

PEER SUPPORT GROUP FOR EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA – TERMS OF REFERENCE

Objectives

The key objective of the Peer Support Group (PSG) is to facilitate the development of high quality UNDAFs/One Programmes by roll-out countries. The PSG accompanies and supports UNCTs during their analytic work and UNDAF/One Programme planning and development processes. This responsibility should be discharged in continuous, full and transparent consultation with staff of the relevant regional offices/bureaus of all UNDG Agencies, including specialized agencies, regional commissions and non-resident agencies.

As agreed by the ECA R-UNDG Team in December 2014, the PSG will extend its support to countries to cover UNDAF/One Programme operationalization, namely implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation. The scope of such advice and support will, however, be limited to the translation of policies and guidelines, and sharing of good practices in terms of (i) joint programme initiatives, (ii) joint monitoring activities, (iii) required joint reporting, and (iv) evaluation.

Roles and Responsibilities

Based on the above objective, PSG roles and responsibilities are grouped around two major categories: (i) UNDAF planning and development stage, and (ii) UNDAF operationalization stage.

UNDAF Planning and Development Stage

- Seek early involvement in the UNCT led processes, starting at the planning stage. This will enable the PSG to provide inputs into the UNCT work plan for its contribution to the country analysis and UNDAF preparation, and help develop a timeline that is feasible for both Country Teams and the PSG.
- Review the support needs of the UNCT to effectively participate in the development and support of the national development framework through its analytical contribution and the UNDAF/One Programme.
- Encourage and support countries in monitoring the appropriate engagement of the host government and its contribution to the implementation of the UNDAF, jointly signed by the government and the UN.
- Ensure/facilitate realization of necessary support identified by the UNCT, including expertise, tools and training activities.
- Facilitate and support the application of current CCA/UNDAF guidelines, as well as the DaO Standard Operating Procedures by the UNCTs, who have the primary responsibility to ensure compliance with respective policies.
- Adopt recommendations that fully reflect the current CCA/UNDAF guidelines, as well as DaO/SOPs, as required by the country context, and help build consensus among the UNCT and other partners on strategic prioritization rather than project agency-specific mandates or interests.
- Review and comment on the proposed Plan of Engagement and the analytical option selected by the UNCT, especially with respect to coherence, effectiveness, and inclusion of regional/sub regional perspectives (while respecting national ownership).

- Seek face-to-face consultations, as much as possible, with UNCTs with a view to assisting them to develop appropriate solutions for meeting country development objectives and develop a working relationship built on trust.
- Ensure that PSG missions to countries include more than one agency, and include expertise to address cross-cutting issues (e.g. capacity development, rights-based approach, gender equality, environmental sustainability and results-based management).
- Support the convening agency in monitoring progress in the completion of the UN contribution to the country analysis and the UNDAF/One Programme preparation. The PSG will also provide early alerts of slippages against quality or/and time expectations to the convening agency, which should subsequently report to the ECA R-UNDG Team.
- Contribute to improving the quality and effectiveness of the UNDAF process via sharing good practices and lessons learned.
- Prepare final reports on the process, lessons learnt and quality of country analyses and UNDAFs/One Programmes. Disseminate good practices and lessons learned.

UNDAF Operationalization Stage

- Provide advice to RCs/UNCTs on UNDAF operationalization models, including with the integration of DaO Standard Operating Procedures, where feasible. Share good practices and examples from other countries in and outside of the region.
- Support UNCTs in the application, mainstreaming and translation of UNDAF programming principles into programmes and projects at country level.
- When requested by countries, facilitate and support joint monitoring activities by the agencies, i.e. ensure common messaging to agency representatives and respective programme specialists on the need to join UNDAF monitoring efforts. Where necessary, provide technical advice or facilitate access to relevant agencies' expertise for particular monitoring activities.
- Provide advice and share good practices with reference to UNDAF Annual and Mid-Term Reviews. Ensure that countries' feedback on the existing guidelines is shared with the ECA R-UNDG Team to be provided to the responsible corporate units.
- Contribute to UNCTs' joint reporting initiatives related to UNDAF/One Programme, by providing UNDG agreed guidance and sharing countries' good examples.
- Advocate for and highlight the mandatory nature of UNDAF evaluations. Support UNCTs' access to rosters of evaluation consultants.
- When requested by RC/UNCT and with prior agreement from the originating agency, facilitate and support UNCTs trainings, workshops and retreats related to the UNDAF operationalization stage.

Convening Agencies

The PSG work will be coordinated by the designated Convening Agency(ies), which are agreed to annually by the ECA R-UNDG Team. The designated Convening Agency(ies) is accountable to the ECA R-UNDG Team to oversee and support UNCTs in ensuring a quality and timely common country programming process, as well as to ensure timely PSG support for the UNDAF/One Programme operationalization. More specifically, the Convening Agency(ies) is responsible for:

- Ensuring the effective functioning of the PSG, including the development and implementation of PSG workplans.

- In cooperation with the PSG, identifying support to fill specific capacity needs as requested by UNCTs.
- Overseeing the provision of inter-agency training and other support to the UNCTs concerned for the preparation of the common country programmes.
- Promoting participation of all UNDG Agencies, including NRAs and Specialized Agencies, as well as Regional Commissions at all stages of work.
- Arranging field missions to support common country programming processes on request from UNCTs. Such missions should normally include relevant staff from at least two agencies of the UNDG.
- Organizing a review of UNCTs Roadmaps/ Plan of Engagement, results of Country Analysis work and drafts of UNDAF/One Programmes by the PSG and providing timely consolidated feedback to UNCTs.
- Keeping an inventory/database of available multi-lingual expertise in the region especially in areas of HRBA, RBM, gender analysis and capacity development.
- Liaising with other Focal Points and regional and sub-regional expertise to ensure that (sub) regional priorities are given due consideration in common country programming processes, while respecting national priorities.
- In consultation with other PSG members, preparing periodic reports on the work of the PSG, highlighting constraints and challenges, to be submitted to the ECA R-UNDG Team for consideration.

The designated Convening Agency(ies) also provide Secretariat support to the PSG. In carrying out these responsibilities, Convening Agency(ies) may agree with other regional offices of UNDG agencies to share the workload among several agencies. Any such arrangements should be agreed beforehand by the ECA R-UNDG Team and communicated to UNCTs and all agencies concerned.

Membership

The ECA R-UNDG Team nominates staff to serve on the Peer Support Group (PSG) for the duration of the common country programming processes in the concerned countries.

Membership of the PSG usually includes representatives of:

- All agencies that are members of the ECA R-UNDG Team
- Regional Commissions
- UN Regional Coordination Specialist
- Relevant Regional Liaison Adviser of the Development Operations Coordination Office (DOCO)
- Consultants hired to support the PSG.

Accountability

PSG is accountable to the ECA R-UNDG Team through its Chair(s), who will report to the R-UNDG Chair and Team on progress, results and lessons learnt on a regular basis. The PSG Chair(s) will also make sure that the R-UNDG Chair's and Team's guidance is incorporated in PSG's further work.

PSG members are accountable through their agency reporting lines for timeliness and quality of their contributions. ECA R-UNDG members are encouraged to ensure PSG members are duly recognized for

their contributions at the regional inter-agency level through agencies' performance management processes.

Modus Operandi

The PSG Convening Agency(ies) will initiate and seek inputs from the other PSG members for the formulation of the PSG Workplan, which will be submitted to the ECA R-UNDG Team for approval and progress monitoring.

The PSG Convening Agency(ies) will receive, from the UNCT, first drafts of the relevant documentation, and will invite comments from all PSG members. A consolidated written commentary will then be provided to the respective UNCT within two weeks of receipt of the drafts. The deadline may be set to three weeks in case of high number of UNDAFs/One Programme roll-outs, requiring the PSG to respond to multiple simultaneous requests.

PSGs may choose to organize themselves as they see fit to ensure the effective functioning of the commenting process and delivery of synthesized comments back to the UNCT, e.g. through virtual meetings, e-mail, video/teleconference as well as face-to-face consultations. They also may agree on methods of sharing work between their members.