Delivering as One
on the MDGs and the Post 2015 agenda

March 2014
• Improving the UN system’s **focus** on working together towards achieving **national development results**.

• **Aligning** UN activities with national priorities and avoiding duplication.

• Making best use of the **mandates** and **expertise** of the entire UN system to deliver results.

• Creating **integrated policy solutions** and **responses** needed to address multi-dimensional challenges.

• **Promoting** the **values**, **norms** and **standards** of the UN in a coherent and consistent manner.

• Increasing the **transparency**, **predictability** and **accountability** of the UN system.

• Using the convening role of the UN to facilitate the **inclusion of all relevant stakeholders**, including global and regional practitioners and non-state actors.

• **Reducing transaction costs** for governments, development partners and, based on the new Standard Operating Procedures, also for UN Country Teams.

• Establishing a **clear division of labour** based on the **comparative advantages** and **capacities** of each UN agency.

• Achieving **efficiency gains** and **cost savings** through harmonized business practices and integrated operational support services.

• The Delivering as One pilot phase was initiated by the UN Secretary-General in 2006 and was successfully concluded by the **independent evaluation** carried out in 2012.

• The original eight Delivering as One pilot countries have been **joined by 28 others** that have **voluntarily** adopted the approach.

• Each country has generated valuable experiences and lessons learned. Collectively, these countries have **demonstrated viability** and **adaptability of Delivering as One** in different UN Country Teams and country contexts.

• In the 2012 quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) resolution, the UN General Assembly gave (for the first time) **intergovernmental recognition** to Delivering as One as a well-tested working modality and business model, even though it remains a voluntary option.
The QCPR recognizes that the DaO approach capitalizes on the complementary strengths and capacities of UN funds, programmes, and specialized agencies to increase overall UN development impact.

The DaO approach has also been successful in reducing programme transaction costs, boosting engagement with governments, improving the effectiveness of the UN system’s work on cross-cutting and normative issues, maintaining consistent efforts in capacity development, and ensuring lower overhead costs for the UN.

There will be a robust and coherent monitoring and evaluation framework with regular results reporting to ECOSOC.

As of March 2014, 37 countries have made formal requests to implement Delivering as One, while several UNCTs in other countries are implementing key elements of the approach.

The acceleration towards the MDGs and the Post 2015 agenda on sustainable development calls for more integrated policies and collaborative efforts and solutions that address complex development challenges. This demands the UN works more closely together at both local and global levels.

The use of integrated strategic approaches for development enables the UN to bridge operational activities and normative work, and allows the organization to use all of its expertise and capacities to make a collective contribution.

The UNDAF guidelines strengthen coherence within the UN, lead to closer alignment with national priorities and foster greater accountability by articulating shared results and defining policies and programmes that deliver them.

Delivering as One increases the opportunities to fully access the range of mandates and capacities of the UN by leveraging the comparative advantages of each agency to plan, manage and deliver on shared results.

The Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) provide an integrated package of support to enable UNCTs and governments to realize this potential at the country level.

The SOPs, while providing an integrated guidance package, allow for the optimal amount of flexibility so UNCTs and governments can adapt the model to suit a country’s needs.

Over 80 countries are developing new United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks or One Programmes in the next two years. All of them will draw upon the SOP guidance package during this process. This provides a tremendous opportunity for countries to adopt the SOPs and improve how the UN works at country level.
The **Common Budgetary Framework** (covering programme, operations and communication) allows for a more inclusive approach to UN engagement, **better planning, prioritization and monitoring** of results and resources, and greater transparency.

Coordinated and/or **joint resource mobilization** for collaborative initiatives, joint funding modalities and strengthened performance-based ‘One Funds’ provide a **more results-oriented resourcing framework** and results in **less fragmentation**.

**Harmonization and increased efficiency in business operations** (inclusive of cost-benefit analyses) allows for enhanced **cost savings, avoiding the duplication** of operations and **reduced transaction costs** for UNCTs.

**One UN Voice** on the normative and policy agenda is of tremendous added value for the UN in-country. Joint advocacy and Improved UN communications provide **increased visibility** and **transparency** of UN activities and more **consistent and effective positioning** of the UN system at the country level.

**A UNDG Plan of Action** for headquarters was approved in February 2014 to support implementation of the Standard Operating Procedures at the country level.

First and foremost, the Plan of Action recognizes DaO as an optimal model for the functioning of the UN at the country level. It emphasizes the need for the **urgent implementation** of the **SOPs** in DaO countries while also encouraging UNCTs to carry out the same work all programme countries. It has become a **universal call to action**.

The Plan of Action **recognizes the bottlenecks**, which hinder working more closely together at the country level and which need to be addressed globally: across the headquarters and Executive Boards of UNDG entities. Roughly **55 actions** have been identified for timely headquarters’ action. This removes remaining barriers to working together more closely at country level and gives a boost to a more effective United Nations development system.

**Consistent messaging** by senior management within agencies to explain and advocate for DaO at the regional and country levels is **needed**. This aspect of SOP implementation has been reported as a weak link and needs to be addressed.

The Plan of Action supports **alignment of agency instruments** and seeks to replace parallel agency approaches/instruments with joint indicators/instruments where possible, such as a **joint monitoring and evaluation framework for DaO** to ensure accountability and measure impact of shared results.
The SOPs, the Plan of Action for Headquarters, and the integrated package of support for the SOPs effectively respond to the Secretary General’s Five year Action Agenda of 2012 that called for the launch of a second generation of Delivering as One focused on managing and monitoring for results, increasing accountability and improved outcomes.

The UN Development Group and its member agencies will roll-out a One Communications initiative to inform programme countries and UNCTs on the SOPs and encourage all countries to use the instruments within their country contexts.

DaO calls for a common vision and sense of purpose of the UN system’s contribution to development. This is followed by strong coordination and coherence for the development agenda and within the UN Country Team. Mixed messaging from HQ will weaken the UN system’s contribution to progress on the ground.

DaO also supports Governments to deliver as one through enhanced coordination and coherence across all sectors. The success of this model of engagement relies on Governments working with the UN in this coordinated way if the UN is to deliver effectively on the accelerated MDGs and Post 2015 agenda.

Member States in Governing Bodies and Executive Boards need to speak with one voice to support the alignment of programme instruments and procedures across the UN system and cut down on the duplication of capacity and tools. This means that planning, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation tools have to be aligned and built on joint instruments where possible.

At the same time, deeper complementary capacities and resourcing should be encouraged for the UN to remain relevant and effective on the ground. The true value and costs of coordination must be acknowledged, which will be significantly lower than the cost of duplicating products and services.

The success of the SOPs, in particular their effect on reduced transaction costs, relies on a number of reforms at headquarters that are outlined in the UNDG Plan of Action for headquarters. Many of these measures are planned to be completed by the end of 2014, and it is important to keep to this timeline given the roll-out of the new United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks/One Programmes.

Fragmented funding continues to represent a major obstacle. As recommended in the DaO evaluation and the QCPR, member states providing non-core funding to the UN are encouraged to increasingly contribute to the One Fund modality and the recently established global Delivering Results Together Fund to support joint efforts. Such funds are attractive options that can complement traditional core and non-core funding for individual projects and entities.
Advantages of Delivering as One

- Reinforced the relevance of the UN development system
- Better positioned to apply integrated policy solutions and responses to address the multi-dimensional challenges
- Promote values, norms and standards of the UN coherently and consistently
- Decreased duplication
- Effective inclusion of non-resident agencies

For the Government:
- Increased national ownership and leadership
- Better alignment with national priorities
- Increased transparency
- Reduced transaction costs
- Delivered results, particularly on cross-cutting, multi-dimensional issues
- Increased predictability
- Better access to expertise from across the UN system

For International Development Partners:
- Better use of their resources (efficiency, cost savings, ...)
- Increased transparency
- Reduced transaction costs
- Increased accountability
- More effective sector coordination

For the United Nations:
- More inclusiveness
- Supports the promotion of norms, values and standards
- Greater development impact
- More effective sector coordination

For National Development Partners: