

Preparations for 2012 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of UN operational activities for development

Action Plan

This action plan provides an overview of the key substantive activities as well as the consultative process planned as part of the analytical preparations of the Secretary-General for the 2012 QCPR of the General Assembly. An integral part of the QCPR preparations will also be a forward-looking analysis of the impact of important emerging issues, challenges and trends on UN operational activities for development.

Analytical studies		Survey of programme countries	Consultative process
A. Funding for operational activities of the United Nations development system			
Funding	DESA will build on progress in past two years in strengthening system-wide statistics, analysis and reporting on trends in funding flows for operational activities for development. Analytical preparations for 2012 QCPR will particularly focus on providing more disaggregated reporting on predictability of funding flows; breakdown of non-core funding by place of mobilization; strengthening analysis of support cost recovery of non-core contributions; refining breakdown between development-related funding and humanitarian assistance; providing more disaggregated analysis of concentration and fragmentation of UN development system; improving accuracy of reporting on sector expenditures; and reconciling funding totals in DESA and DAC reports (see Strategy Note for more details on work stream on funding)	DESA will elicit additional evidence on funding issues through <i>Survey</i> of programme country governments mandated in GA resolution 64/289 on system-wide coherence (see more details below)	DESA will consult focal points in UN entities for providing funding-related data on strategic approach and draft report. DESA will also convene inter-agency meeting on system-wide reporting on funding in cooperation with CEB secretariat which will include progress review of soon-to-be-developed UN-wide financial statistics database and reporting system DESA will consult UNDG/DOCO in design of <i>Survey</i> questions
B. National capacity development and development effectiveness			
Capacity-building and development	Desk review of relevant documents	DESA will elicit additional evidence through <i>Survey</i> of programme country governments on issues such as national ownership; capacity-building and development; use of national execution modalities, national expertise, national systems and procedures, including procurement systems; and support to and promotion of new and emerging technologies	DESA will consult UNDG/DOCO in design of <i>Survey</i> questions DESA will explore possibility of convening informal meeting of 6-8 Resident Coordinators and/or UNCT members to discuss key findings of <i>Survey</i> and other issues relevant for QCPR preparations
South-South cooperation and development of national capacities	Desk review of relevant documents	DESA will elicit additional evidence through <i>Survey</i> of programme country governments for evidence on issues relating to support of UN entities to mainstreaming of South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation into	DESA will consult UNDG/DOCO on design of <i>Survey</i> questions DESA will consult Special Unit for South-South Cooperation in UNDP on <i>Survey</i> findings and other

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		country-level programming	issues relevant to QCPR preparations DESA will consult JIU on data from its 2011 report on South-South cooperation
Gender equality and women's empowerment	DESA will rely on collaboration with UN-Women for evidence on issues related to gender equality and empowerment of women. This will include review of progress at country-level in improving mainstreaming of gender equality and women's empowerment in UN system operational activities. Other issues to be examined include: integration of gender into policies, strategies, medium-term plans and multi-year funding frameworks of UN entities; efforts to improve coordination and division of labour among UNCT members and enhance effectiveness of gender specialist resources, gender focal points and gender theme groups; effectiveness of institutional accountability mechanisms including inclusion of internationally-agreed gender equality results and gender-sensitive indicators in strategic frameworks; improvements in quantitative and qualitative reporting on gender equality, including gender disaggregated data; evaluation of the impact of joint initiatives; inclusion of gender-related information in annual reports of Resident Coordinators; system-wide coherence in promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment; and gender balance in appointments in organizations of UN development system	DESA will elicit additional evidence through <i>Survey</i> of programme country governments	DESA will work closely with UN-Women in assessing progress in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in UN operational activities. DESA will collaborate closely with UNDG/DOCO in design of <i>Survey</i> questions
Transition from relief to development	Desk review of relevant documents DESA will consult UNDG/DOCO on need to prepare separate analytical paper on this issue	DESA will elicit additional evidence through <i>Survey</i> of programme country governments on issues such as national ownership, capacity-building and development, alignment of assistance with national priorities, effectiveness of inter-agency coordination, transaction costs, system-wide coherence, South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation, funding	DESA will consult UNDG/DOCO in design of <i>Survey</i> questions DESA will explore possibility of convening informal meeting of 6-8 Resident Coordinators and/or UNCT members in countries undergoing transition from relief to development to discuss key findings of <i>Survey</i> and other issues relevant for QCPR preparations
C. Improved functioning of UN development system			

	Analytical studies	Survey of programme countries	Consultative process
Coherence, effectiveness and relevance¹	<p>DESA will conduct an assessment of how the characteristics, approaches and strategic and programmatic frameworks of UN system operational activities should evolve to respond to various country situations, based on principles of national ownership and leadership, and to evolving international development cooperation environment.²</p> <p>This work will include an assessment of UNDAFs to determine, inter alia, their alignment with national development plans and IADGs including MDGs, and effectiveness of their process, building on the review conducted by UNDG. Other issues to be examined include: added-value of UN system vis-a-vis other actors, relevance of UNDAFs to governments and other partners, alignment of agency programmes with UNDAFs, inter-agency coordination, cooperation with Bretton Woods institutions, accountability for system-wide results, transaction costs, joint initiatives, participation of non-resident agencies, monitoring, evaluation and reporting on results.</p> <p>This work stream will also include a review of progress made by UN development system in improving results-based strategic planning and management in order to strengthen accountability and transparency, and identification of measures to further improve its long-term delivery and results. This work will also examine what results mean for multilateral institutions and how they can be identified and assessed</p> <p>DESA will discuss with UNDG/DOCO specific focus of follow-up analytical work to the recently concluded study on Resident Coordinator System including the management and accountability system</p>	<p>DESA will elicit additional evidence on issues relating to UNDAF process, Resident Coordinator System and accountability and emerging issues, challenges and trends in UN operational activities for development through <i>Survey</i> of programme country governments</p>	<p>DESA will consult UNDG/DOCO in design and implementation of study as well as <i>Survey</i> questions</p> <p>DESA will consult UNDG UNDAF Programming Network in design and implementation of study</p> <p>DESA will consult HLCP/CEB, HLCM/CEB and UNDG/CEB on key findings of <i>Survey</i> of programme country governments and other issues relevant to QCPR preparations</p> <p>DESA will consult UNDG/DOCO on specific focus of analytical work relating to RCS and UN coordination. DESA will also consult UNDG WG on RCS on planned analytical work</p> <p>DESA will consult UNDG/DOCO on feasibility of conducting survey of UN Resident Coordinators and UN country teams on issues relating to functioning of UN system</p>
Regional dimensions	<p>Desk review of relevant documents.</p>	<p>DESA will elicit additional evidence through <i>Survey</i> of programme country governments on issues such as support of regional structures of UN entities to country-level activities</p>	<p>DESA will consult UNDG/DOCO in design of <i>Survey</i> questions</p> <p>DESA will consult Regional Commissions and selected UNDG Regional Support Teams and Regional Directors on key findings of <i>Survey</i> and other issues relevant to QCPR preparations</p>

¹ As mandated in GA resolution 64/289 (OP1), a draft compilation of legislation on roles and responsibilities of intergovernmental bodies in governance of UN operational activities for development has been prepared by DESA and made available to Member States “as background material for the comprehensive policy review” (<http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/pdf/compilation/pdf>).

² This analysis will be forward-looking and examine the impact of important emerging issues, challenges and trends on UN operational activities for development.

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Transaction cost and efficiency	DESA will evaluate progress in harmonizing and simplifying business practices with view to identifying way forward in increasing cost efficiency and quality of business operations and their ability to allow fast and flexible UN response and partnerships with governments and other actors. This will include comparative analysis of three main business models: provision of administrative services by individual entities, (b) a more harmonized approach to operational services and (c) outsourcing administrative services to independent business centre at full cost recovery with focus on areas of finance, human resources management, ICT, procurement , common premises and administrative services	DESA will elicit additional evidence on issues relating to transaction cost and efficiency through <i>Survey</i> of programme country governments	DESA will consult UNDG/DOCO in design and implementation of study as well as <i>Survey</i> questions. DESA will also consult UNDG Joint Funding and Country Office Business Operations Network in design and implementation of study
Country-level capacity of UN development system	Desk review of relevant documents	DESA will elicit additional evidence through <i>Survey</i> of programme country governments on evolving demands placed on UN system support and issues such as skills and expertise of UN staff at country-level	DESA will consult UNDG/DOCO in design of <i>Survey</i> questions DESA will consult with HLCM/CEB and UNDG/CEB on key findings of <i>Survey</i> and other issues relevant for QCPR preparations
Evaluation of operational activities for development	Desk review of relevant documents	DESA will elicit additional evidence through <i>Survey</i> of programme country governments on issues such as effectiveness of evaluation of country programmes, national ownership of evaluations at country-level, development of national evaluation capacities	DESA will consult UNDG/DOCO in design of <i>Survey</i> questions DESA will consult UNEG on key findings of <i>Survey</i> and other issues relevant to QCPR preparations
D. Other key QCPR-related initiatives			
'Client satisfaction survey'	<i>GA resolution 64/289</i> Requests SG, under auspices of ECOSOC and in cooperation with UN resident coordinators, to prepare and put in place a periodic survey, directed to Governments, on the effectiveness, efficiency and relevance of the support of UN system in order to provide feedback on the strengths and main challenges encountered in their interactions with UN development system, with a view to enabling intergovernmental bodies to address them, and also requests that the results of such surveys be published and made available to Member States (see OP10).	The <i>Survey</i> questionnaire will be sent from Deputy Secretary-General through the respective UN Resident Coordinator to head of the Government agency that functions as central counterpart to the UN development system. This agency will determine the level at which the one consolidated Government response will be based on further consultations at different levels.	DESA will consult closely UNDG/DOCO in design of <i>Survey</i> . In addition, experts on survey design & implementation within and outside UN system will be consulted including UNDP, Statistics Division of DESA and others DESA will organize workshop(s) with participation of Member States to discuss findings of <i>Survey</i> and other issues relevant to QCPR preparations DESA will brief Executive Boards and governing bodies of Fs/Ps /SAs on key findings of <i>Survey</i> DESA will organize workshop(s) in NY and Europe with participation of UN entities to discuss findings of

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			<i>Survey</i> and other relevant QCPR issues
Comprehensive review of institutional framework for system-wide evaluation of UN operational activities for development	<p><i>GA resolution 64/289</i> Requests SG, in consultation with UNEG and JIU, to commission a comprehensive review of the existing institutional framework for the system-wide evaluation of operational activities for development of UN system, and to submit a report, with recommendations, to GA at 66th session</p> <p>ODSG has commissioned two senior consultants to undertake the SWE review. The report of the consultants is expected to be submitted to DSG in first half of December 2011 and forwarded to Member States shortly thereafter</p>		<p>ODSG has established Reference Group composed of UNEG, DESA, OIOS, OCHA and JIU to advise on SWE review</p> <p>ODSG will convene two workshops in October and November respectively to discuss findings and recommendations of consultants</p>
Independent evaluation of DaO pilots	<p><i>GA resolution 64/289</i> Encouraged SG to proceed with the modality for the independent evaluation of lessons learned from the “delivering as one” pilots, as outlined by the Secretariat, after consultation, covering all aspects of the initiative, and looks forward to receiving the outcome at 66th session of GA</p> <p>The report of the Evaluation Management Group, which will oversee the independent evaluation of DaO initiative will be presented to President of GA during its 66th session</p>		<p>Main activities during the implementation phase will be field missions to the eight pilot countries to gather additional data deemed necessary on basis of review by Core Evaluation Team of country-led evaluations</p>