

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

Survey Results

INTRODUCTION

The present document was prepared based on the ECA Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) Implementation Survey undertaken by the Secretariat of the Regional United Nations Development Group for Europe and Central Asia (ECA R-UNDG) between 11 September and 3 November 2015.

The Survey measured implementation of the following elements of the SOPs for countries adopting Delivering as One.

| PILLAR | CORE ELEMENTS |
|--|--|
| Overarching | <p>Joint oversight and ownership agreed between Government and the UN and outlined in agreed terms of reference for a Joint National/ UN Steering Committee</p> <p>Annual reporting on joint UN results in the UN Country Results Report</p> |
| One Programme | <p>Signed UNDAF at the outcome level with legal text¹ as appropriate</p> <p>Joint Work Plans (of Results Groups), aligned with the UNDAF and signed by involved UN entities</p> <p>Results Groups (chaired by Heads of Agencies) focused on strategic policy and programme content established and aligned with national coordination mechanisms</p> |
| Common Budgetary Framework (and One Fund) | <p>A medium-term Common Budgetary Framework aligned to the UNDAF/One Programme as a results oriented resourcing framework for UN resources</p> <p>Annual Common Budgetary Frameworks (as a part of the Joint Work Plans) updated annually with transparent data on financial resources required, available, expected, and to be mobilized</p> <p>A Joint Resource Mobilization strategy as appropriate to the country context (with the option of a One Fund duly considered) approved by the UNCT and monitored and reported against in the UN Country Results Report</p> |
| One Leader | <p>Strong commitment and incentives of the UNCT to work towards common results and accountability through full implementation of the M&A system and the UNCT Conduct and Working Arrangements</p> |
| Operating as One | <p>Business Operations Strategy² endorsed by UNCT is highly recommended, adapted to local needs and capacities, to enhance operational oneness processes through</p> |

¹ Joint Programmes continue to be a valid mechanism in this context.

² The Business Operations Strategy is currently being field tested with finalization in 2015.

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| | eliminating duplication of common processes to leverage efficiencies and maximize economies of scale |
| | Empowered Operations Management Team (chaired by a Head of Agency) |
| | Operations costs and budgets integrated in the overall medium-term Common Budgetary Framework |
| Communicating as One | A joint communication strategy appropriate to the country context approved by the UNCT and monitored and reported against in the UN Country Results Report |
| | Country Communications Group (chaired by a Head of Agency) and supported by regional and HQ levels, as necessary |

In addition to a stock-taking exercise for status identification, the purpose of the ECA SOPs Implementation Survey was to identify the challenges that countries face, as well as countries' future plans with regard to the implementation of each pillar and its core elements.

All 18 offices in the ECA region provided responses to the Survey. An overview of SOP implementation status by country and by pillar is available in Annex I. Detailed findings for each element of key pillars are presented in Annex II.

In addition, the Survey sets the baseline of SOP implementation in the region and will be used in future monitoring of results over time.

KEY FINDINGS

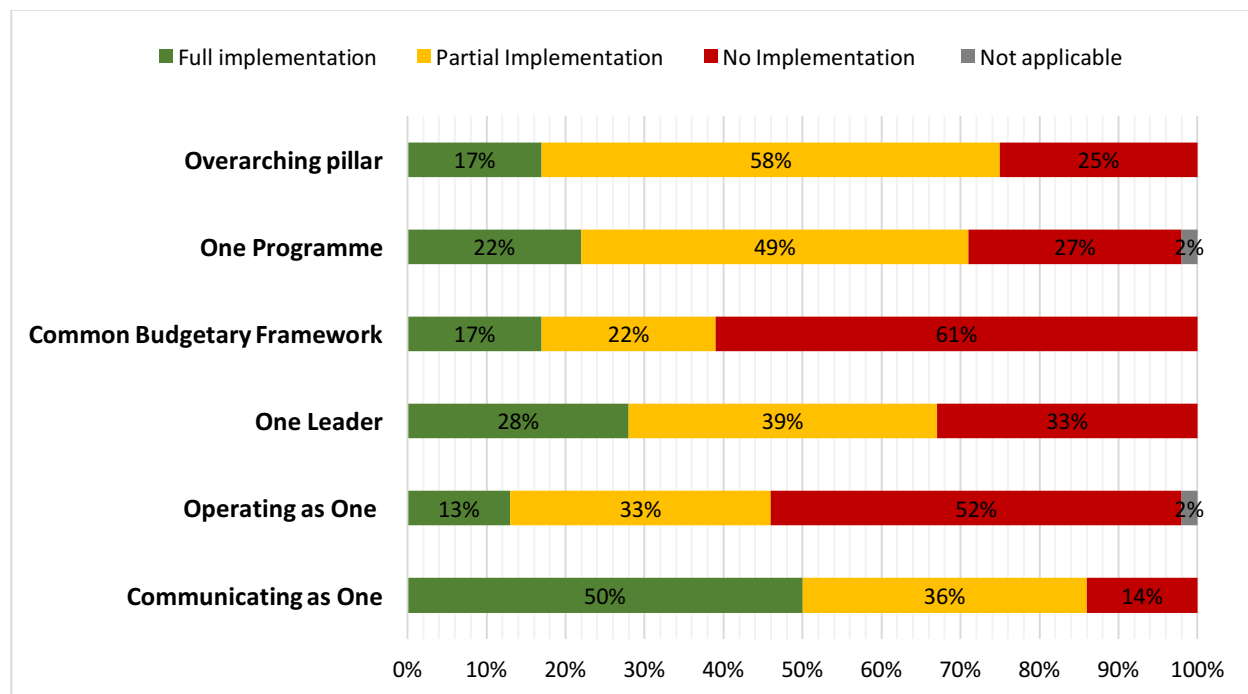
The analysis of the responses provided by countries allows to trace several key tendencies across the countries and across the pillars:

- Countries that formally adopted the DaO approach are more advanced with the SOP implementation than countries with no formal DaO application.
- There is a correlation between the level of awareness on and understanding of the SOPs and the status of their implementation.
- There is a correlation between the status of implementation and the ability to look for solutions to overcome challenges: the higher the status of implementation of the element, the more likely the country is to come up with an approach to overcome a challenge or identified gap. The contrary also holds true: the lower the status of implementation, the more respective countries highlight challenges rather than solutions.
- There is a correlation between the status of implementation and the understanding of the value of the SOPs for the UN work in a country: the higher is the implementation status, the higher is the comprehension of DaO advantages.
- There is a lack of buy-in and commitment on a number of individual Heads of Agencies in different countries and their primary concentration on agency(ies)'s specific mandates, which leads to bringing the overall status of implementation of the SOP pillar(s) to a lower level.
- There is a perception of a bureaucratic character of a number of SOP requirements.

A. General Overview

The overall progress on SOP implementation in the ECA region can be presented as follows:

Figure 1. Implementation of SOPs in the ECA Region by pillars



Overall, countries demonstrate a good level of SOP implementation. Four pillars have a level of implementation (full or partial) of 65% or above. These are:

- Overarching pillar (with only 25% of countries reporting no implementation);
- One Programme (27% of countries reported no implementation, while for 2% (one territory) one of the elements of the pillar it is not applicable);
- One Leader (33% of countries reported no implementation).
- Communicating as One (14% of countries reported no implementation).

Pillars with the lowest level of implementation are:

- Common Budgetary Framework (61% of countries reported no implementation);
- Operating as One (52% of countries reported no implementation, while for 2% (one territory) one of the elements of the pillar is not applicable).

All pillars could thus be arranged in the following continuum to illustrate the level of implementation.

Figure 2. Implementation of the SOPs Pillars from the lowest to the highest level of implementation



B. Pillars with a Good Implementation Rate

Within the pillars that have a good implementation rate, the following elements require higher attention both by UNCTs and the R-UNDG:

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <i>Overarching</i> | Annual reporting on joint UN results in the UN Country Results Report |
| <i>One Programme</i> | Joint Work Plans (of Results Groups), aligned with the UNDAF and signed by involved UN entities |
| <i>One Leader</i> | Strong commitment and incentives of the UNCT to work towards common results and accountability through full implementation of the M&A system and the UNCT Conduct and Working Arrangements |
| <i>Communicating as One</i> | Country Communications Group (chaired by a Head of Agency) and supported by regional and HQ levels, as necessary |

Within the Overarching Pillar, the core elements have the following rate of implementation:

Table 1. Implementation of the elements of the Overarching Pillar

| | Joint oversight and ownership agreed between Government and the UN and outlined in agreed terms of reference for a Joint National/ UN Steering Committee | | Annual reporting on joint UN results in the UN Country Results Report | |
|----------------|--|------------|---|------------|
| | Number of countries | Percentage | Number of countries | Percentage |
| Full | 3 | 16% | 3 | 17% |
| Partial | 12 | 67% | 9 | 50% |
| No | 3 | 17% | 6 | 33% |

The element with a lower level of implementation under this pillar is the annual reporting on joint UN results.

Among key challenges reported by countries under this element are:

- Data: lack of reliable data to measure and report on agreed outcomes;
- Capacities: M&E capacities of the UN staff that require strengthening.
- Lack of commitment from the government side;
- Lack of commitment on the side of some agencies to provide inputs into the reports.

Samples of relevant UN Country Results Reports from countries that have been implementing this element (Albania, Kyrgyzstan, and Moldova) will be provided to those countries that will be preparing the reports starting from 2016. An online learning session from the “champions” in the region to other offices is considered to promote higher quality reporting and share approaches for overcoming data shortages.

Within the One Programme pillar, the core elements have the following rate of implementation:

Table 2. Implementation of the elements of the One Programme pillar

| | Signed UNDAF at the outcome level with legal text as appropriate | | Joint Work Plans (of Results Groups), aligned with the UNDAF and signed by involved UN entities | | Results Groups (chaired by Heads of Agencies) focused on strategic policy and programme content established and aligned with national coordination mechanisms | |
|------------------------|--|------------|---|------------|---|------------|
| | Number of countries | Percentage | Number of countries | Percentage | Number of countries | Percentage |
| Full | 7 | 52% | 1 | 6% | 3 | 19% |
| Partial | 5 | 29% | 9 | 50% | 11 | 56% |
| No | 2 | 12% | 8 | 44% | 4 | 25% |
| N/A³ | 1 | 7% | - | - | - | - |

As seen from the table above, the element with the lowest level of implementation is the Joint Work Plans (JWP) of Results Groups. Only Albania has reported full implementation of this element. Challenges experienced by other countries include:

- Difficulties with making changes to a JWP once signed by the government, as this requires a process of re-signing the document;
- Work planning, monitoring and reporting of the Joint Work Plans is a time and effort consuming process.
- Insufficient capacities for monitoring, reporting and evaluation.
- Instances when UN agency-specific work plans take precedence over JWP, turning the JWP preparation into a consolidation of UN agency work plans rather than a joint work planning process with partners.
- Lack of commitment on the side of some UN agencies to engage in the development of the Joint Work Plans.

From the responses of those countries that have not prepared JWPs before, it is clear that there is a lack of understanding who should sign the JWPs on the side of the government. Several countries have indicated that they are still in the process of preparing the Terms of Reference for the Results Groups, after which agencies will discuss the preparation of JWPs.

To address this situation, JWPs from countries that are more advanced with the element (Albania and Montenegro) will be shared with the rest of the offices in the region.

³ Not applicable to Kosovo (References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

Within the Common Budgetary Framework pillar, the core elements have the following rate of implementation:

Table 3. Implementation of the elements of the Common Budgetary Framework Pillar

| | A medium-term Common Budgetary Framework aligned to the UNDAF/One Programme as a results oriented resourcing framework for UN resources | | Annual Common Budgetary Frameworks (as a part of the Joint Work Plans) updated annually with transparent data on financial resources required, available, expected, and to be mobilized | | A Joint Resource Mobilization strategy as appropriate to the country context (with the option of a One Fund duly considered) approved by the UNCT and monitored and reported against in the UN Country Results Report | |
|----------------|--|------------|--|------------|--|------------|
| | Number of countries | Percentage | Number of countries | Percentage | Number of countries | Percentage |
| Full | 3 | 17% | 4 | 22% | 2 | 11% |
| Partial | 5 | 28% | 2 | 11% | 5 | 26% |
| No | 10 | 55% | 12 | 67% | 11 | 63% |

The elements under this pillar have the lowest level of implementation. A detailed overview of key challenges and potential action points is presented at the end of this section.

Within One Leader pillar, the following is the rate of implementation:

Table 4. Implementation of the elements of the One Leader Pillar

| | Strong commitment and incentives of the UNCT to work towards common results and accountability through full implementation of the M&A system and the UNCT Conduct and Working Arrangements | |
|----------------|---|------------|
| | Number of countries | Percentage |
| Full | 5 | 28% |
| Partial | 7 | 39% |
| No | 6 | 33% |

Within this pillar, the biggest challenges relate to:

- Varying commitment of agencies;
- Lack of inclusive and transparent dialogues within UNCTs;
- Difficulties with getting a buy-in of new members of UNCTs;
- Challenges with revising the TOR for UNCT Conduct and Working Arrangements with the arrival of the new RC.

A number of offices that will start implementation of UNDAFs in 2016 have reported that UNCTs will consider developing and adopting the UNCT Conduct and Working Arrangements. A webinar on the best practices will be welcome by the country offices.

Within the Operating as One pillar, the following is the rate of implementation:

Table 5. Implementation of the elements of the Operating as One Pillar

| | Business Operations Strategy endorsed by UNCT | | Empowered Operations Management Team (chaired by a Head of Agency) | | Operations costs and budgets integrated in the overall medium-term Common Budgetary Framework | |
|----------------|--|------------|---|------------|--|------------|
| | Number of countries | Percentage | Number of countries | Percentage | Number of countries | Percentage |
| Full | 2 | 11% | 5 | 38% | 0 | 0% |
| Partial | 4 | 22% | 10 | 31% | 4 | 22% |
| No | 12 | 67% | 3 | 31% | 13 | 72% |
| N/A | - | - | - | - | 1 | 6% |

A detailed overview of the challenges of the implementation of the pillar is presented at the end of the section.

Within the Communicating as One pillar, the following is the rate of implementation:

Table 6. Implementation of the elements of the Communicating as One Pillar

| | A joint communication strategy appropriate to the country context approved by the UNCT and monitored and reported against in the UN Country Results Report | | Country Communications Group (chaired by a Head of Agency) and supported by regional and HQ levels, as necessary | |
|----------------|---|------------|---|------------|
| | Number of countries | Percentage | Number of countries | Percentage |
| Full | 7 | 39% | 11 | 61% |
| Partial | 7 | 39% | 6 | 33% |
| No | 4 | 22% | 1 | 6% |

C. Least Implemented Pillars

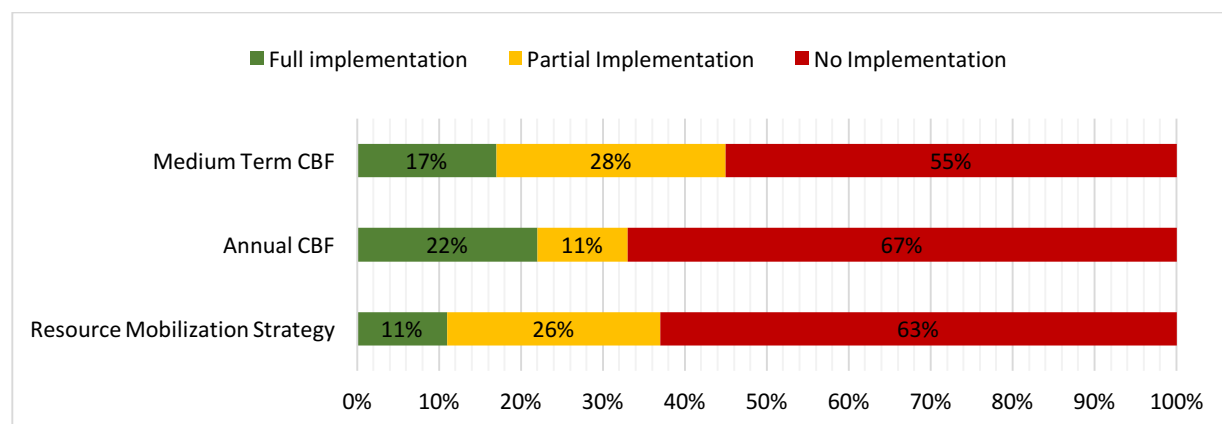
COMMON BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK

The pillar embraces:

1. Medium-Term Common Budgetary Framework reflecting financial resources required, available, and to be mobilized for the whole programming cycle.
2. Annual Common Budgetary Framework (as part of the Joint Work Plans) updated annually with data on financial resources required, available, and to be mobilized.
3. A Joint Resource Mobilization Strategy approved by the UNCT and being used to mobilize resources for implementation of the UNDAF/One Programme.

Figure 3 shows that on average more than 50% of countries are not implementing the elements under the Common Budgetary Framework pillar.

Figure 3. Implementation of the SOP Core Elements under the Pillar of Common Budgetary Framework



The *key challenges* mentioned by the countries relate to:

Methodologies:

- Difficulties with estimating the potential sources of funding for a medium-term common budgetary framework in countries with shrinking donor resources;
- Difficulties with updating the documents in a timely manner;
- Perception of extensive bureaucratic procedures and coordination difficulties
- Inclusion of the financial information of the Specialized Agencies due to specific governing and implementing mechanisms;
- Lack of accuracy of data.

Commitment and buy-in:

- The agencies are not willing to share their financial information;
- The agencies use their own financial systems and ways of keeping track of planned and expected budgets, so it is difficult for them to provide information in request formats and time periods.

UN Guidelines and procedures:

- Confusing and limiting factors of certain tools/guidelines (such as minimum thresholds per transfer, which is a burden to overcome for every transfer for programmes of limited monetary size; guidelines in particular of the MDTF, which need streamlining, etc.)

Suggested actions include:

- A communication from the Chair of R-UNDG to the Regional Directors to further encourage agencies' representatives in the field to cooperate and coordinate on the implementation of this pillar.
- A webinar with practical tips on better resource planning and estimation and one on resource mobilization strategy preparation will be organized.
- A country office that has been capturing inconsistencies within guidelines will be approached to institutionalize their experience with One Fund and submit feedback to the MDTF Office on the guidelines produced.

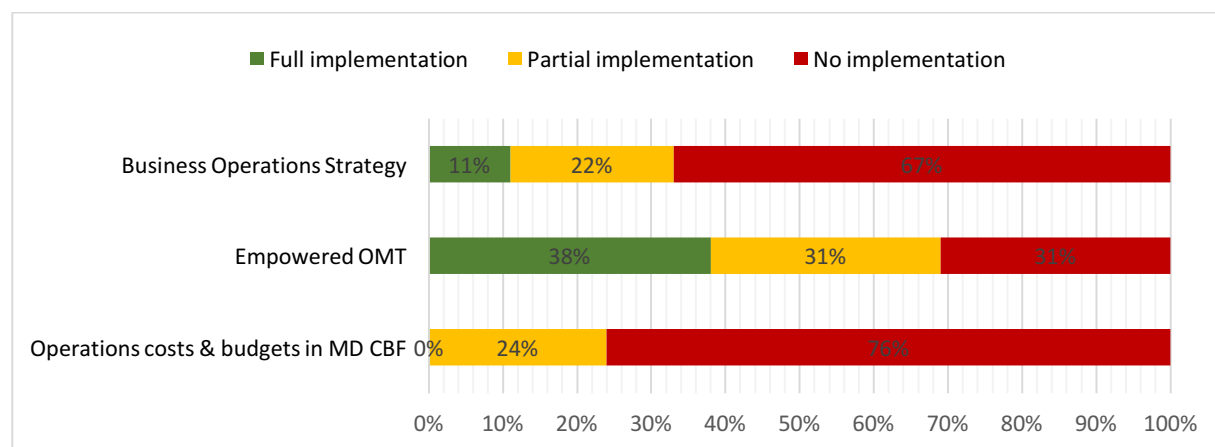
OPERATING AS ONE:

The pillar embraces:

1. Business Operations Strategy endorsed by UNCT, adapted to local needs and capacities;
2. Empowered Operations Managements Team (chaired by a Head of Agency);
3. Operations costs and budgets integrated in the overall medium-term Common Budgetary Framework.

Out of the three elements that the pillar embraces, one (Empowered OMT) element has a higher status of implementation, while the two remaining elements are much less advanced. The integration of operations costs and budgets in the overall medium-term CBF, in particular, is not fully implemented by a single country in the region.

Figure 4. Implementation of the SOP Core Elements under the Pillar of Operating as One



The *key challenges* identified by countries include:

Commitment and buy-in:

- Varying commitment of agencies;
- Lack of interest from Heads of Agencies to chair the OMT

Capacities:

- Varying operational capacities of agencies and lack of experience with the BOS;
- Inconsistencies and delays in data submission

Suggested action points:

- Request from Regional Directors to the agencies in the field for additional commitment to promote further implementation of the pillar;
- Identification of a number of training/learning opportunities targeting both the whole region and individual countries with either highest interest in the implementation of the pillar or biggest gap.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

Based on the analysis above, there are three main actions that the R-UNDG can consider to further boost the SOP implementation as part of their discussion at the R-UNDG meeting:

1. Share the results of the Survey with RCs/UNCTs highlighting the key gaps for UNCTs' stronger involvement. This can be backed up by a joint R-UNDG communication addressed to all RCs and UNCTs highlighting agencies' commitment to DaO/SOP implementation.
2. A series of webinars and workshops (with the support from respective agency specialists and DOCO) on the weakest pillars to raise the overall awareness level.
3. Country specific support for the elements that have been successfully implemented in some countries in the region to those who are lagging behind on the implementation.

To operationalize the strategy, the Secretariat of the ECA R-UNDG will:

1. Upload best practices and country-level documents to the ECA R-UNDG web-page;
2. Based on the Survey results, undertake additional consultations with the offices that are successfully implementing the SOPs and those whose answers demonstrate a possibility to benefit from a peer-to-peer learning to quickly boost the implementation status of certain elements and pair respective offices for further learning.
3. Coordinate and set-up virtual learning exchanges between the offices and technical specialists in identified areas for countries to have better understanding of particular requirements.

Annex I – SOP IMPLEMENTATION BY COUNTRY AND PILLAR

| | Joint Nat/UN SC | UN Country Results Report | UNDAF w Legal Text | Joint Work Plans | Results Groups by HOA | Medium term CBF | Annual CBF | Joint Resource Mobilizat ion Strategy | UNCT Conduct and Working Arrange ments | Business Operatio ns Strategy | OMT by HOA | Costs & Budgets integrat ed in CBF | Communi cation Strategy | Communi cations Group |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|---------------|---|---|--|---------------|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Albania | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Armenia | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Azerbaij an | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Belarus | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bosnia and Herzego vina | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Georgia | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Kazakhst an | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Kosovo (as per UNSCR 1244) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Kyrgyzst an | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Moldova | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Monten egro | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Serbia | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |



| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Tajikistan | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Turkey | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Turkmenistan | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ukraine | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Uzbekistan | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Annex II – IMPLEMENTATION OF SOPS BY ELEMENT

1. OVERARCHING PILLAR

JOINT OVERSIGHT AND OWNERSHIP AGREED BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND THE UN AND OUTLINED IN AGREED TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A JOINT NATIONAL/UN STEERING COMMITTEE

| | |
|------------------------|----|
| Full implementation | 3 |
| Partial implementation | 12 |
| No implementation | 3 |
| Total | 18 |

Figure 5. Implementation of SOP core element on joint oversight and ownership agreed between government and the UG and outlined in agreed Terms of Reference for a Joint National/UN Steering Committee

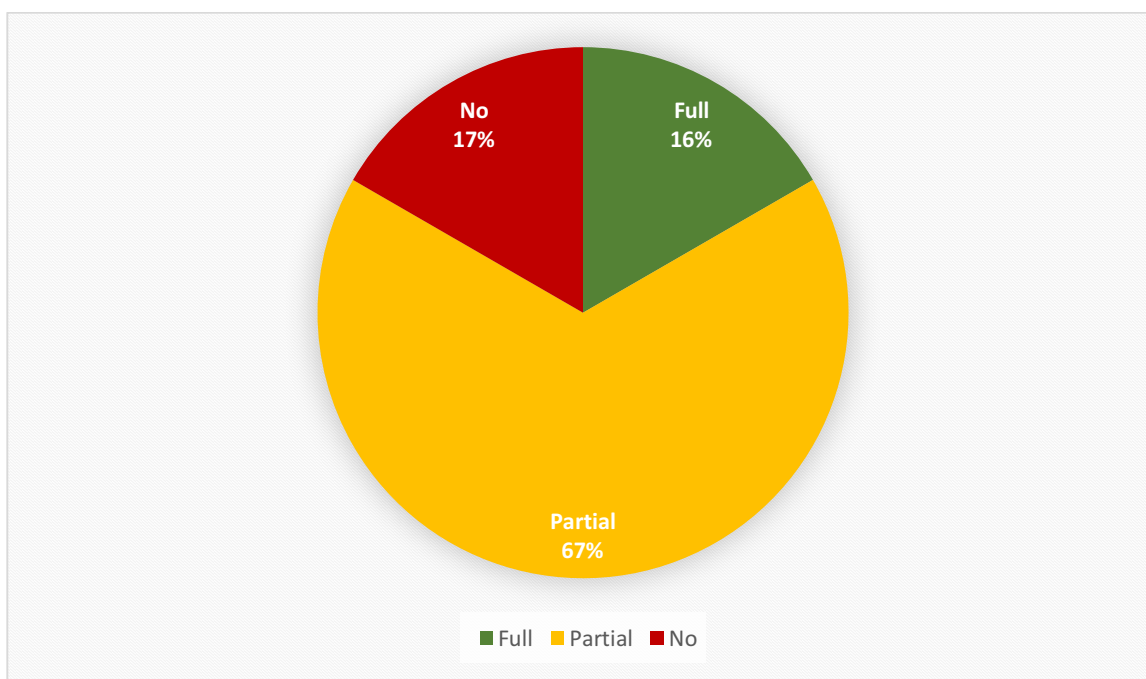


Table 7. Implementation on SOP core element on joint oversight and ownership agreed between government and the UG and outlined in agreed Terms of Reference for a Joint National/UN Steering Committee by country

| Status of implementation | Countries that have reported this status |
|--------------------------|--|
| Full | Albania, Montenegro, Serbia |

| | |
|----------------|--|
| <i>Partial</i> | <i>Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo⁴, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Uzbekistan</i> |
| <i>No</i> | <i>Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine</i> |

Among the ***challenges*** for the implementation of this pillar, the countries have indicated:

Host government related:

- Lack of commitment and ownership of the national government and complex governing structure that hinders proper approval procedure at the Joint Steering Committee as well as timely engagement of the national partners throughout the UNDAF implementation;
- Inter-ministerial and intra-ministerial cooperation that are rather poor are making the implementation of DaO much harder;
- Adequate representation from the Government side (Minister/deputy Minister level);
- Change of Government and delayed appointment of the new institutions/representatives to the UNDAF National Steering Committee and individual programmes' steering committees; lack of properly functioning Government aid coordination structure due to Government changes;
- Planning of meetings to ensure government officials participation is challenging in view of the changing calendars of key officials;
- Lack of understanding of RBM approach by Government counterparts;
- Poor national M&E capacity;
- Lack of accessible and reliable data to measure UNDAF outcomes; limited means of verification, while government does not welcome the use of alternative data sources, including UN studies.

UNCT related:

- Prioritization for resource mobilization (given the large amount of unfunded deliverables included in the work plans) proves very difficult and cumbersome for the JSC;
- Requirements are quite bureaucratic for a small UNCT and agencies capacity in middle-income countries; difficult to convince all agencies and counterparts of the benefits of a DaO approach;
- In-house M&E capacity needs to be strengthened as well to deliver quality results.

⁴ References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999)

ANNUAL REPORTING ON JOINT UN RESULTS IS ENSURED THROUGH A JOINT UN COUNTRY RESULTS REPORT

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| <i>Full implementation</i> | 3 |
| <i>Partial implementation</i> | 9 |
| <i>No implementation</i> | 6 |
| <i>Total</i> | 18 |

Figure 6. Implementation of SOP core element on annual reporting on joint UN results via the UN Country Results Report

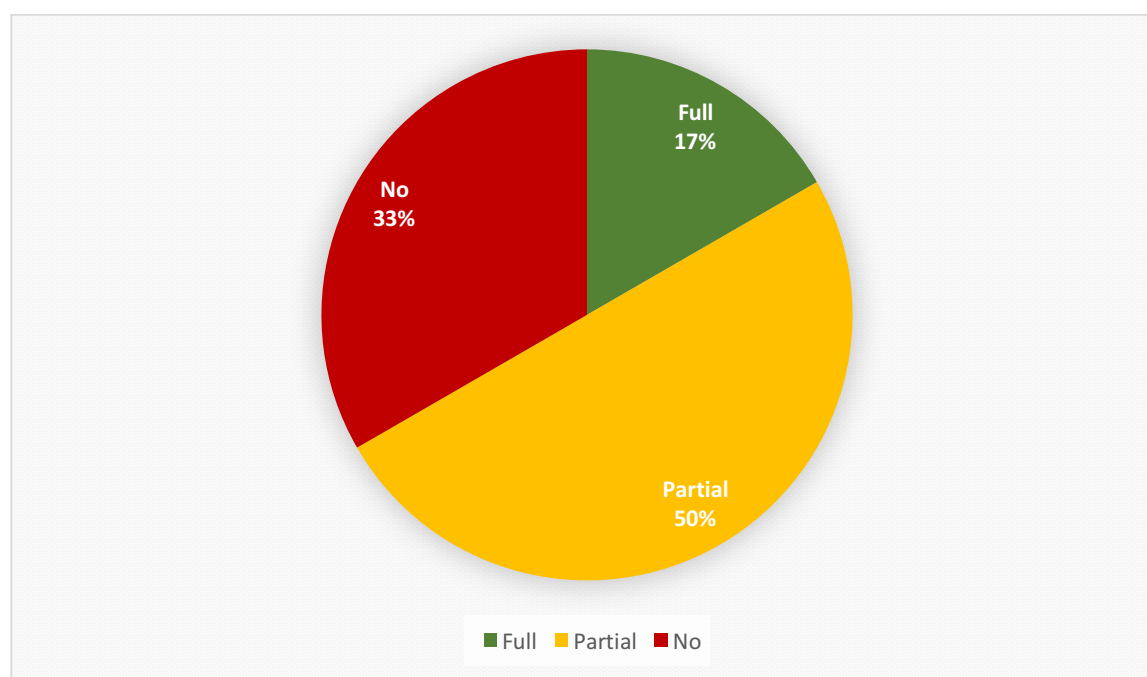


Table 8. Implementation on SOP core element on annual reporting on joint UN results via the UN Country Results Report

| <i>Status of implementation</i> | <i>Countries that have reported this status</i> |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <i>Full</i> | <i>Albania, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova</i> |
| <i>Partial</i> | <i>Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine</i> |
| <i>No</i> | <i>Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan</i> |

In terms of the challenges and possible ways to overcome them, the countries indicated:

Host government related:

- Government's commitment to co-chairmanship and proper engagement throughout the UNDAF implementation stage and reporting;

- Insufficient M&E capacities of government staff in terms of reporting at the outcome level;
- Challenges posed by the change in the government aid coordination structure, which make the process long and cumbersome;
- Lack of verifiable data from Government sources to measure and report on achieving UNDAF outcomes.

UNCT related:

- Difficulties in ensuring that all UNCT agencies contribute to the report due to lack of time and commitment;
- Timely implementation, monitoring and review of the UNDAF in line with the UNDAF Results Groups annual work plans;
- Insufficient M&E capacities of the UN staff in terms of reporting at the outcome level (Albania);
- Level of presentation of achievements (with smaller agencies reporting conferences and events as achievements);
- Numerous reporting obligations, including agency-specific reporting, which overburdens the JSC;
- Lack of effectiveness of the monitoring mechanisms for the high-level results to measure the achievements under the UNDAF results;
- Lack of clarity on what basis has to be used to operationalize the work of the result groups - CPAPs and AWP of other agencies or RG Annual Work Plans;

2. ONE PROGRAMME

SIGNED UNDAF AT THE OUTCOME LEVEL WITH LEGAL TEXT AS APPROPRIATE

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| <i>Full implementation</i> | 7 |
| <i>Partial implementation</i> | 8 |
| <i>No implementation</i> | 2 |
| <i>Not applicable</i> | 1 |
| <i>Total</i> | 18 |

This pillar is not applicable to Kosovo given that the UN in Kosovo operates under Security Council Resolution 1244.

Figure 7. Implementation of SOP element on UNDAF signed at the outcome level with legal text as appropriate

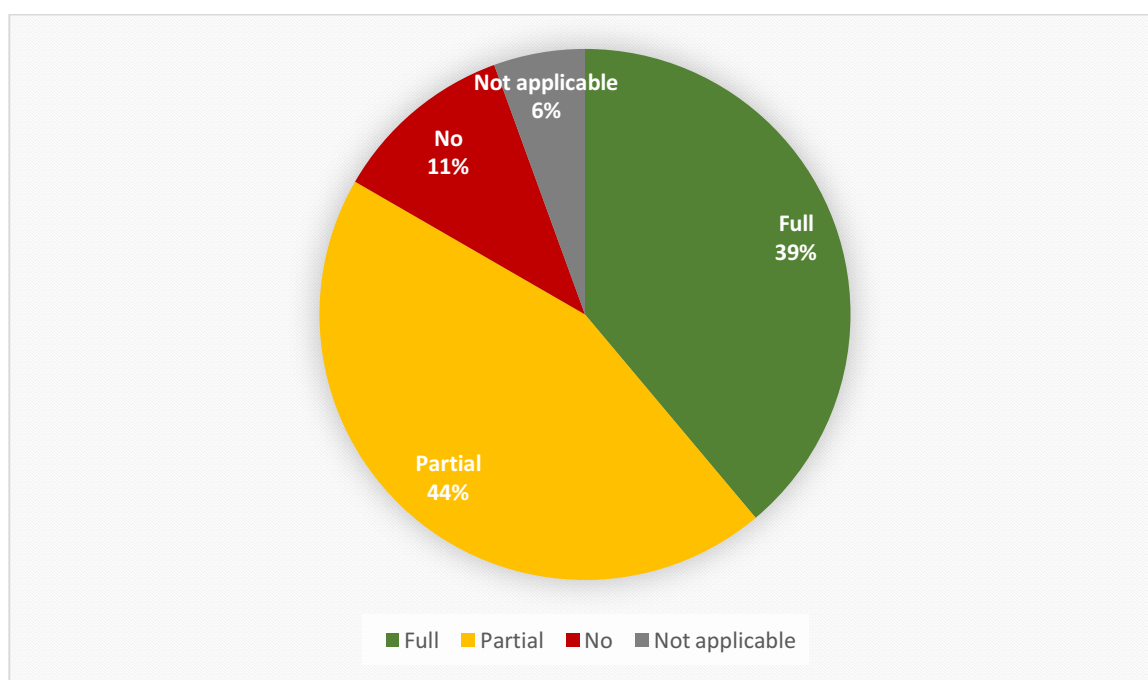


Table 9. Implementation of SOP element on UNDAF signed at the outcome level with legal text as appropriate by country

| <i>Status of implementation</i> | <i>Countries that have reported this status</i> |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <i>Full</i> | <i>Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</i> |
| <i>Partial</i> | <i>Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Montenegro, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan</i> |
| <i>No</i> | <i>Tajikistan, Turkey</i> |

Note: It should be noted that since the legal annex was adopted only in 2015, only Bosnia and Herzegovina has an UNDAF with the legal annex per se as called for by the SOPs.

The major challenges to implementation as presented by countries include:

Host government related:

- Lack of ownership and participation of the Government at all stage;
- Absence of an approved national strategic framework for the future years;
- Inefficient government aid coordination structure;
- Inappropriateness of the legal text as seen by the Government, which delays signing of the UNDAF;

UNCT related:

- The system of cost sharing needs to be institutionalized. There is currently (i) hesitation for UN Agencies to cost share and (ii) unequal distribution of cost sharing among UN agencies. The cost sharing system as it stands now puts a heavy burden on the RCO to follow through, remind, and solicit UN agencies for funding. In addition, without the certainty of a committed budget, planning and implementation of activities for the year is difficult and uncertain;
- UNCT has no prior experience with UNDAF Action Plan or Joint Results Group

JOINT WORK PLANS (OF RESULTS GROUPS), ALIGNED WITH THE UNDAF AND SIGNED BY INVOLVED UN AGENCIES

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| <i>Full implementation</i> | 1 |
| <i>Partial implementation</i> | 9 |
| <i>No implementation</i> | 8 |
| <i>Total</i> | 18 |

Figure 8. Implementation of SOP element on Joint Work Plans (of Results Groups), aligned with the UNDAF and signed by involved UN agencies

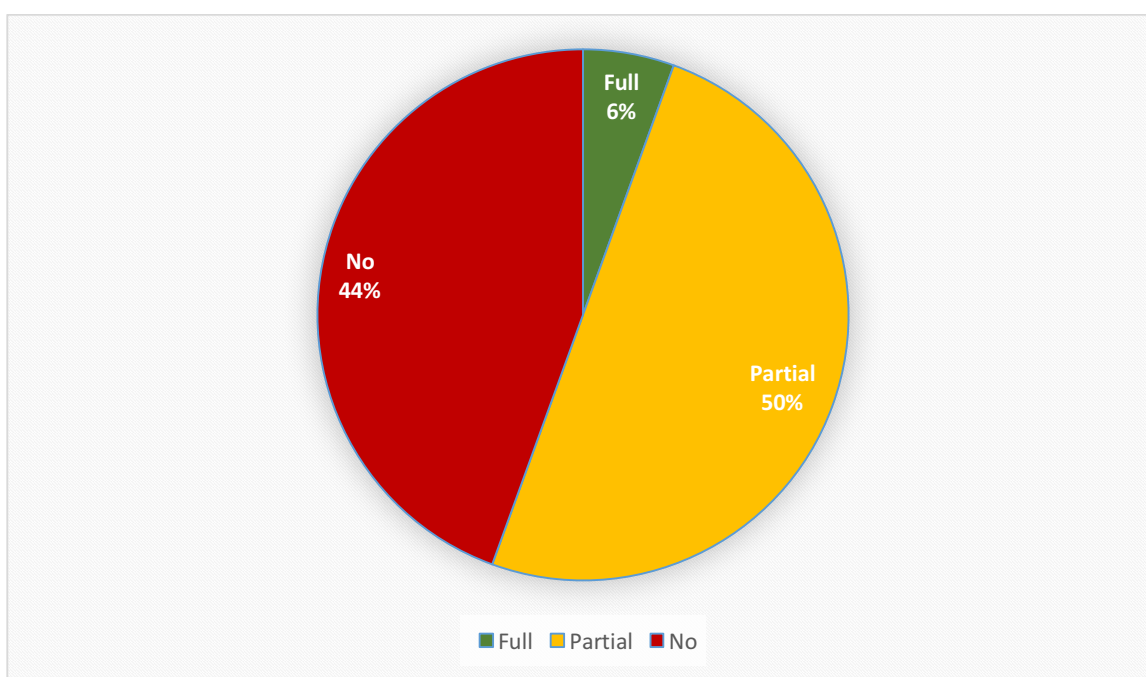


Table 10. Implementation of SOP element on Joint Work Plans (of Results Groups), aligned with the UNDAF and signed by involved UN agencies by country

| <i>Status of implementation</i> | <i>Countries that have reported this status</i> |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <i>Full</i> | <i>Albania</i> |
| <i>Partial</i> | <i>Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine</i> |
| <i>No</i> | <i>Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan</i> |

The major challenges to implementation as presented by countries include:

Host government related:

- Government entities' commitment to co-chairmanship and proper engagement throughout the UNDAF implementation stages;
- Government signatories, Deputy Ministers, as strategic authorities, are not directly involved in the work carried out on the outputs and have limited information on what they are signing and in some cases refuse to sign; consequently, it is difficult to make changes to a JWP given the difficulties faced for its signature;

UNCT related:

- The biggest concern for UN programme staff is the burden related to work planning, monitoring and reporting;
- There are times when the UN agency-specific work plans often precede that for the OWG JWP. This means that JWP preparation is more of a consolidation of UN agency work plans rather than a joint work planning process with partners. The JWPs preparatory process should reflect more the joint visioning between the collaborating UN agencies and country partners;
- Limited resources and shrinking budgets, including human resources gap;
- Poor in-house M&E capacity;
- Lack of agreement inside the UNCT on the usefulness of the Joint Work Plans;
- Lack of clarity inside UNCT who signs off the JWPs;
- Difference in chairing skills of the agency representatives;

Issues and country requests:

- Guidance from UNDG/DOCO will be beneficial in informing about best practices for preparing JWPs;

RESULTS GROUPS (CHAIRD BY HEADS OF AGENCIES) FOCUSED ON STRATEGIC POLICY AND PROGRAMME CONTENT ESTABLISHED AND ALIGNED WITH NATIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISMS

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| <i>Full implementation</i> | 3 |
| <i>Partial implementation</i> | 11 |
| <i>No implementation</i> | 4 |
| <i>Total</i> | 18 |

Figure 9. Implementation of SOP element on Results Groups (chaired by Heads of Agencies) focused on strategic policy and programme content established and aligned with national coordination mechanisms

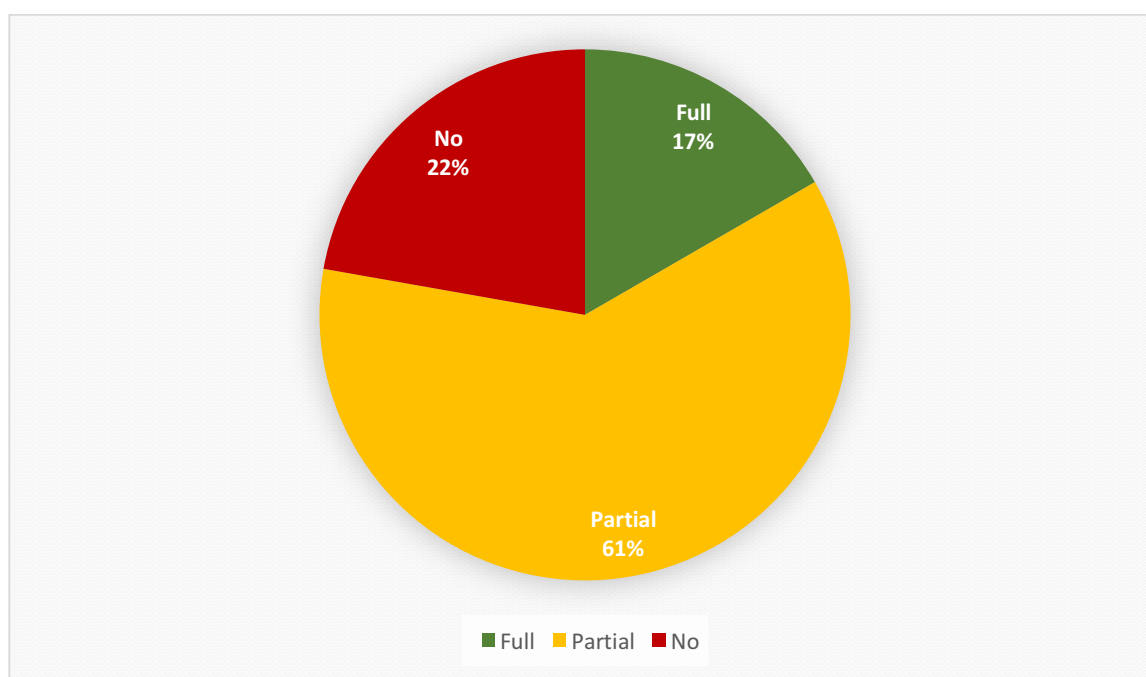


Table 11. Implementation of SOP element on Results Groups (chaired by Heads of Agencies) focused on strategic policy and programme content established and aligned with national coordination mechanisms

| <i>Status of implementation</i> | <i>Countries that have reported this status</i> |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <i>Full</i> | <i>Albania, Moldova, Montenegro</i> |
| <i>Partial</i> | <i>Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan</i> |
| <i>No</i> | <i>Belarus, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine</i> |

The major challenges to implementation as presented by countries include:

Host government related:

- Proper coordination with the government and avoidance of duplication;
- Poor intra- and interministerial cooperation within the Government;
- Absence or weakness of national coordination mechanisms to properly align and ensure coordination;

UNCT related:

- Small UNCTs find it difficult to find Chairs for RGs;
- Varying commitment of RG Chairs;
- Limited resources and shrinking budgets, including human resources gap;
- Poor in-house M&E capacity;
- Lack of effective collaboration, based on the “institutional culture of fear”, different personalities and styles; lack of cooperation at the working level; gaps in information sharing; lack of commitment; concerns for agency visibilities; lack of initiative; suspicion;

3. COMMON BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK (AND ONE FUND)

A MEDIUM-TERM COMMON BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK ALIGNED TO THE UNDAF/ONE PROGRAMME AS A RESULTS-ORIENTED RESOURCING FRAMEWORK FOR UN RESOURCES

| | |
|------------------------|----|
| Full implementation | 3 |
| Partial implementation | 5 |
| No implementation | 10 |
| Total | 18 |

Figure 10. Implementation of SOP element on a medium-term Common Budgetary Framework aligned to the UNDAF/One Programme as a results-oriented resourcing framework for UN resources

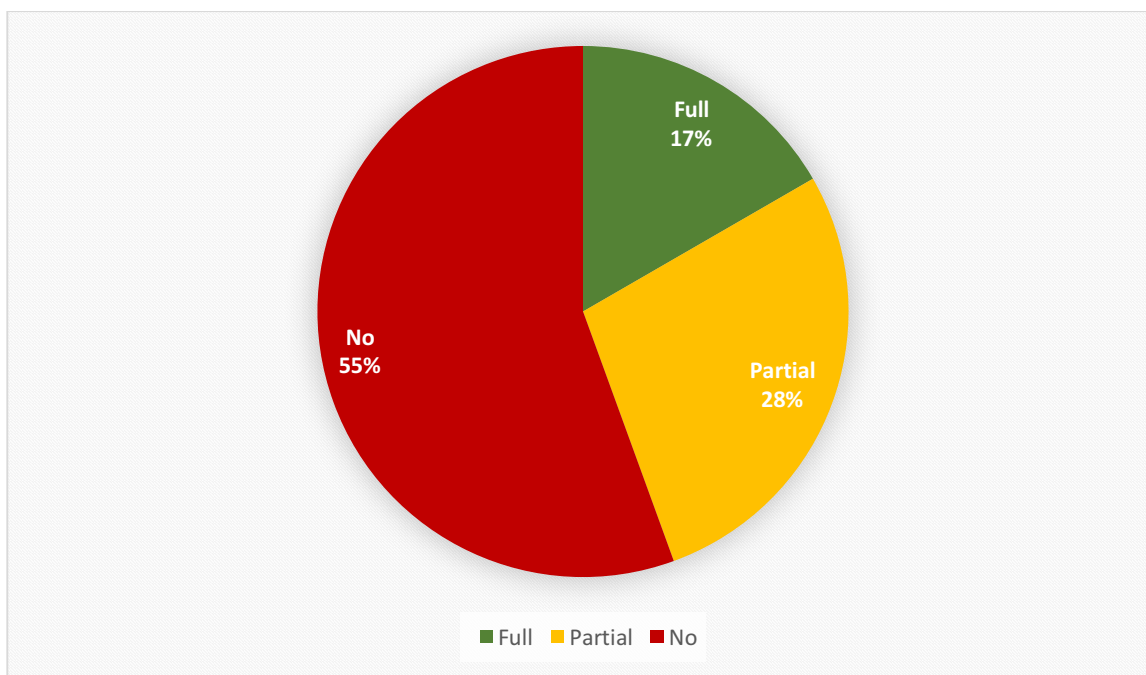


Table 12. Implementation of SOP element on a medium-term Common Budgetary Framework aligned to the UNDAF/One Programme as a results-oriented resourcing framework for UN resources by country

| Status of implementation | Countries that have reported this status |
|--------------------------|---|
| Full | Albania, Moldova, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia |
| Partial | Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kazakhstan, Montenegro, Uzbekistan |
| No | Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine |

The major challenges to implementation as presented by countries include:

UNCT related:

- Ensuring a realistic costing of the One Programme, taking into account the potential financing sources to cover unfunded outcomes;
- Main challenge is with regard to updating the document three times a year since not all agencies provide inputs timely;
- The agencies have different financial systems and ways of keeping track of planned and expended budgets so for some of them is difficult to provide information requested by the CBF as it requires additional time;
- Developing the common budgetary framework using One Fund modality may be challenging at this medium UNDAF implementation stage. UNCT and OMT in particular would need hands-on expertise and practical support in capacitating on the Common Budgetary Framework processes beyond key policy decisions;
- The members of the UNCT may not wish to share the budget information. As this is a change of culture it may take time;

Other:

- Reduced funding opportunities for middle-income countries and increasing competition among the agencies for the available funding

ANNUAL COMMON BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK (AS A PART OF THE JOINT WORK PLANS) UPDATED ANNUALLY WITH TRANSPARENT DATA ON FINANCIAL RESOURCES REQUIRED, AVAILABLE, EXPECTED, AND TO BE MOBILIZED

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| <i>Full implementation</i> | 4 |
| <i>Partial implementation</i> | 2 |
| <i>No implementation</i> | 12 |
| <i>Total</i> | 18 |

Figure 11. Implementation of SOP element on annual Common Budgetary Framework (as a part of the Joint Work Plans) updated annually with transparent data on financial resources required, available, expected, and to be mobilized

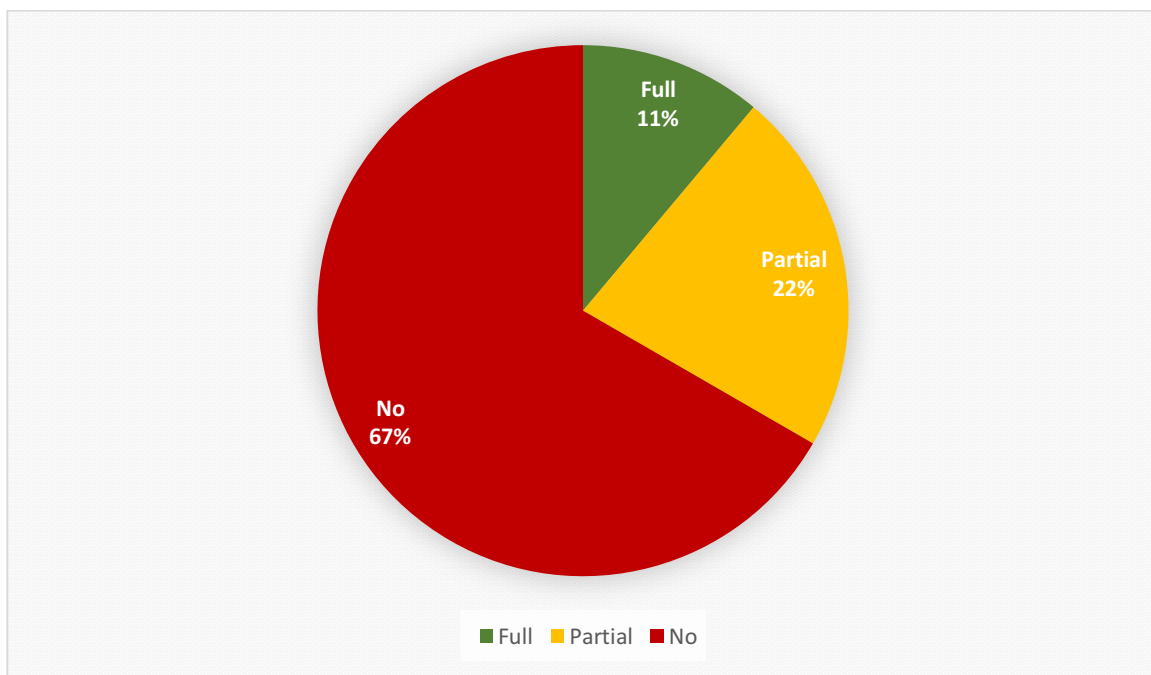


Table 13. Implementation of SOP element on annual Common Budgetary Framework (as a part of the Joint Work Plans) updated annually with transparent data on financial resources required, available, expected, and to be mobilized per country

| <i>Status of implementation</i> | <i>Countries that have reported this status</i> |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <i>Full</i> | <i>Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Montenegro</i> |
| <i>Partial</i> | <i>Kyrgyzstan, Serbia</i> |
| <i>No</i> | <i>Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan</i> |

The major challenges to implementation as presented by countries include:

UNCT related:

- Ensuring a realistic costing of the One Programme, taking into account the potential financing sources to cover unfunded outcomes;
- Inclusion of the financial information of the Specialized Agencies due to specific governing and implementing mechanisms;
- Varying commitment of agencies due to additional admin burden for agencies;
- Data is not 100 percent accurate due to different reporting systems and calculation methodologies;
- Further enhancement of the M&E structures may be required;

Issues, requests from countries:

A request for a stronger push from HQ level for agencies to provide data to RCO.

A JOINT RESOURCE MOBILIZATION STRATEGY AS APPROPRIATE TO THE COUNTRY CONTEXT (WITH THE OPTION OF A ONE FUND DULY CONSIDERED) APPROVED BY THE UNCT AND MONITORED AND REPORTED AGAINST IN THE UN COUNTRY RESULTS REPORT

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| <i>Full implementation</i> | 2 |
| <i>Partial implementation</i> | 5 |
| <i>No implementation</i> | 11 |
| <i>Total</i> | 18 |

Figure 12. Implementation of SOP element on a Joint Resource Mobilization Strategy as appropriate to the country context (with the option of a One Fund duly considered) approved by the UNCT and monitored and reported against in the UN Country Results Report

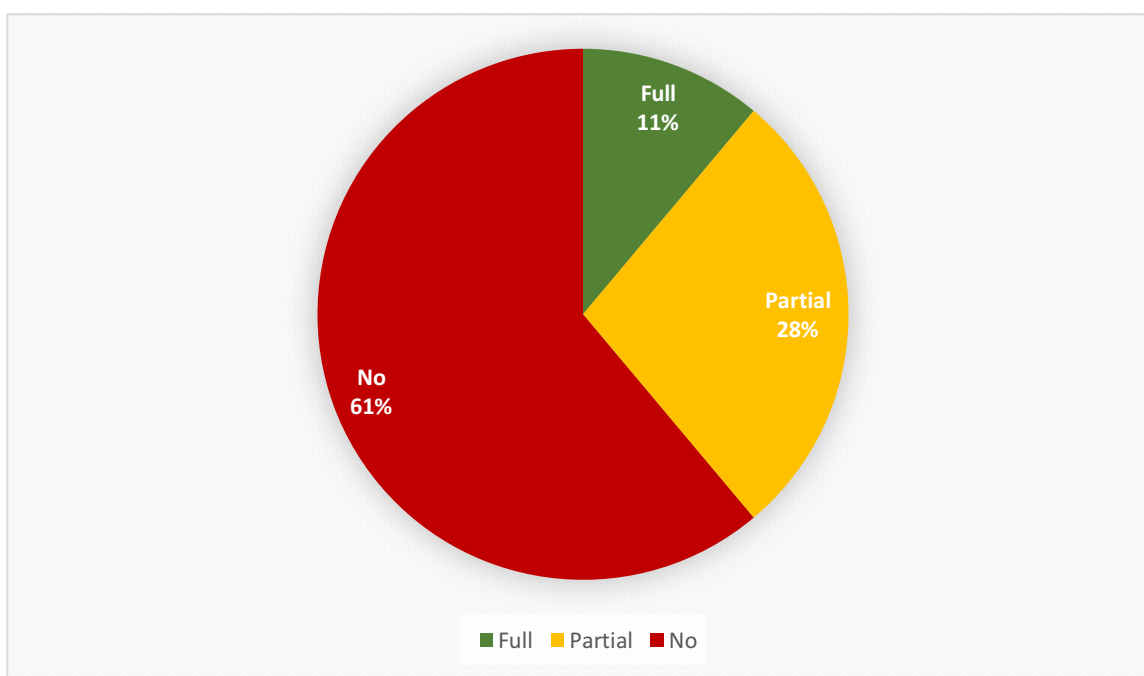


Table 14. Implementation of SOP element on a Joint Resource Mobilization Strategy as appropriate to the country context (with the option of a One Fund duly considered) approved by the UNCT and monitored and reported against in the UN Country Results Report by country

| <i>Status of implementation</i> | <i>Countries that have reported this status</i> |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <i>Full</i> | <i>Albania, Montenegro</i> |
| <i>Partial</i> | <i>Armenia, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Serbia</i> |
| <i>No</i> | <i>Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan</i> |

The major challenges to implementation as presented by countries include:

UNCT related:

- Challenge of scaling up initial cost-sharing arrangements and change the 'image' of the UN from a 'donor' to a 'partner';
- Buy-in from all UNCT members and UNCT commitment to carry out the endorsed Strategy, to the possible extent jointly, in a very competitive donor environment;
- Individual agencies concern over their 'brand' and resources;
- Individual agencies find it more convenient for them to approach donor agencies individually, rather than in cooperation to each other;
- Extensive bureaucratic procedures and coordination difficulties that the agencies have experienced in the past in the implementation of the very few joint programmes have discouraged the agencies from undertaking joint RM.

Other:

- Shrinking donor base for MICs;

Issues, requests from countries:

- Difficulties with the MDTF, in particular, a minimum threshold of 50,000 USD per transfer from the MDTF to Participating UN Organizations creates an obstacle for MICs with programmes of limited monetary size. Moreover, MDTF reporting guidelines need to be streamlined. In the various documents provided by the MPTF Office at least six different names are used for the same report.

4. ONE LEADER

UNCT CONDUCT AND WORKING ARRANGEMENTS AGREED BY UNCT AND IMPLEMENTED

| | |
|------------------------|----|
| Full implementation | 5 |
| Partial implementation | 7 |
| No implementation | 6 |
| Total | 18 |

Figure 13. Implementation of SOP element on UNCT Conduct and Working Arrangements agreed by UNCT and implemented

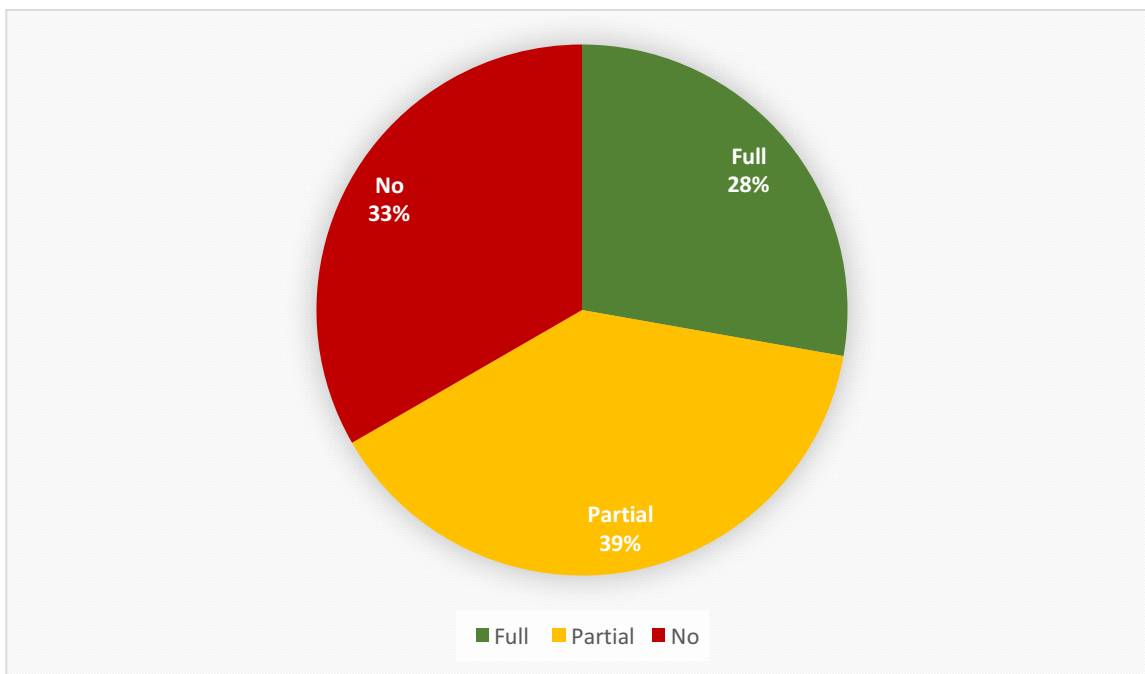


Table 15. Implementation of SOP element on UNCT Conduct and Working Arrangements agreed by UNCT and implemented by country

| Status of implementation | Countries that have reported this status |
|--------------------------|--|
| Full | Armenia, Azerbaijan, Moldova, Serbia, Turkey |
| Partial | Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan |
| No | Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan |

The major challenges to implementation as presented by countries include:

UNCT related:

- Varying commitment from agencies and their getting buy in from new UNCT members on the TOR as well as during the revision time;
- Ensuring an inclusive and transparent discussion within the UNCT;
- Balancing between formal requirements and practical needs at the ground.

Issues, requests from countries:

- Countries that implement the pillar recognize that more frequent references should be made for higher success with implementation.
- Best practices were requested by be made available from DOCO.

5. OPERATING AS ONE

BUSINESS OPERATIONS STRATEGY ENDORSED BY UNCT AND ADAPTED TO LOCAL NEEDS AND CAPACITIES

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| <i>Full implementation</i> | 2 |
| <i>Partial implementation</i> | 4 |
| <i>No implementation</i> | 12 |
| <i>Total</i> | 18 |

Figure 14. Implementation of SOP element on Business Operations Strategy endorsed by UNCT and adapted to local needs and capacities

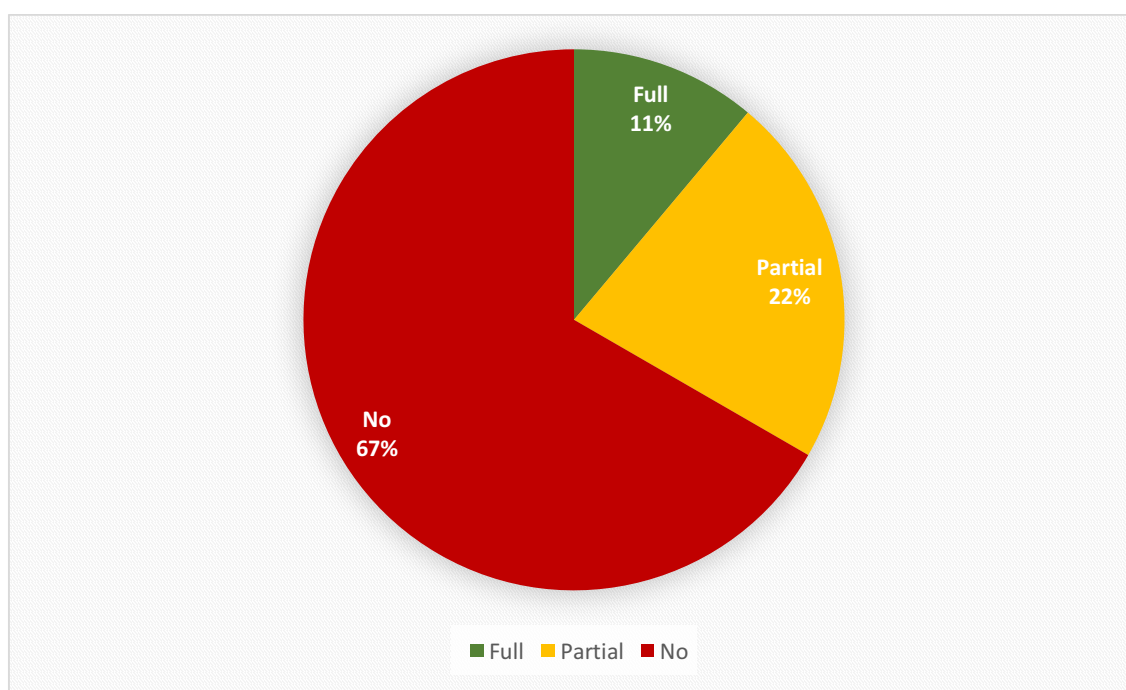


Table 16. Implementation of SOP element on Business Operations Strategy endorsed by UNCT and adapted to local needs and capacities by country

| <i>Status of implementation</i> | <i>Countries that have reported this status</i> |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <i>Full</i> | <i>Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova</i> |
| <i>Partial</i> | <i>Albania, Georgia, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan</i> |
| <i>No</i> | <i>Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Montenegro, Serbia, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan</i> |

The major challenges to implementation as presented by countries include:

UNCT related:

- Varying commitment from agencies;
- Varying capacities among agencies in relation to operations, therefore this doesn't provide the incentive to OMT to apply all SOPs guidance;
- OMT needs capacity development in BOS development process;
- Perception that BOS is a timely and costly process.

Issues, requests from countries:

- Agency specific rules and regulations prevent further cooperation that need to be solved at HQ level;

EMPOWERED OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT TEAM CHAIRED BY A HEAD OF AGENCY

| | |
|------------------------|-----------|
| Full implementation | 5 |
| Partial implementation | 10 |
| No implementation | 3 |
| Total | 18 |

Figure 15. Implementation of SOP element on empowered Operations Management Team chaired by a Head of Agency

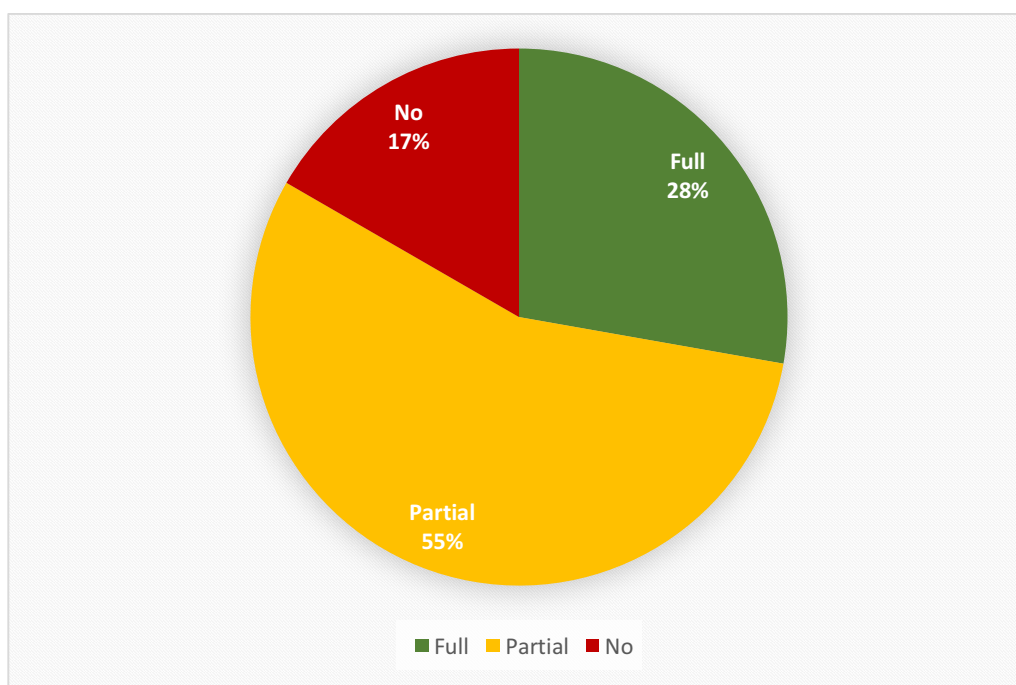


Table 17. Implementation of SOP element on empowered Operations Management Team chaired by a Head of Agency by country

| Status of implementation | Countries that have reported this status |
|--------------------------|---|
| Full | Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Serbia, Turkey |
| Partial | Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Montenegro, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan |
| No | Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan |

The major challenges to implementation as presented by countries include:

UNCT related:

- Varying commitment from agencies;
- Varying capacities among agencies in relation to operations, therefore this doesn't provide the incentive to OMT to apply all SOPs guidance;

- Inconsistencies and delays in data entry and processing from multiple ERP systems used by UN agencies;
- Different UN agency standards discourage common LTAs for procurement of computer software and hardware;
- Harmonization of rules and procedures such as DSA breakdown rates, different systems for performance appraisal, and approving limits for agency procurement committees;
- Shrinking budgets and, consequently, human resources gap, namely Operations Managers;
- Insufficient interest from HOAs to chair the OMT.

OPERATIONS COSTS AND BUDGETS INTEGRATED IN THE OVERALL MEDIUM-TERM COMMON BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| <i>Full implementation</i> | 0 |
| <i>Partial implementation</i> | 4 |
| <i>No implementation</i> | 13 |
| <i>Not applicable</i> | 1 |
| <i>Total</i> | 18 |

Figure 16. Implementation of SOP element on operations costs and budgets integrated in the overall Medium-Term Common Budgetary Framework

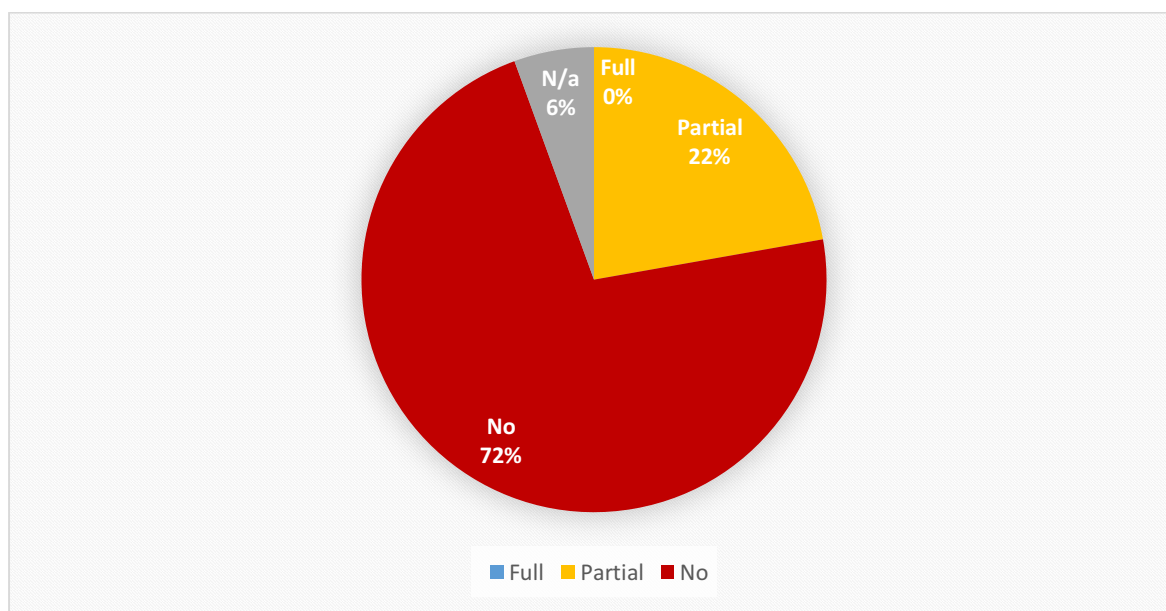


Table 18. Implementation of SOP element on operations costs and budgets integrated in the overall Medium-Term Common Budgetary Framework by country

| <i>Status of implementation</i> | <i>Countries that have reported this status</i> |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <i>Full</i> | |
| <i>Partial</i> | <i>Albania, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Montenegro</i> |
| <i>No</i> | <i>Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Serbia, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan</i> |

The major challenges to implementation as presented by countries include:

UNCT related:

- Commitment of the UNCT to include operations costs into the medium-term CBF proves difficult as this entails a huge work on behalf of OMT chair to consolidate the financial information from all UN Agencies;

- Unpredictability of funding perspectives for some agencies and difficulties for providing information for the period of 2-3 on planned resources, is an agency has an annual planning only and is project based years.

6. COMMUNICATING AS ONE

A JOINT COMMUNICATION STRATEGY APPROPRIATE TO THE COUNTRY CONTEXT APPROVED BY THE UNCT AND MONITORED AND REPORTED AGAINST IN THE UN COUNTRY RESULTS REPORT

| | |
|------------------------|----|
| Full implementation | 7 |
| Partial implementation | 7 |
| No implementation | 4 |
| Total | 18 |

Figure 17. Implementation of SOP element on a Joint Communication Strategy appropriate to the country context approved by the UNCT and monitored and reported against in the UN Country Results Report

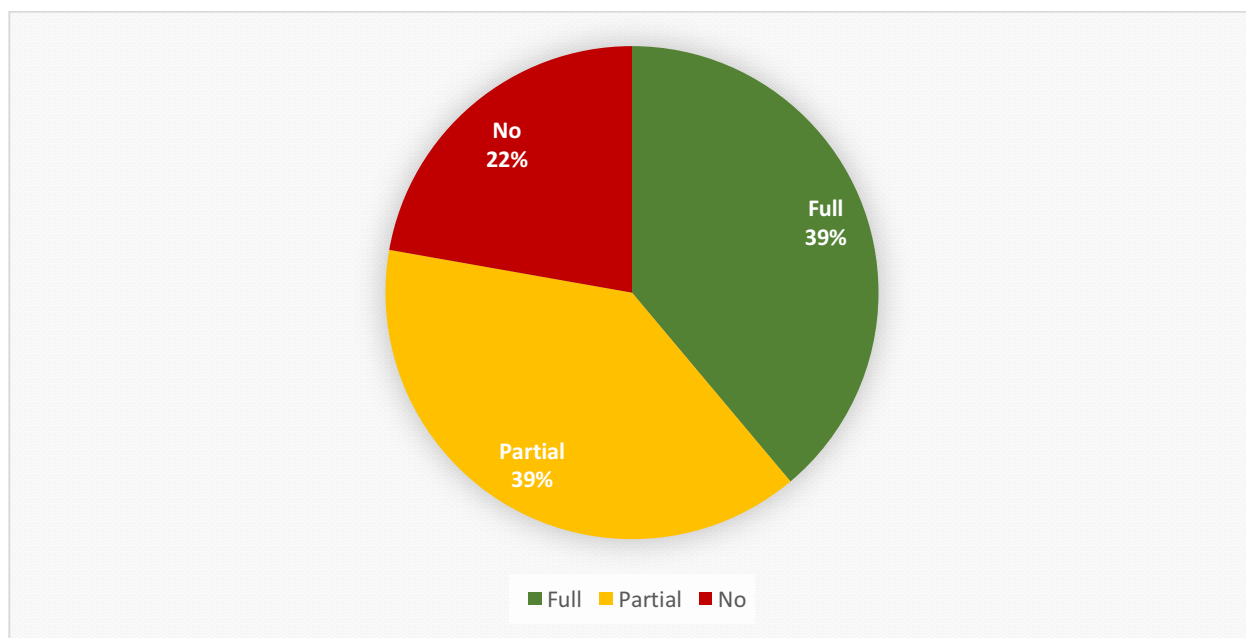


Figure 19. Implementation of SOP element on a Joint Communication Strategy appropriate to the country context approved by the UNCT and monitored and reported against in the UN Country Results Report by country

| Status of implementation | Countries that have reported this status |
|--------------------------|--|
| Full | Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Montenegro, Turkey |
| Partial | Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine |
| No | Kosovo, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan |

The major challenges to implementation as presented by countries include:

UNCT related:

- It has proven difficult for the UN Agencies to cost share the UN communication budget. As a result, planning of the UN communication activities for the year proves difficult as their implementation risks to become unreliable;
- Limited human resources;
- Individual UN agencies tend to prioritize their agency communications over broader UN communications and outreach, while DPI focuses on the implementation of initiatives and campaigns that are driven by the activity of DPI headquarters rather than the local, country-specific needs;

Issues raised by countries:

- Media relations shall be better streamlined at UN level, aiming at improved results in terms of quality and quantity of media coverage, as well as efficiency gains;
- A higher degree of transparency and timely information sharing towards external partners and civil society on results, money spent and contracting opportunities could be achieved using the appropriate communication tools.

COUNTRY COMMUNICATIONS GROUP CHAIRED BY A HEAD OF AGENCY

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| <i>Full implementation</i> | 11 |
| <i>Partial implementation</i> | 6 |
| <i>No implementation</i> | 1 |
| <i>Total</i> | 18 |

Figure 18. Implementation of SOP element on a County Communications Group chaired by a Head of Agency

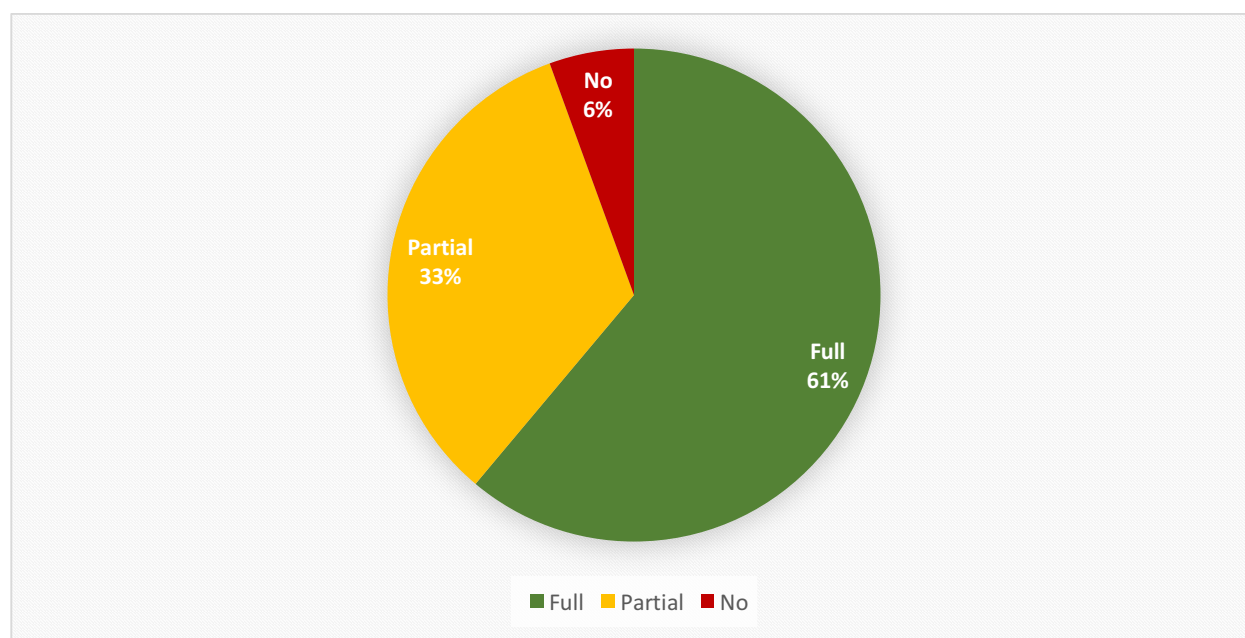


Table 20. Implementation of SOP element on a County Communications Group chaired by a Head of Agency by country

| <i>Status of implementation</i> | <i>Countries that have reported this status</i> |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <i>Full</i> | <i>Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine, Uzbekistan</i> |
| <i>Partial</i> | <i>Albania, Georgia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</i> |
| <i>No</i> | <i>Turkmenistan</i> |

The major challenges to implementation as presented by countries include:

UNCT related:

- Lack of engagement from the UNCT;
- Lack of staff;

- Shortage of financial means gathered each year in support to annual UNCG work plans;
- Prevalence of agency priorities over those of the broader UN.

Issues raised by countries:

- Need to further improve substance based communication linked to strategic priorities and development goals.