Budget, One Leader, One House and One Set of Management Practices</u>. As stated in the *Agreed Principles, Objectives and Instruments to achieve One UN in Vietnam*, the one management structure has been the first objective (to be realized in the second half of 2006), followed by one programme and one budget (end of 2006), one set of management practices and one house (end of 2007).

- Similar to UNDAF, the One Plan is based on Viet Nam's Social Economic Development Plan (SEDP) and related national sector plans. The One Plan is conceived as an instrument for making the UN's contribution to some of the principles of the Ha Noi Core Statement on Aid Effectiveness (July 2005)[25] more visible, by focusing on alignment, harmonisation, simplification, and managing for results.

- It is expected that by early 2008 a revised One Plan will be finalised with almost all UN agencies operating in Vietnam fully integrated (UNHCR did not join the One UN initiative while IPOM is not a UN agency).

Actors

- In early 2006, the UNCT agreed on a **"two track" approach"**, in which EXCOM agencies would go ahead and others opt in or out depending on their specific circumstances and within their own time frames.

- The One Plan 2006-2010 currently encapsulates the country programmes of the six Agencies (UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNV, UNAIDS and UNIFEM) that signed up to it. However, as agreed during a retreat of the Heads of Agencies of the UNCT as a whole (February 2007), the One Plan would be opened up once, in early 2008, to allow UN agencies to join the One Plan if they wished. The Government has since then received letters of intent from IFAD, UNESCO, ILO, UNIDO, FAO, WHO,

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[25] In 2005, the Government of Viet Nam and donors produced the Hanoi Core Statement on Aid Effectiveness which translates the Paris Declaration into Partnership Commitments for Viet Nam. The Core Statement includes 14 indicators with indicative targets for 2010.

UNODC, UN-HABITAT and IOM. The current focus is thus on the integration of 8 organizations from the UNCT into the second phase of One Plan.[26]

- The Government Aid Coordinating Agencies (GACA), the Resident Coordinator and the Heads of participating UN Agencies guide the overall implementation of the One Plan. A range of partners implements UN-funded interventions (including Government agencies, research institutions, and mass and civil society organisations). Partnerships with and engagement of the private sector will be pursued for fostering corporate social responsibility as part of the collective efforts in supporting inclusive development of Viet Nam.
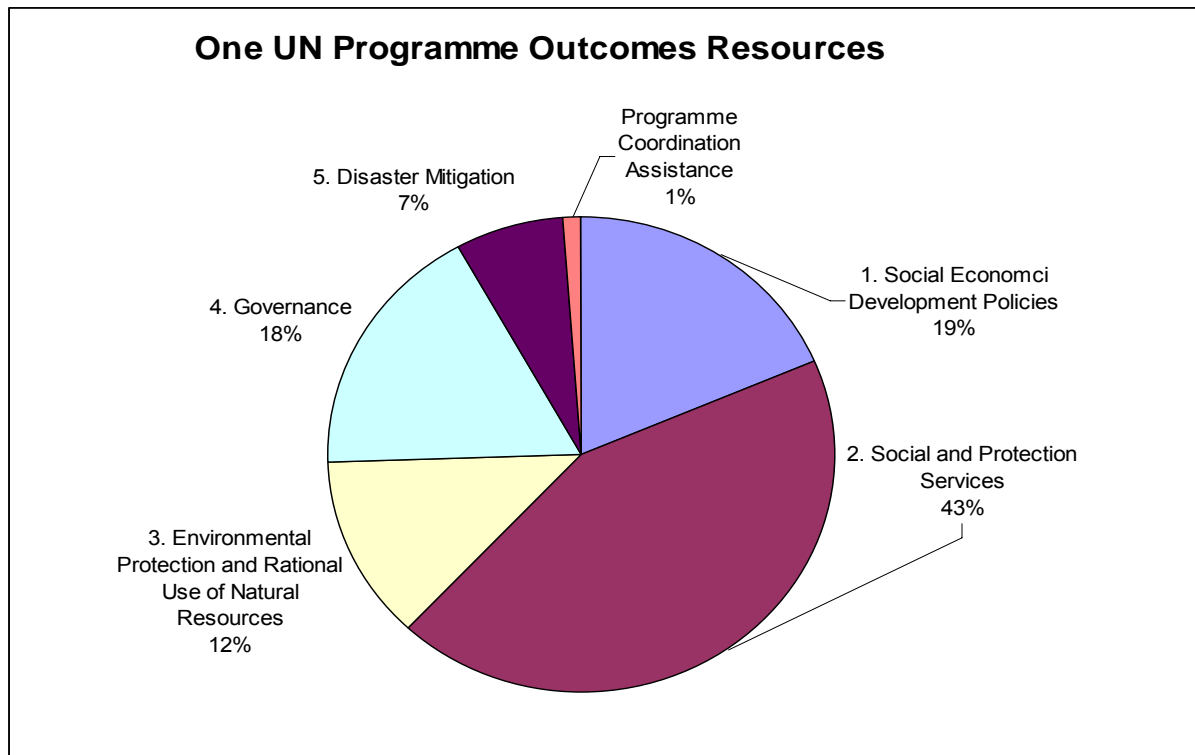
One Programme

- Under the strategic leadership of the Resident Coordinator, the One Plan combines the Country Programme Action Plans (CPAPs) and Country Programme Documents (CPDs) of the ExCom Agencies and the three other participating agencies. As stated above, the One Plan is based on the analysis in the UN Common Country Assessment (CCA) for Vietnam, within the overall framework of the UNDAF and in keeping with general pillars of the SEDP.

- Since the One Plan is the specific contribution to UNDAF of just the six participating UN agencies, it does not cover the whole of UNDAF. However, links to the higher level results of the SEDP and the UNDAF remain straightforward, as shown by the One Plan outcomes: i) social and economic development policies, plans and laws supporting an equitable and inclusive growth; ii) universally available and high quality social and protection services; iii) environmental protection and a rational use of natural resources for poverty reduction and economic growth; iv) accountable, transparent and participatory governance; v) adequate policies and capacities to effectively reduce risks of, and vulnerability to, natural disasters.

- The One Plan will be made operational through the development of Detailed Project Outlines, project documents and Annual Work Plans, which describe the specific results to be achieved.

One Budgetary Framework and One Fund

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26 On June 11 2007, the Representatives of the five Specialized Agencies (FAO, WHO, ILO, UNESCO and UNIDO) sent the Minister of Planning and Investment a letter, concerned as they were that the draft One Plan was not addressing the stated objectives and was not supporting the sustainable development of activities that are part of the Specialized Agencies' mandate. They thus formally requested to be included in all exchanges and discussions related to the One Plan and the Plan to be adapted to include the contributions of these organizations in the outcomes, outputs and budgets and that allocation from the one fund takes place only when this would happen. . The Minister of Planning and Investment replied by stating that all UN agencies had actually been invited to join the Tripartite National Task Force, which oversees the implementation of the One UN initiative in Viet Nam, as observers as early as May 2006. But only ILO and UNAIDS formally requested to be included in the TNTF.

- The draft terms of reference for the One Budgetary Framework and the One Fund were developed during a mission of the Resource Mobilization Managers of UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA to Vietnam in December 2006.

- About US$ 218 million - one third from regular budgets - is required in order to reach the program outcomes. UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF Executive Boards have approved a total commitment not exceeding US$ 70 million for the period from 1 January 2007 to 31 December 2010. UNV, UNAIDS and UNIFEM expect to access the remaining US$ 3 million.

One UN Programme Outcomes Resources

- Programme Coordination Assistance 1%
- 5. Disaster Mitigation 7%
- 4. Governance 18%
- 3. Environmental Protection and Rational Use of Natural Resources 12%
- 1. Social Economci Development Policies 19%
- 2. Social and Protection Services 43%

- Of the total resource requirements, US$ 126 million has already been mobilised. The ToR for the One Plan Fund (US$ 92 million, i.e. the gap between resources already secured and those needed to implement the Plan until 2010) was finalized in June 2007 and later subscribed by the Agencies on July 10, 2007. MoUs and LoAs between Administrative Agent (UNDP) and participating agencies followed too.

- The Joint Donor Assessment contains a commitment to provide full, non-earmarked funding for the One Plan – through the One Fund – for an initial phase (1 July 2007 to 31 December 2008). The funding needs for this period are altogether of US$ 33 million.

- The whole Budgetary Framework will be modified in 2008, as soon as the other UN agencies join the program. With this regard, it is worth noting that:

a) The Director General of WHO openly stated the organization's readiness to become part of the One UN Plan in 2008 and the will to modify its two-year programme budget to align it with the five-year planning cycle of the Government of Vietnam and the One UN. However, the WHO DG also pointed out that a revision of the One Plan and of the budgetary framework in favour of health sector policies would be essential.

b) The Director of IFAD specified in the letter of intent that, as IFAD resources are extended to the Government as loans, pooled funding may not be an immediate choice. Rather joint programmes would be an area where IFAD can work with two or more UN organizations.

One Leader

- The UNCT supports the Resident Coordinator system based on the accountability framework that has been developed for the RC by the Resident Coordinator Issues Group of UNDG in consultation with all agencies of UNDG and the UN CEB. The accountability framework, which is outlined in the document "*Principles for enhancing the leadership role of the resident coordinator*" was agreed by members of UNDG at its Executive Committee retreat of 15 July 2005.

- Attempts to operationalize the RC authority, responsibility and accountability (RC note) have stalled in UNDG for lack of agreement beyond the six principals of the participating agencies of the One Plan 1.

- In addition to the above, taking into account the context of the One UN initiative in Viet Nam, the UN agencies with presence in the country agreed to strengthen the authority, responsibility and accountability of the RC function with a view to addressing the challenge o UN system-wide coherence (Cf Tam Dao agreement of September 2007).

- The UNCT is currently developing a local MoU which will contain the following principles: the One Leader i) has the authority to give guidance on One Plan ; ii) is the ultimate decision maker on the allocation for funds; ii) will speak with One Voice.

One Office

- All UN Agencies in the UNCT have confirmed their strong support towards establishing a UN House, once financial feasibility concerns are met. With the limited budget for construction purposes in UN agencies, financial feasibility remains indeed a challenge. External support from donors and the government is essential for successful completion of this project.

- The RC office has begun a process of analysing the costs associated with converting the UN Apartment Building, located in the Van Phuc diplomatic compound and currently utilized for UNFPA office spaces and for apartments for UN staff. The preliminary cost figures run from US$ 1.2 million (renovation of current building) to US$ 5.6 million (constructing new premises). However, the UNCT has indicated that retrofitting the building plus adding two floors on top is at least needed (minimum costs of US$ 2.8 million).

- A mission from UNEP and the UN Working Group on Common Premises established the technical feasibility of an eco-friendly UN House. Moreover, a short term financial/ real estate analyst and a full term UN House Project Manager have been recruited with funding from ExCom (on reimbursable basis) and RCO. Contributions from the National Government, the UN agencies and donors are being sought.

One Set of Management Practices - One Management Plan (OPMP) and One UN Support Facility

- In line with the Ha Noi Core Statement, the UN system has intensified efforts to rationalise its implementation arrangements, and to simplify and harmonise programme management, administrative and financial procedures.

- 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. The following common services are considered priority: developing long-term agreements for procurement; common cost norms; learning and training services; travel services; and a shared interpreters/translators pool.

- A 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 US$ 2 million over a two-year period from mid-2007 to mid-2009.

- A Management Plan (OPMP) – primarily conceived as an internal management tool - is now being prepared to ensure that the One Plan is matched by the appropriate management structure, human resources, and improved business practices and common services. Progress has been made in several areas including DNA calculation practices; long term agreements for copying service and IT equipment; a common learning plan; uniforms for UN drivers, etc.

- Harmonised Programme and Project Management Guidelines (HPPMG) have been developed to decrease transaction costs for partners and UN staff. All chapters have been reviewed and commented upon at least once by the National Government and

three ExCom Agencies. Agreement was reached on some key points, i.e. UN programme cycle, financial reporting requirements, M&E. The second complete draft is expected in December 2007.

Communication

- Since mid-December 2006, the UN Communication Team has been operating as a single unit, with staff members from UNFPA, UNDP and UNICEF sharing a single office and working from a joint work-plan. This is the first example of a collocated, fully-functioning team formed as part of Viet Nam's One UN initiative.

- During the retreat in Johannesburg (May 2007), the Vietnam Communications Team made a presentation to the colleagues from all the other pilot countries, showing the difference in between "communicating about One UN" (as is being done in most pilots) and "communicating as One UN" (as is being done in Viet Nam). But clearly many issues relating to how to prioritize the growing and ever-diversifying workloads still remain. Team members often expressed the challenge of knowing where agency tasks versus UN tasks versus other demands on their time fit together.

- Key products include One UN information brief, Common Goals Collective action document-sharing website (**http://unvietnam.wordpress.com**)**,** One UN folders and business cards generally solidifying the UN brand.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- The Government and participating UN agencies agreed on proceeding with an annual review of projects as per clusters of the One Plan and an annual review of One Plan **(**starting from 2008**)** under the guidance of the Steering Committee. This will aim to make adjustments based on the findings, outlining programme priorities for the coming year, and discussing overall funding allocations and other issues. The Review of the One Plan results should, to the extent possible, be planned and conducted in conjunction with UNDAF.[27] Moreover, in mid 2009, an independent evaluation of the One Plan will be carried out by external consultants. Findings, conclusions and recommendations of this evaluation will feed into planning of the next One Plan cycle, 2011-2015.

- An inter-agency Working Group on Monitoring and Evaluation (MEWG) was established at the end of March 2007 to develop a comprehensive M&E framework of the One Plan. The WG - composed of M&E officers from the participating agencies - was strengthened by the arrival of a Development Results/Planning Officer in March 2007 working in the Office of the Resident Coordinator. The MEWG assists the One

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[27] This is consistent with Viet Nam's Decree 131 on management and utilisation of ODA by the Government of Viet Nam.

Plan Steering Committee in measuring the results from the One Plan towards a more effective, coherent and efficient UN. The MEWG is also expected to contribute to the M&E of One Plan implementation at the output and outcome levels.

- For the above purposes, the MEWG has suggested a comprehensive M&E Framework based on the Results and Resources Framework of the One Plan. The Evaluation Framework includes impact indicators that help track the progress in the OP1 results (the same will be done for OP 2) and the value added of the UN working together in the One Plan, such as reduced transaction costs and enhanced impact in line with the Hanoi Core Statement. A range of M&E instruments are expected to be used, including regular Government surveys, sectoral baseline and end-line surveys, studies (especially at the provincial level), joint periodic reviews and monitoring, and independent assessments and evaluations as well as data management systems, such as DAD and VietInfo.

- The Donor Joint Assessment states that the One Plan progress should be reviewed against success criteria between months 12 and 18 as to provide a sound basis for moving forward with full funding for the remainder of the One Plan period. An informal tripartite meeting was held on June 28, 2007 to finalise a set of success criteria which relates to activities to be undertaken by - and to the immediate release of funds that will be earmarked for - the six participating UN agencies in the period from July 2007 to December 2008. These success criteria are not to be regarded as conditions for donor support. Rather they are the actions which all three parties consider necessary for success and against which they can monitor progress. When progress is not as fast as anticipated, success criteria will be retained, but the timeframe for their achievement extended. It was agreed that the success criteria would be shared with the Specialised Agencies who already signed their Letter of Intent. The success criteria will be reviewed in the TNTF when the Specialised Agencies join the One UN in the first quarter of 2008 and donors make additional funds available to implement the revised One Plan.

One UN Initiative - Success Criteria July 2007 to December 2008	
By end	**Criteria**
June 2007	▪ Government, donors and the participating UN Agencies agree *One UN Initiative Success Criteria* for the period July 2007 to end December 2008.

October 2007	▪ <u>Draft</u> *One UN Management Plan* shared with GoV and donors and including
	  ○ Current staffing breakdown
	  ○ fund flow information
	  ○ One UN support facility proposal
	▪ TNTF agree update of the original *One UN Road Map* of February 2006.
	▪ *One Plan M&E Framework* in place.
	▪ *RC Note* approved and UN participating agencies outline how Country Directors will relate to the RC
	▪ RC's authority reflected in One Plan Fund allocation/prioritization

December 2007	▪ *Joint Progress Report* on UN reform process (HCS-related and others) presented to annual CG meeting. ▪ *UNEG/UNDG benchmarks* reviewed by TNTF, and adapted if necessary. ▪ TNTF happy with design and budget for One UN House ▪ Donors agree to provide funding for One UN Support Facility and One House.

March 2008	▪ Specialized Agencies that have signed Letters of Intent have all joined Revised One Plan based on their comparative advantage.
	▪ *Revised One Plan* agreed by TNTF.
	▪ Government and donors support <u>final</u> *One UN Management Plan* including
	  ○ capacity mapping of staff
	  ○ revised staffing plan
	  ○ analysis identifying potential reduction of costs (opportunity, transactional, financial)
	  ○ explanation of organizational changes.
	▪ <u>Revised</u> *One Plan M&E Framework* in place
	▪ *Harmonized Programme Management Guidelines* operational and related HCS indicators in place.
	▪ UN participating agencies reporting greater support from HQ
	▪ One UN process being documented in Viet Nam and shared with other One UN pilots in the context of UNEG and UNDG benchmarking initiatives.

September 2008	▪ Shared TNTF understanding of UN's comparative advantage in Viet Nam. ▪ Outcome of TNTF review of "Success Criteria" signals sufficient progress to allow donors to seek approval for remaining One Plan/One Plan Fund period.
December 2008	▪ *Joint Progress Report* on UN reform process presented at CG meeting ▪ One UN House opened ▪ Donor approval of un-earmarked full-funding for remaining One Plan/One Plan Fund period

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Outstanding/pending issues

- **One Leader**. Urgent action is required. As more agencies are joining the pilot, there are anxieties among the local team about the need to re-open the discussion on One Leader.
- **Financial feasibility of UN House.**
- **Re-focussing of the UN's role in supporting Vietnam's development**. 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. 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.

Contacts

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