

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES
for COUNTRIES ADOPTING the
“DELIVERING AS ONE” APPROACH

August 2014









GUIDANCE
**NOTE ON JOINT
PROGRAMMES**



**UNITED NATIONS
DEVELOPMENT GROUP**



-  **The Common Budgetary Framework**, with all planned and costed UN programme activities presented transparently in one place, provides a shared view of the UN's contribution as a whole to the country;
-  **The One Programme** unifies the UN system under one national development strategy/plan, and is underpinned by integrated policy positions and services, and real-time monitoring through joint work plans;
-  **The One Fund (optional)** provides performance-based support to the UN's integrated policy approaches;
-  **The One Leader** and the UN Country Team (UNCT) leadership, is based on mutual accountability, with an enhanced co-ordination function led by the Resident Coordinator, involving all of the UNCT in team leadership, to carry responsibility for the role and results of the UN in the country;
-  **Operating as One** provides options to build ever more cost-effective common operations and service support; and
-  **Communicating as One** facilitates coherent messaging and advocacy on normative and operational matters, and a consistent and teamed-up strategic dialogue with host countries.

The United Nations Development Group (UNDG) is an instrument for UN reform created by the Secretary-General in 1997 to improve the effectiveness of UN development work at the country level. Bringing together the operational agencies working on development, the UNDG is chaired by the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme on behalf of the Secretary-General.

The UNDG develops policies and procedures that allow the UN system to work together and analyse country issues, plan support strategies, implement programmes, monitor results and advocate for change. These initiatives increase UN impact in helping countries to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

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ACRONYMS

AA	Administrative Agent	QCPR	Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review
CA	Convening Agency	RIAS	Representatives of the Internal Audit Services
DaO	Delivering as One	SAA	Standard Administrative Arrangement
DD	Disbursement Date	SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
DIM	Direct Implementation Modality	TOD	Terminal Obligation Date
EU	European Union	UN	United Nations
FMOG	Fiduciary Management Oversight Group	UNCT	United Nations Country Teams
JP	Joint Programme	UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
MA	Managing Agent	UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
MDG-F	Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund	UNDG	United Nations Development Group
MDTF	Multi-Donor Trust Fund	UN-REDD	United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding	UN-RIAS	United Nations Representatives of Internal Audit Services
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation	USD	United States Dollars
NIM	National Implementation Modality		
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization		
PMU	Programme Management Unit		
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers		
PUNO	Participating United Nations Organization		

1. INTRODUCTION



1.1. BACKGROUND

This Guidance Note, which is applicable to all UN funds, programmes and specialized agencies, replaces the Guidance Note on Joint Programming of December 2003, and aims to give practical, hands-on guidance on Joint Programmes, when to use them and how to implement them.

The revised guidance reflects the experiences with Joint Programmes over the past decade and responds to the recommendations from an extensive review of the Joint Programme mechanism in 2012/2013. It also puts Joint Programmes in context of new developments such as updated United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) guidance and One Programme guidelines (forthcoming), as well as linkages with Multi-Donor Trust Funds (MDTFs), including One Funds.

Drawing on lessons learnt from past experiences and a consultative process undertaken with stakeholders across the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), major changes in the Guidance Note on Joint Programmes include an expanded section on when to choose Joint Programmes, the introduction of thresholds, expanded guidance on choosing and implementing the fund management options, more information on governance structures, including the introduction of a convening agency, more guidance on reporting, including the introduction of a narrative reporting template, more information on audits, and a revised structure with step-by-step processes for establishing and managing Joint Programmes.

A Joint Programme is only one modality of working together in the context of UNDAF, Delivering as One (DaO)/One Programme or other frameworks for common country programming. It may also be used in countries that are currently not using any of these frameworks, as well as to support regional or global-level UN collaboration.

1.2. Rationale

Joint Programmes help to achieve greater system-wide coherence that supports national priorities and needs. The strategic intent of joint efforts is to help countries coordinate development programmes themselves. Benefitting from the UN development system and United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs), such development should be inclusive and sustainable.

Following a number of initiatives and resolutions aimed at increasing UN coherence, in December 2012, in the context of the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) of the United Nations, the General Assembly adopted a resolution paragraph 118 of which “encourages the United Nations development system to further strengthen joint programming processes at the country level, where appropriate, as a useful way to promote greater coherence, taking

into account the principles of national ownership, alignment with national priorities and the comparative advantage of individual entities of the United Nations system at the country level.”

Since the adoption of the 2003 Guidelines on Joint Programming a decade ago, four important developments accelerated the growth of Joint Programmes: a review of the effectiveness, efficiency and lessons learned from the first generation of Joint Programmes (completed in 2006); country-specific piloting of “Delivering as One” (2007-2012); creation of the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund (MDG-F) which funded 130 Joint Programmes (2007-2013); and the growth of Multi-Donor Trust Funds

(MDTFs) as recognized high-quality pass-through financial management channels for donor funding to multi-agency programmes, including Joint Programmes. In addition, studies of stand-alone Joint Programmes, managed by different organizations, have shown that promoting Joint Programmes has been a way to promote not only system-wide coherence, but also other priorities established by their constituencies. Further, a UNDG review of Joint Programmes was undertaken in 2012-2013 to examine the application of Joint Programme modalities in various contexts and inform the revision of the 2003 Guidelines.¹

¹ [https://undg.org/i/b21a1wflgb%aSVe%\\$%#!"#\\$-B7Mechanism7Review7Consolidated7Final7Report7B7W7q7Sck%\\$%#%pdf](https://undg.org/i/b21a1wflgb%aSVe%$%#!)

2. DEFINITIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR CHOOSING AND INITIATING JOINT PROGRAMMES



2.1. DEFINITIONS

A **Joint Programme** is a set of activities contained in a joint work plan and related common budgetary framework, involving two or more UN organizations and (sub-) national governmental partners, intended to achieve results aligned with national priorities as reflected in UNDAF/One Programme or an equivalent programming instrument or development framework. The work plan and budgetary framework form part of a Joint Programme Document, which details roles and responsibilities of partners in coordinating and managing the joint activities. While the Joint Programme arrangement is only between UN organizations, government entities, civil society organizations and the private sector can be engaged as implementing partners, depending on the rules of participating UN organizations.

A Joint Programme is one of the available **implementation tools** used within the common country programming process. It is distinct from other joint funding tools such as the Multi Donor Trust Funds (MDTF), including One Funds.

Funding for a Joint Programme can be:

- stand-alone (i.e. financed directly by UN organizations or by donors to the UN organization and not through an MDTF/One Fund or other pass-through funding mechanisms)
- financed through a multi-donor trust fund, including One Fund, or a global fund
- co-funded by governments

A Joint Programme can be established at national level (involving one country), regional or global levels (involving two or more regions or countries). Global and regional programmes, which may utilize global vertical funds and/or Multi Donor Trust Funds, may consist of **global / regional** Joint Programmes that address guidelines and methodologies at global or regional

level, and/or **national** Joint Programmes through which UN organizations deliver at national level in different geographic regions, or a combination of the two. They have global and country-level Steering Committees and governance structures for Joint Programmes based on what fits best for each individual case. Examples of global Joint Programmes are included in the training package that is developed together with this Guidance Note.

2.2. WHEN IS A JOINT PROGRAMME APPROPRIATE?

A Joint Programme is appropriate if it identifies and builds on complementarities and brings together the added value of its partners in addressing complex development challenges. It requires a commitment from participating organizations to work together. Its design should ensure components that build on each other, clarity on the roles and responsibilities of each partner, and mutual accountability on the delivery of development results.

PRIMARY
FACTORS TO
CONSIDER ARE
WHETHER THE
JOINT APPROACH
MAXIMIZES
LEVERAGE,
CLARITY ON
PROGRAMMATIC
SCOPE, DONOR
INTEREST,
THRESHOLDS,
PREFERRED
FUNDING
FLOW, AND
ACCOUNTABILITY

The decision of national governmental partner(s) and UN organizations on whether to develop a Joint Programme is grounded in factual and objective information. Primary factors to consider are whether the joint approach maximizes leverage, clarity on programmatic scope, donor interest, thresholds, preferred funding flow, and accountability².

A Joint Programme should meet the following criteria:

- Two or more organizations working towards common strategic results and/or national priorities
- Adequate support (resources, time and willingness to work together) for the Joint Programme from all key stakeholders who consider the programme area a priority
- Roles and responsibilities of each partner clearly defined, based on an analysis of the comparative advantages of each partner (including agreement about caseload and/or targeted recipients)
- Adequate capacity to implement among participating organizations (including shared or overlapping geographical presence, logistics, human resources, technical expertise, capacity to scale up)
- Addressing sector-wide and multi-sectorial development challenges that require an integrated response from different partners
- Complementary implementation capacities at central and local level
- Complementary interventions of UN organizations in order to achieve results and/or geographical coverage, to reach target population, to provide required sensitivity, capacity, and/or coverage of multiple programme areas etc.; these complementary interventions may be based on global commitments such as the agreed divisions of labor in global partnerships / action plans or global Multi Donor Trust Fund

- Strong results groups, coordination mechanisms, national steering committees, or sector/cluster groups exist and support Joint Programmes
- A functioning results based system exists
- Clear exit strategy to ensure sustainability of changes brought about by the Joint Programme

2.3. WHEN IS A JOINT PROGRAMME NOT APPROPRIATE?

Joint Programmes are not mandatory to meet objectives of the UNDAF, One Programme or QCPR mandate. A Joint Programme is not appropriate if it is not programmatically preferred (e.g., not a good fit related to programming context, operating environment including aid architecture and business practices, capacities, etc.) or cost efficient (considering a mid- or long-term perspective). A Joint Programme may also face more difficulties in fragile and conflict affected settings. When two or more UN organizations are not working for the same results, they may continue working in the context of common country programming processes, without establishing a Joint Programme.

Beyond the programmatic considerations, there are also significant cost considerations related to preparation, development, management and coordination of a Joint Programme. For small programmes, these costs can be excessive. Thus, the minimum thresholds for establishing a Joint Programme should be taken into account. For programmes with a broad strategic scope and substantial donor interest, but for which the detailed interventions are still to be defined and funding allocations are not specified at the time of establishment, a Multi-Donor-Trust Fund (MDTF) could be considered (see separate guidance). For small programmes, such as those below USD 200,000, with each organization implementing separately, but with greater coordination, cooperation through bilateral agreements should

² See the "Joint evaluation of Joint Gender Programmes in the UN system" report for more reference details.

be considered. Annex A includes a flowchart for choosing fund management modality.

2.4. KEY STEPS FOR ESTABLISHING A JOINT PROGRAMME

The following steps are recommended for establishing a Joint Programme. The sequence of steps is not mandatory as long as the listed elements are included in the process. The first few steps serve to agree on priorities and programmes with national stakeholders, and the next few steps serve to determine what kind of Joint Programme it should be and which agency will serve in which role, based on capacities and thresholds.

Step 1. Building upon country analysis and UNDAF/One Programme and other frameworks

The establishment of a Joint Programme is driven by the country situation and context.³ The usual starting point for identifying a potential Joint Programme is a completed UNDAF results matrix, One Programme, or other programming framework for common country programming or a development framework such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP). Another entry point can be the Common Budgetary Framework, identifying UN funding gaps, and/or the UN resource mobilization strategy to meet these funding gaps. Joint Programmes can be designed not only at the beginning of a country programming cycle but also following major reviews, such as UNDAF annual reviews, and potential subsequent revisions to programmes.

In countries where an UNDAF does not exist, UN organizations can coordinate their activities in the context of other programming or development frameworks. This will ensure that national entities and UN organizations work closely together with clearly identified common goals and clearly assigned roles. Joint Programmes can also occur within regional and global frameworks such as global level vertical funds that are driven by global normative issues such as climate

change. Such global vertical funds support the implementation of a standard set of programmes in their areas of operation across multiple countries and may have global and country-level Joint Programmes.

While the overarching outcomes of a Joint Programme should be based on higher level objectives to which the Joint Programme aims to contribute, it is important to take into account that the formulation of a Joint Programme at operational level requires a detailed level of analysis of development challenges, baselines, etc. It may take additional time for joint baseline analysis, consultation and participation processes to identify the most adequate strategy of joint UN action and to ensure a realistic design and work plan.

Step 2. Initial considerations and consultations

UN Country Team members work with the Resident Coordinator to make joint decisions relating to programming activities and financial matters and both lead and participate in results groups (under One Programme) and thematic groups or equivalent (under UNDAF) that drive Joint Programme development and implementation. The Resident Coordinator and UN Country Team members make programming and development decisions in accordance with the vision, roles, responsibilities and mutual accountabilities spelled out in relevant policies and instruments. Involvement of national governmental partners in design and implementation of Joint Programmes is crucial to foster national ownership, sustainability, and impact of Joint Programmes.

Step 3. Considering capacity and comparative advantage

In planning for a Joint Programme, the capacity and comparative advantages of the government, implementing partners and participating UN organizations to coordinate, manage and provide inputs (e.g., cash, supplies, in-kind or technical expertise) to support implementation and

³ Refer to the "Joint evaluation on Joint Gender Programmes in the UN system" report for some useful recommendations and suggestions.

monitoring of the Joint Programme should be carefully considered. Where applicable, differences in methodology and approach – e.g. prioritization of areas and target population groups, methodology for community mobilization, modality of delivery of technical assistance – should be identified and resolved at the planning stage. For non-resident agencies, the Resident Coordinator should ensure their engagement in the process as needed in accord with their interests.

The value-added contributions or comparative advantage of each agency should be considered by the UN Country Team, Resident Coordinator, national partner/s and donor/s. Participating UN organizations (PUNOs) should be chosen only if they are essential for the successful implementation of the project and for producing the joint results and have the capacity for timely delivery of outputs of the Joint Programme. This may include adequate capacity of PUNOs to undertake results-based planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation.

Step 4. Considering Thresholds

Thresholds are an internal control mechanism that helps to manage risks. Thresholds for Joint Programmes are introduced to enable the UNDG to collectively manage risks, whether political/strategic, programmatic or financial, in their common programming.

Thresholds are introduced for the establishment of Joint Programmes using pass-through and pooled funding modalities, with details provided in the respective chapters of the present Guidance Note. No threshold is established for the parallel fund management modality since it is usually funded through either core resources or agency-mobilized resources using agency-specific rules and procedures for which UNDG-wide thresholds would not apply.

Exceptions to the thresholds for establishment should be brought to the attention of the UNDG Fiduciary Management Oversight Group by the Administrative Agent or Managing Agent on an annual basis. For details, please see the respective chapters of the present Guidance Note.

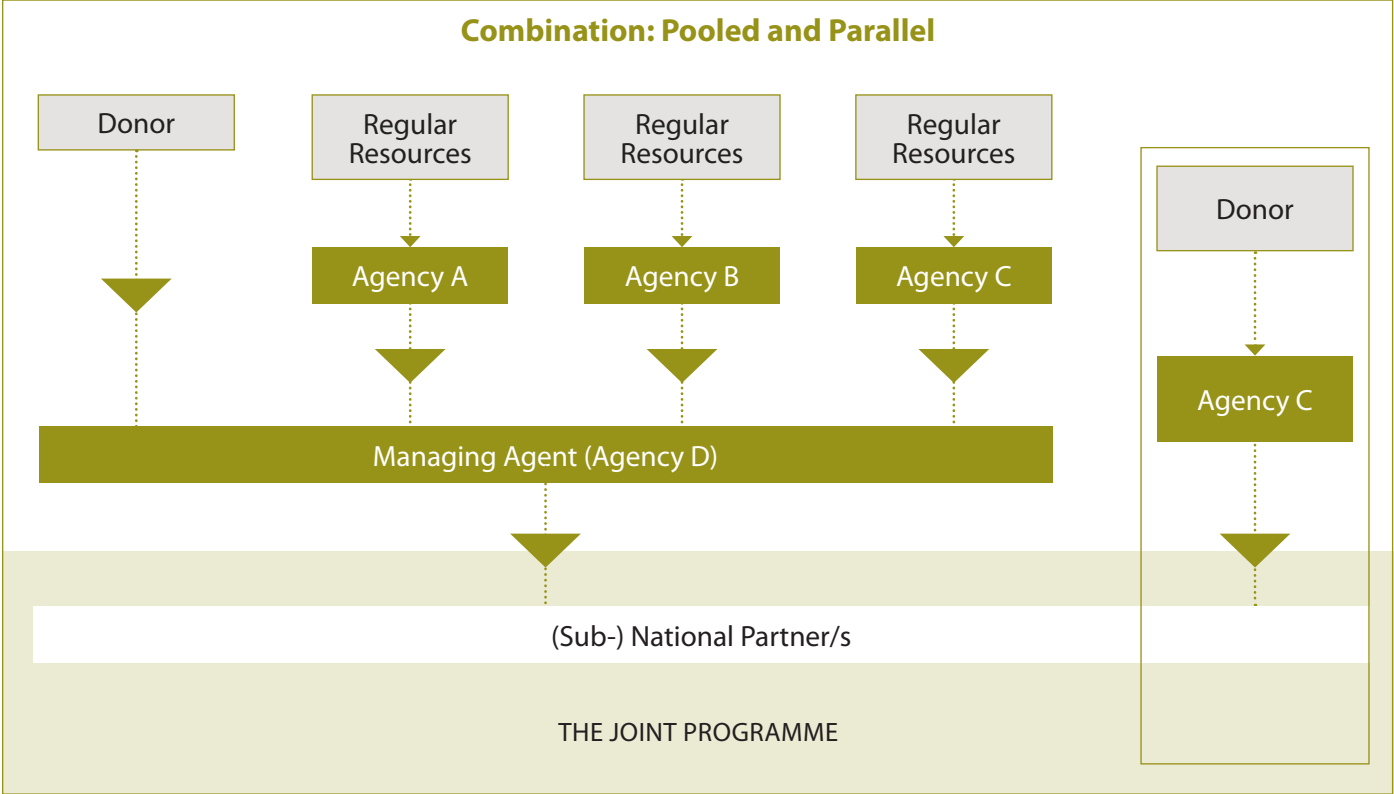
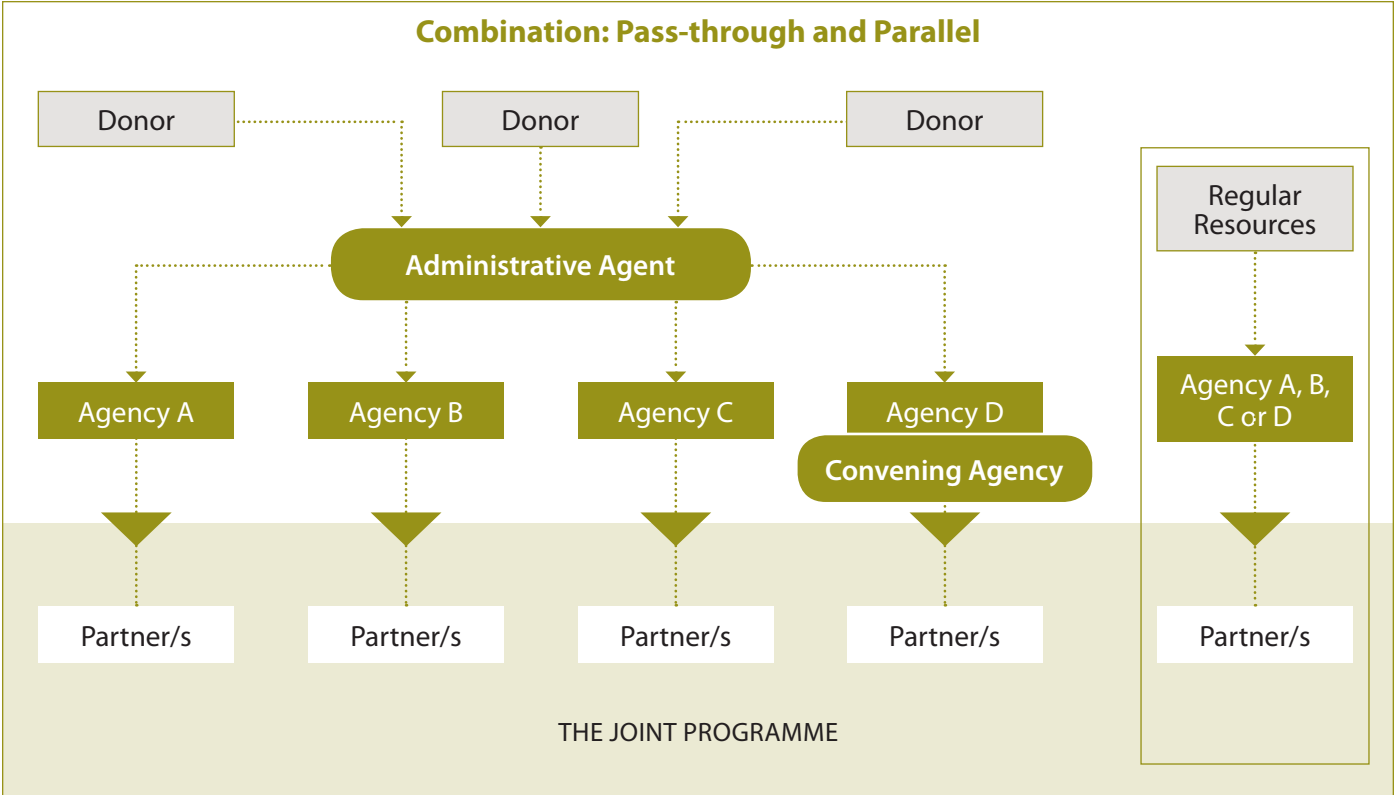
Step 5. Decision to select one or a combination of fund management modalities

When deciding to establish a Joint Programme, there are three fund management modalities to choose from: a) pass-through, b) pooled, and c) parallel. For more information on these modalities, please refer to the operational sections (chapters 3-5) of this Guidance Note. These modalities can also be combined.

Combination of options: Joint Programmes may require a combination of fund management modalities that support the country in a flexible way. For example, participating UN organizations might decide to pool funds under an Administrative Agent or Managing Agent for those parts of a Joint Programme to be managed jointly, while other parts of the Joint Programme would be managed separately through parallel funding--because of donor, government, or UN agency requirements--within the overall framework of the Joint Programme. Where this occurs, it is especially important that participating UN organizations inform each other of source of funds allocated to the Joint Programme, independent of the fund management option, and conduct any resource mobilization efforts for the Joint Programme in a coordinated manner.

Under a combination of modalities, an aggregated/consolidated budget for a Joint Programme will include resources allocated under each fund management modality used for the Joint Programme. Aggregated/consolidated reporting (both narrative and financial) will likewise include each of the fund management modalities used in the Joint Programme.

The decision to select one or a combination of fund management modalities for a Joint Programme should be based on how to achieve the most effective, efficient and timely implementation, and to reduce transaction costs for national partners, donors and the UN. Annex A shows a decision-making matrix and Box 1 (below) provides key considerations for choosing between these fund management modalities.



partners for planned results needs to be clearly identified. This includes the selection of the UN organization(s) that will be assigned special roles as Administrative Agent (AA), Convening Agency (CA), or Managing Agent (MA). The decision-making responsibilities and coordination mechanisms need to be clarified early on. Also the role of the government in Joint Programme governance at national and sub-national level needs to be clarified as well as the role of civil society stakeholders. The governance and management structures outlined in the respective operational sections (Chapters 3-5) should be taken into consideration when deciding about roles and responsibilities. Existing structures should be utilized rather than creating new ones.

Step 7. Developing Joint Programme Document

After the participating organizations have decided which result they jointly support and their roles have been determined, a Joint Programme Document needs to be developed. The approved format for a Joint Programme Document developed under the purview of the UNDAF Programming Network (UPN) hasn't changed since 2008. It is provided in Annex B. The Joint Programme Document includes mandatory sections of work plan and budgetary framework, coordinating and management mechanism with details about roles and responsibilities of the partners in the joint activities, a results matrix (e.g. log frame), an M&E Framework with indicators and targets, and reporting requirements. Sections of the UNDAF results matrix may be adapted for the Joint Programme Document. Customization of the non-mandatory parts of the Joint Programme Document is possible.

The joint multi-year **work plan** sets out the activities that will be carried out during each year of the Joint Programme, the expected outputs and outcomes to which these activities will contribute to, annual indicators with targets, the inputs needed to carry out the activities, and the timeframe, budget, and responsibilities for completing the activities.

The **common budgetary framework** should include direct costs for the coordination

mechanism, for monitoring and evaluation, audit, communication, and reporting. For instance, resources required for the organization of meetings of the Steering Committee and similar activities, as well as the functions of Managing Agent, Convening Agency and similar coordination mechanisms need to be budgeted for. Since reporting needs to be by UNDG approved harmonized budget categories, developing the budget in these categories might be considered. For monitoring, evaluation and reporting, an indicative allocation of 3% to 5% of funds is recommended. Internal and external auditing as well as administrative investigations, if appropriate, also have to be thought through and budgeted.

Closure of the Joint Programme also needs to be considered from the design phase and an end date should be agreed upon. A clear exit strategy, sustainability plan, and scaling up strategy (where applicable) should be in place with clear roles and responsibilities of implementing partners.

The Joint Programme Document is signed by all participating UN organizations and national or sub-national governmental partners. For regional and global Joint Programmes, endorsement or signatures of participating countries (at least three, if there are more than three countries) are required.

Step 8. Management and start-up

Even before a Joint Programme Document has been signed, participating UN organizations need to coordinate their start-up processes to maximize efficiency since organizations have different timeframes and legal frameworks for starting to work with countries. The development of a Joint Programme, its approval and ultimately the starting date should be planned in such a way that it does not delay the implementation of ongoing agency activities. The different processes and procedures of UN organizations and the different implementing modalities of organizations in a given country, such as National Implementation Modality (NIM) and Direct Implementation Modality (DIM), need to be taken into account when setting up realistic work plans and timeframes.

Start-up, including signature of programme documents, can take 3-4 months or more, and the inception phase, including determining and establishing methods and procedures for implementation and evaluation, can take from 6 months to 1 year. This needs to be taken into account when planning for a Joint Programme. The development of joint programmes, their approval and ultimately the starting date should be planned in such a way that it does not delay the implementation of ongoing agency activities.

In order to maximize efficiency for start-up, the following tips may be considered:

- Circulate draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (and Standard Administrative Arrangement [SAA]) even while discussing the Joint Programme Document (see details on MOU and SAA in pass-through and pooled funding modality sections)
- Start planning activities while waiting for first funds to come in, e.g.,
 - Schedule first (preliminary) Steering Committee meeting and make a decision how first funds will be allocated
 - Review roles and responsibilities of partners
 - Review national approval processes to reduce signature timeframes
- Begin planning for the inception phase and operational tasks immediately after the Joint Programme is approved, e.g., as required,
 - Write job descriptions or Terms of Reference and post job openings
 - Gather quotations for needed supplies and materials
 - Plan specific steps for monitoring, evaluation, and audit and develop or modify any necessary forms; involve UN Evaluation Group (UNEG), Representatives of Internal Audit Services (UN-RIAS) and Panel of Auditors
 - Schedule and facilitate inception workshops, where appropriate (i.e. to get agreement from all partners on the results, indicators and target timeframes while also clarifying roles and responsibilities)

Once a Joint Programme has been initiated, UN organizations should ensure that all necessary arrangements are made in a timely manner to ensure prompt implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting. Chapters 3-5 provide operational guidance for the management part per fund management modality.

Step 9. Communication

National governmental partners, implementing partners, donor(s), and each participating UN organization in a Joint Programme should be duly recognized in key **external** joint communication products used to publicize the initiative for the duration of the programme. Joint and harmonized communication is encouraged. The Steering Committee of the Joint Programme should agree whether to use the UN-system logo for the Joint Programme (which is the preferred option) or logos of each participating UN organization, together with logos of national partners and donor(s), for visibility. The creation of new logos is discouraged. There is also the option of having both the UN logo on the corner of the joint communication with the contributing organizations and partners in a logo line-up on the back of the print cover (or on a website in a column that is secondary in visual hierarchy of information). For **internal** communication, there should be a commitment from participating organizations to share in a timely manner information related to the Joint Programme with all partners.

Summary: Key considerations

Key considerations to take into account when deciding among and implementing a fund management modality for a Joint Programme are summarized in Box 1.

Even though organizational regulations may assign responsibility of some procedures in the key considerations to individual organizations, the overall goal should be mutual accountability—which may include joint monitoring and evaluation—which can be fostered through the coordination mechanism for each fund management modality.

UN ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD **ENSURE** THAT ALL **NECESSARY** ARRANGEMENT ARE **MADE IN A TIMELY MANNER** TO ENSURE **PROMPT IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION, AND REPORTING**

Box 1. Key considerations for parallel, pooled, and pass-through fund management modalities

Key Considerations	Parallel	Pooled	Pass-Through
Goal/Expected Results	Working toward common result that is clearly defined	Working toward common result that is clearly defined	Working toward common result that is clearly defined
(Sub-)National or international governmental partners	Different or common partners	Common partner/s	Different or common partners
Donors	Each organization mobilizes its own resources; no joint resource mobilization	Core resources from UN organizations; donors encouraged to provide funds to MA	Joint resource mobilization; donors agree to channel funds through one UN organization (AA)
Governance	Joint Programme Steering Committee	Joint Programme Steering Committee	Joint Programme Steering Committee
Accountability (For all: Steering Committee has overall accountability for fund allocation and achieving results)	Each organization accountable for its results; organizations jointly responsible for achieving Joint Programme goal Role of Steering Committee may need to be strengthened for this modality	Managing Agent accountable for financial and programmatic results	Administrative Agent (AA) accountable for effective and impartial fiduciary management; Convening Agency (CA) accountable for coordination among participating organizations and for consolidating narrative reporting; each participating UN organization accountable for own programmatic and financial results; organizations jointly responsible for achieving Joint Programme goal
Required legal documents (Each Joint Programme needs a Joint Programme Document)	No additional UNDG approved documents	Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Participating UN Organizations and the Managing Agent	One (1) Memorandum of Understanding which includes agreements between the Participating UN Organizations, the Administrative Agent and the Convening Agency & one (1) Standard Administrative Arrangement (SAA) between the Donor and the Administrative Agent
Coordination	JP Coordination Mechanism (as agreed among participating partners); costs of coordination should be shared by all PUNOs	MA coordinates management of programmatic activities	CA responsible for coordinating all the Joint Programme partners, and reporting back to the Steering Committee
Finance	Each organization manages own funds	Managing Agent (MA) pools funds and manages funds	AA passes through funds to Participating UN Organizations who manage their own funds
Cost recovery	Each organization applies its own indirect cost recovery rate	The Managing Agent applies its own cost recovery rate	UNDG approved administrative fee for AA (1%) and indirect costs for each participating UN organization (7%); Cost for Convening Agency needs to be directly budgeted
Monitoring	By each PUNO throughout the year; culminates at the joint annual review of joint work plan	Monitoring should be in accordance with the MA's procedures and policy guidance	By each PUNO throughout the year; may include joint monitoring facilitated by Convening Agency; annual consultations with Donors, AA, and PUNOs to review status of Joint Programme

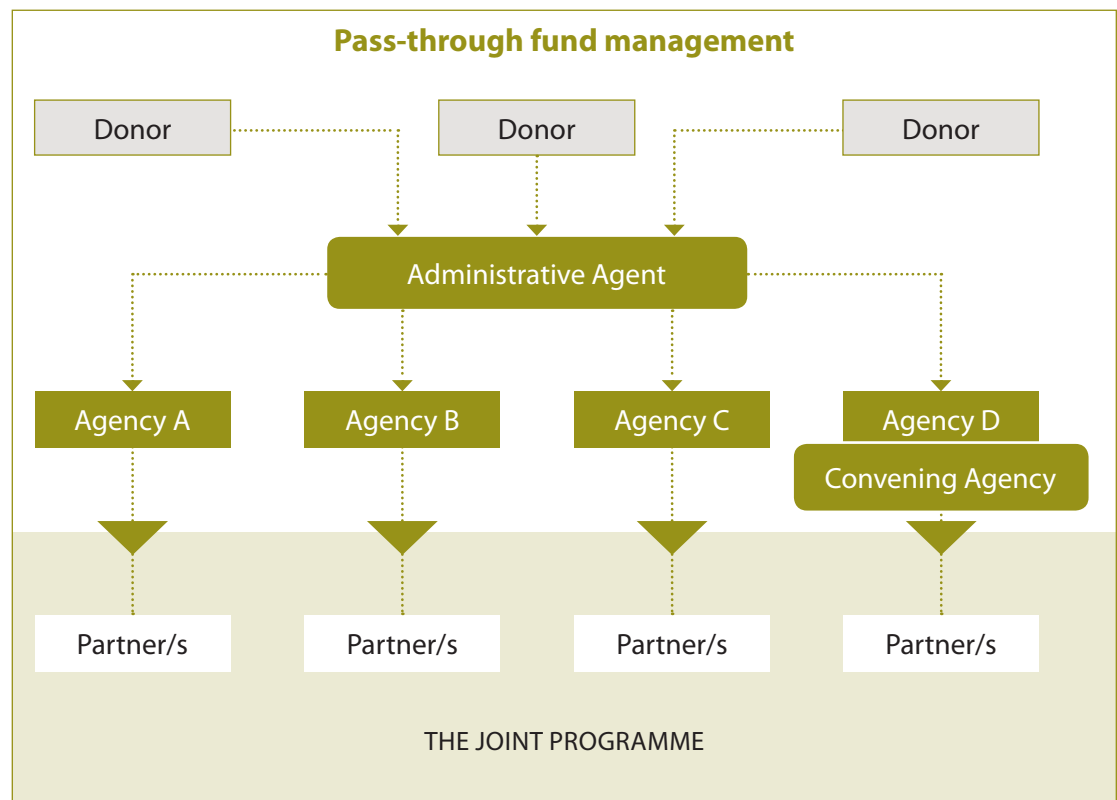
Key Considerations	Parallel	Pooled	Pass-Through
Evaluation (For all: in accordance with Joint Programme Document)	Choice of evaluation modality will drive the responsibility for undertaking a joint evaluation: consider timing, budget, scope and type of evaluation; e.g., independent evaluation by Evaluation Offices or at decentralized/programme level by establishing an independent evaluation management group and external evaluation team vs. decentralized/programme-level evaluation by management		
Internal Audit	Coverage of Joint Programme decided by the Internal Audit Services (IAS) of the PUNOs involved, following a risk-based procedure		
	<p>IAS of each PUNO responsible for auditing its own contribution to the Joint Programme; each report according to each PUNO internal audit report disclosure policy.</p> <p>Summary consolidation of results into one joint public audit report coordinated by one PUNO IAS agreed by the participating IAS.</p> <p>Recommendation follow-up be undertaken according to the procedures in force in that PUNO</p>	<p>MA's IAS responsible for carrying out the audit of the Managing Agent; Review of the implementation of programme components by other PUNOs carried out by those PUNOs' IAS and reports issued according to each PUNO internal audit report disclosure policy</p> <p>Summary consolidation of results into one joint public audit report.</p> <p>Recommendation follow-up be undertaken according to the procedures in force in each PUNO.</p>	<p>Joint audit conducted either by one IAS on behalf of all, a group of IAS of PUNOs involved, or an outside audit provider on behalf of all IAS involved; coordinated by Convening Agency</p> <p>Covering Joint Programme governance and administration as well as implementation of programme components by the PUNOs. Public joint audit report.</p> <p>May be complemented by specific PUNO internal audit reports; the disclosure of which is according to each PUNO's relevant policy.</p> <p>Recommendations of the joint audit followed by the IAS of one PUNO on behalf of all, as agreed among the IAS of all PUNOs; recommendations from additional reports issued by the IAS of a PUNO separately followed by that IAS</p>
External Audit	By Panel of Auditors		
Investigation	Depending on whom the alleged subject(s) of the investigation is/are, an investigation may be conducted by one or more PUNOs' investigation services, upon determination of which investigation framework to use. The final report(s) will be provided to the decision-making body of the PUNO(s) involved, as appropriate. Disciplinary and /or administrative actions, if any, will be undertaken according to the disciplinary framework of each PUNO involved.		
Reporting	One organization should be responsible for consolidated narrative reporting (as identified in Joint Programme Document); each PUNO prepares certified financial report annually	Managing Agent responsible for financial and narrative (programmatic) reporting, including certified financial reports annually and at the end	AA responsible for consolidating financial reports; Convening Agency responsible for consolidating narrative reports; PUNOs prepare narrative and certified financial reports annually and at the end for their components of the programme
Closing	Each organization responsible for operationally and financially closing its part of the Joint Programme	Managing agent responsible for operationally and financially closing the Joint Programme	Each organization responsible for operationally and financially closing its part of the Joint Programme; AA responsible for financially closing the Joint Programme in consultation with the respective organization headquarters' finance departments

3. PASS-THROUGH FUND MANAGEMENT MODALITY: OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE



3.1. OVERVIEW

Pass-through fund management is currently by far the most commonly used modality for Joint Programmes. Under this option, two to five UN organizations develop a Joint Programme, identify funding gaps and submit a Joint Programme Document to donor(s). If the donor(s) and participating UN organizations agree to channel the funds through one UN organization, working with **different national, sub-national and/or international governmental partners**, then the pass-through modality applies. (The diagram refers to the financial flow and includes one example for a Convening Agency. The Administrative Agent (AA) can also be the Convening Agency, provided that there is a “firewall” in place in accordance with the agreed Protocol on the Administrative Agent for Multi-Donor Trust Funds and Joint Programmes, and One UN Funds.)



The joint work plan indicates the activities to be supported by each of the participating UN organizations. The programmatic and financial accountability rests with the participating UN organizations and (sub-) national governmental partners that manage their respective components of the Joint Programme.

When a decision on a pass-through funding modality is made, the mandatory thresholds should be taken into account. The thresholds are introduced to ensure effective management and decision-making on Joint Programmes as well as their cost-efficiency:

- **Budget contributions:** Expected contributions equal to at least USD 1 million times the number of participating UN organizations (PUNOs), with each PUNO expected to receive at least USD 100,000. (For instance, if three organizations participate, the budget of the Joint Programme needs to be at least USD 3 million, while one PUNO can receive as little as USD 100,000, if the other two receive a total of at least USD 2.9 million together.)⁴
- **Number of participating UN organizations:** Not more than five PUNOs, with the preferred number of PUNOs being two to four.
- **Duration:** An expected duration between signature of the MOU and operational end date of the Joint Programme of three to five years, with exceptions for shorter duration made for Joint Programmes operated in a transition context, provided the other two thresholds are met.

Special consideration should be given to the cases when the European Union (EU) is one of the contributing donors. Separate UNDG Operationalization Guidelines for the European Union Special Conditions Agreement should be consulted in conjunction with the Guidance Note on Joint Programmes.

Exceptions made to the thresholds for establishment should be brought to the attention of the UNDG Fiduciary Management Oversight Group (FMOG) by the Administrative Agent, where possible before implementation of the joint programme, and if not on an annual basis.

The Administrative Agent is entitled to a direct cost charge for Funds that do not meet the \$1 million per PUNO threshold, equal to the difference between the Administrative Agent fees that would have been earned if the Joint Programme had met the threshold minus the actual Administrative Agent fee that has been earned. If an Administrative Agent would like to use this possibility, a reference to this direct cost charge needs to be included in the Joint Programme document and the Steering Committee will need to approve the direct cost charge based on a request from the Administrative Agent.

3.2. Process of establishing a pass-through Joint Programme

3.2.1. Governance

For a Joint Programme using pass-through modality, the Steering Committee provides strategic direction and oversight and has decision-making authority, the Convening Agency is responsible for coordinating the programmatic aspects, and the Administrative Agent is responsible for financial management, while each participating UN organization has programmatic and financial responsibility for the funds disbursed to it. The Administrative Agent and Convening Agency may or may not be the same agency. The national government is part of the governance mechanism at central and local levels, e.g., through co-leading the Steering Committee⁵. Existing structures should be utilized to the extent possible rather than creating new ones.

⁴ The FMOG will review the experience with thresholds after an initial test period.

⁵ In line with the Delivering as One SOPs guidance, the UNCT should reach an agreement on the Government's role in the Steering Committee with regard to strategic direction as well as in the resource allocation processes.

Steering Committee

- Decision-making authority; highest body for strategic guidance, fiduciary and management oversight and coordination
- Facilitates collaboration between participating UN organizations and host government for the implementation of the Joint Programme
- Includes senior programme managers of all signatories of the Joint Programme Document; may also include other members in observer capacity, such as civil society organizations; may be co-chaired by the Government and UN Resident Coordinator at country level
- Reviews and approves Joint Programme Document and annual work plans, provides strategic direction and oversight, sets allocation criteria, allocates resources, reviews implementation progress and addresses problems, reviews and approves progress reports budget revisions/reallocations, and evaluation reports, notes audit reports (published in accordance with each PUNOs' disclosure policy), and initiates investigations (if needed). It may be supported by a Secretariat/Support Office
- Meets at least semi-annually



Administrative Agent (AA)

- Accountable for effective and impartial fiduciary management and financial reporting
- Selected jointly based on merit in a comparative review by all participating UN organizations
- May be a Participating UN Organization or any other qualified UN organization; only one AA needed for global programme
- Responsible for *financial/administrative* management: Receives donor contributions, disburses funds to Participating UN Organizations based on Steering Committee instructions, and consolidates periodic financial reports and final financial report.
- Involved in day-to-day administration

Convening Agency (CA)

- Accountable for coordination of programmatic activities and narrative reporting
- Selected jointly based on merit in a comparative review by all participating UN organizations
- Needs to be a Participating UN Organization with in-country presence
- Responsible for *operational and programmatic* coordination: Coordinates all the Joint Programme partners, coordinates and compiles annual work plans and narrative reports, coordinates monitoring of annual targets, calls and reports on Steering Committee meetings, facilitates audits and evaluation, and reports back to the Steering Committee; may be involved in resource mobilization.
- Involved in day-to-day coordination, but does not hold any financial or programmatic accountability



Participating UN Organizations (PUNOs)

- UN organizations that participate in the Joint Programme, which may include UN funds, programmes, specialized agencies, including non-resident agencies, at national, regional or global level
- Operate in accordance with their own regulations, rules, directives and procedures
- Assume full programmatic and financial accountability for funds disbursed by the AA

(Sub-)National Governmental Partners

- Governmental agencies at national or sub-national level that coordinate with UN organizations and implementing partners
- Own the national programme to which the UN provides support



Implementing Partners

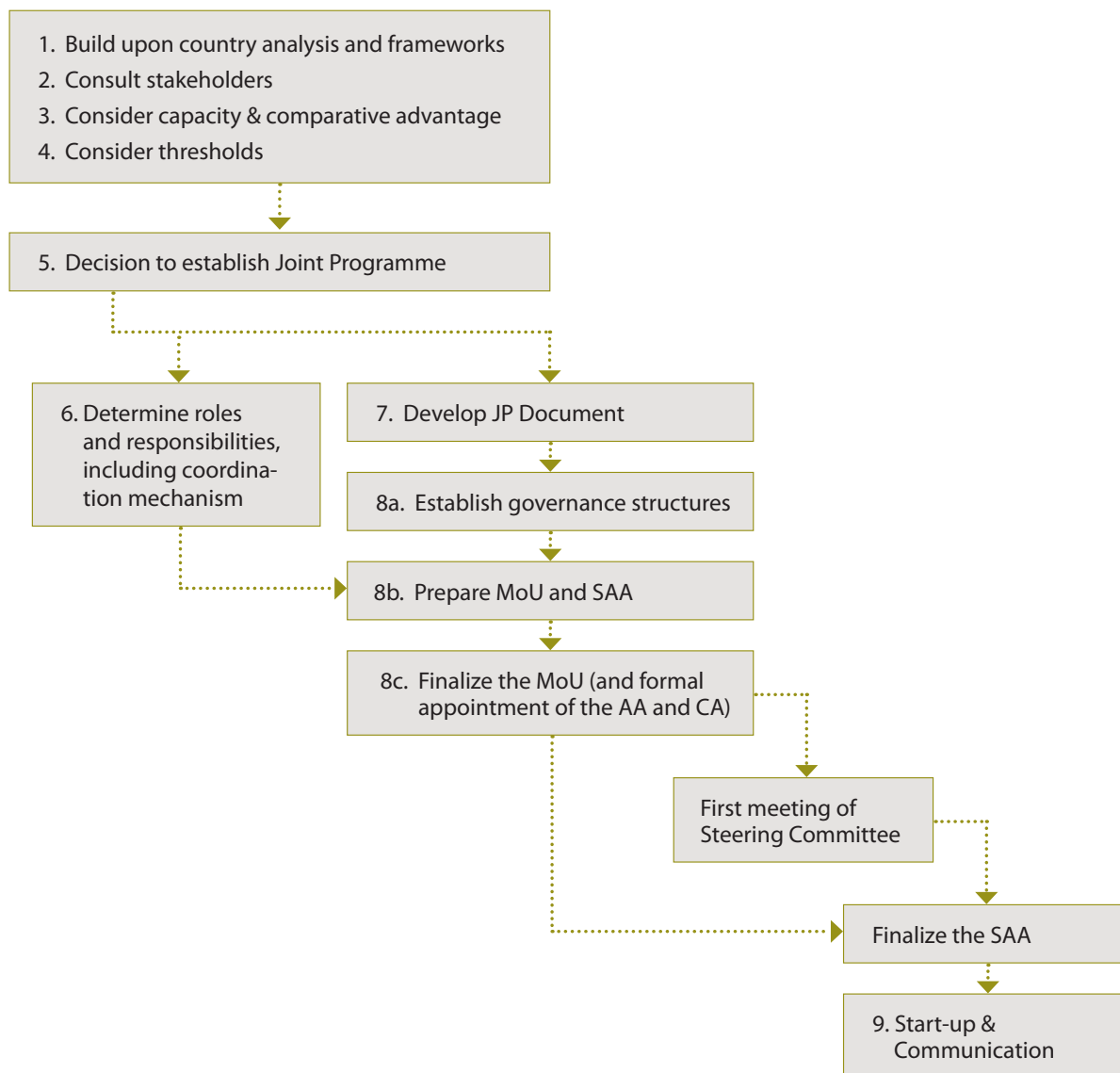
- National, regional or international governmental or non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and/or private sector partners (as permitted by the rules and regulations of participating UN organizations) that may be working with Participating UN Organizations and/or (Sub-)National governmental Partners to implement the Joint Programme

Coordination: The Convening Agency coordinates and convenes various stakeholders, which may include: convening and reporting on Steering Committee meetings, setting up a Programme Management Unit (PMU) if existing structures cannot be utilized for such, coordinating the preparation of work plans, commissioning

mid-term and final evaluation, and other planning of joint processes.

3.2.2. Establishment process

The steps outlined below may be taken in order to establish a Joint Programme using the pass-through modality.



Selection of the Administrative Agent: The UN organizations participating in the Joint Programme will select the AA, taking into consideration the following elements: i) UN organization; ii) Financial and administrative capacity to interface between donor(s) and participating UN organizations and perform the financial and administrative functions outlined in the Protocol on the Administrative Agent for Multi Donor Trust Funds and Joint Programmes and One UN Funds.

Selection of the Convening Agent: The UN organizations participating in the Joint Programme will select the CA, taking into consideration the following element: i) UN organization with country presence; ii) Thematic, functional and geographical area of expertise in the area covered by the programme; iii) Convening capacity to interface between Steering Committee and participating UN organizations.

3.2.3. Required documentation

A Joint Programme using pass-through funding modality requires the following documentation:

- Joint Programme Document
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Participating UN Organizations and the Administrative Agent and Convening Agency (MOU)
- Standard Administrative Arrangement between the Donor and the Administrative Agent (SAA)

3.3. Process of managing a pass-through Joint Programme

3.3.1. Finance

Accounting/Budget: The Administrative Agent will set up separate ledger accounts for the Joint Programme and will prepare a consolidated budget from the separate budgets received from each participating UN organization for approval by the Steering Committee.

Each participating UN organization will set up a separate ledger account for the Joint Programme and will prepare a separate budget for the Joint Programme, consistent with its procedures. Since reporting needs to be by UNDG approved

harmonized budget categories, it is preferable that the budget be set up in these categories. Each PUNO will account for the funds distributed by the AA in respect of its components in the Joint Programme in accordance with its financial rules and regulations.

Fees: The Administrative Agent shall be entitled to allocate one percent (1%) of the amount contributed by donor(s), for its costs of performing the AA's functions. In cases where the Joint Programme does not meet the thresholds for establishment or the Joint Programme is subject to a non-cost extension, the Steering Committee will review and consider the inclusion of the remainder of the fee as direct costs.

The Convening Agency shall be entitled to recover its direct costs related to its convening role, which should be included in the Joint Programme budgetary framework. Each Participating UN Organization will recover indirect costs at the established rate of 7%.

Transfer of funds: The allocation of funds should follow established criteria, as outlined in the Joint Programme Document or in Steering Committee minutes and needs to be approved by the Steering Committee. Following Steering Committee instructions, supported by the appropriate documentation, and provided that the balance of donor contributions is sufficient, transfers will be made by the AA to the participating UN organizations within 3-5 days. Direct transfer between participating UN organizations of funds received from the AA in a pass-through modality is not allowed to avoid multiple cost recovery charges by UN organizations.

For new Joint Programmes, the size of individual transfers from the AA to the PUNOs during the implementation phase should be at least USD 100,000 per individual transfer. For ongoing Joint Programmes these transfers should have a minimum size of USD 50,000 per individual transfer from the AA to a specific PUNO for the period 2014-2015, and at least USD 100,000 per individual transfer from 1 January 2016 onwards. Transfers can be smaller during the last year of implementation, when the final round of allocations is made. It is recommended to limit the

number of transfer rounds to preferably one and maximum two per year.

Revisions: Agreed upon revisions of the grant, such as no-cost extension, increase or decrease of total budget and reallocations between budget categories will be initiated by the Steering Committee or affected participating UN organization and approved by the Steering Committee. Changes of activities that affect outputs and outcomes must also be approved by the Steering Committee, and the Joint Programme Document may need to be amended, the annual work plan revised and the budgetary framework adjusted to accommodate new or changed allocations. Significant programmatic or financial deviations of the Joint Programme Document (e.g., budget revisions above 15%, changes to implementation timeline, scope, objective, target groups and/or location of activities) may require discussions with donors and respective amendments of the MoU and SAA.

3.3.2. Monitoring

A Joint Programme is monitored throughout its duration in accordance with the Joint Programme Document. Monitoring is the continuous function of using the systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide the key stakeholders of the Joint Programme with indications of the degree of progress and achievements of objectives of the Joint Programme (including progress in the use of allocated funds). Monitoring should be done against targets and indicators and progress should be reported in the narrative report.

Each PUNO is responsible for monitoring its contributions, and the Convening Agency oversees and coordinates to ensure all targets are monitored. A Monitoring Plan should include roles and responsibilities for monitoring, timing and methodology. Monitoring is linked to evaluation since it facilitates data collection toward targets, though additional data collection and different frameworks for analysis are needed for evaluation.

3.3.3 Evaluation

Evaluation is the systematic and objective assessment of the Joint Programme which aims to determine the relevance and fulfillment of

objectives as well as the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the Joint Programme (and when feasible, its impact). Evaluation of Joint Programmes should inform learning, decision-making and guidance on how to implement the modality.

Evaluation of a Joint Programme should be undertaken in accordance with the guidance from the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) (e.g., relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability) with an emphasis on results and on the Joint Programme process. Since there is a growing trend toward joint programming initiatives and a movement for harmonization alignment, there is a momentum and strengthened rationale for conducting joint evaluations. A joint evaluation, wherein the evaluation units of all concerned organizations participate in the Evaluation Management Group, is the preferred option. Participating UN organizations should share information and progress updates, and undertake joint monitoring and evaluation where appropriate. Refer to [Resource Pack on Joint Evaluations](#) for different options to organize a joint process.

An indicative allocation of 3% to 5% of funds should be allotted for monitoring, reporting and evaluation/s. This provision for the evaluation of the Joint Programme may be budgeted under the components of any of the participating UN organizations. For Joint Programmes that last 3 years or longer, a mid-term evaluation is recommended.

3.3.4. Reporting

The Joint Programme will have one consolidated annual report (including programmatic and financial reports), which should be harmonized with other reporting formats such as UNDAF or One UN Country Results Report to the extent possible. Reporting deadlines stated in the legal instruments (e.g., MoU, SAA) should be adhered to. All reports have to be endorsed by the Steering Committee and will be shared with all relevant stakeholders through the Steering Committee.

Administrative Agent: shall prepare certified annual and final **financial reports** consisting of the reports submitted by each participating UN

THE JOINT PROGRAMME WILL HAVE ONE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL REPORT, WHICH SHOULD BE HARMONIZED WITH OTHER REPORTING FORMATS SUCH AS UNDAF OR ONE UN COUNTRY RESULTS REPORTS

THE
NARRATIVE
REPORTS SHOULD
DESCRIBE IN A
COHERENT MANNER
WHAT IS BEING DONE
JOINTLY AT OUTCOME
AND OUTPUT
LEVEL

organization and a report on “Source and Use of Funds.” The AA shall provide those consolidated reports to each donor that has contributed to the Joint Programme account, in accordance with the timetable in the Standard Administrative Arrangement. The reports shall use UN approved harmonized budget categories: (1) Staff and other personnel costs, (2) Supplies, commodities, materials, (3) Equipment, vehicles and furniture, including depreciation, (4) Contractual services, (5) Travel, (6) Transfers and grants counterparts, (7) General operating and other direct costs, (8) Indirect support costs.

Convening Agency: shall prepare annual and final consolidated **narrative progress reports** based on the reports submitted by each participating UN organization, and shall provide those consolidated reports to the Administrative Agent for further submission to each donor that has contributed to the Joint Programme, in accordance with the timetable. The narrative reports should describe in a coherent manner what is being done jointly at outcome and output level. The generic annual and final programme narrative progress report template shall be used.

Each Participating UN organizations: will prepare narrative reports in accordance with the narrative reporting template and financial reports in accordance with its financial regulations, rules and operational policy guidance, using the UN harmonized budget categories. The narrative report will be shared with the Convening Agency, and the financial report will be shared with the Administrative Agent.

In addition to annual reports, quarterly or semi-annual field updates, e.g., to the Steering Committee, are encouraged for effective management of Joint Programmes, though these updates are unofficial (i.e., not certified by agency headquarters) and may involve a level of detail not meant to be captured in official annual reports.

3.3.5. Audit and Investigations

Internal audit: Applying the risk-based criteria required under international internal auditing standards, the Internal Audit Services (IAS) of the participating UN organizations will collectively

review and prioritize those which would be considered for joint internal audit coverage through the UN Representatives of Internal Audit Services (UN-RIAS) network. Joint audits will be carried out under the established relevant frameworks for joint audits.

Under a joint audit approach, the IAS of the participating UN organizations selected for coverage execute one single internal audit, which is carried out on behalf of all PUNOs. The audit may be carried out by one IAS on behalf of all, by a joint team of internal auditors from PUNO IAS or by a third party auditor jointly engaged by the PUNO IAS. A joint internal audit will cover joint programme governance and administration as well as implementation of programme components by the PUNOs. The joint audit report will be public.

A joint audit report may be supplemented by further reports on issues specific to particular PUNOs; these reports are issued by the IAS of that PUNO in accordance with its disclosure policy. Further, there may be circumstances where a specific audit of the implementation of one PUNO’s component of a Joint Programme is determined as needed by that PUNO’s management or IAS, even where a joint audit is not planned. In such cases, the audit will be carried out by that PUNO’s IAS in accordance with the PUNO’s regulations and rules, and the publication of the resulting audit report will follow the PUNO’s disclosure policy.

Recommendations of the joint audit will be followed by the IAS of one PUNO on behalf of all, as agreed among the IAS of all PUNOs; recommendations from additional reports issued by the IAS of a PUNO to its management will be separately followed by that IAS.

The cost of a joint audit of the Joint Programme or only parts thereof will be covered by the Joint Programme.

External Audit: The matter of external audit of the particular joint undertaking has to be referred to the External Auditors of all participating agencies.

Administrative Investigations: Investigations of allegations of misconduct by UN organization

personnel, implementing partners and vendors in relation to Joint Programmes will be carried out by the Investigation Service of the UN organization with whom the potential subject of investigation is contracted, in accordance with that PUNO's regulations and rules. That PUNO's Investigation Service will share information as appropriate with counterparts in the other PUNOs to determine whether the alleged misconduct is limited to one PUNO or extends to others. Where a subject of an investigation is contracted to more than one PUNO, the Investigation Service of the PUNOs concerned will conduct joint or coordinated investigations and determine the investigation framework to use. The resulting investigation report(s) will be provided to the relevant bodies or individuals of the PUNOs involved, following each PUNO's internal procedures. Disciplinary and/or administrative measures will be taken by each PUNO according to its framework for disciplinary measures and vendor sanction mechanism, as appropriate.

3.4. Process of closing a pass-through Joint Programme

3.4.1. Closure

Operational: As outlined in the MOU, each Participating UN Organization informs the AA in writing when all activities under the approved programmatic document have been completed. For a Joint Programme the operational end date is the date in which the last participating UN organization completes its activities and informs both the CA and the AA. If not all participating UN organizations have finished their activities and informed the AA by the end date envisaged in the Joint Programme document, then the programme cannot be closed yet and a (no-cost) extension has to be requested. As outlined in the MOU, a final narrative report, after the completion of the final year of the activities, is prepared by each Participating UN Organization and submitted to the CA. The report shall be issued no later than four months (30 April) of the year following the operational closing of the programme.

Financial: As part of the financial closure, each participating UN organization needs to return any unspent balance to the AA; transfer any interest for prior and current year to the AA, unless their rules and regulations do not require participating UN organizations to do so; and report no expenditure in excess of funds transferred. After this occurred, the AA confirms the completion to the participating UN organizations and closes the programme allocation within its internal system. The AA will return any unspent funds remaining in the Joint Programme account after the financial closure of the Joint Programme to the donor(s) or utilize them in a manner agreed upon between the AA and the donor(s), and approved by the Steering Committee. The financial closure process begins only after all participating UN organizations have satisfactorily closed all of their respective programmatic allocations. It generally takes 12 months following the AA's confirmation that all programmatic allocations have been financially closed. (For more information, see [Fact Sheet "How to Close a Project/Joint Programme"](#).)

Since Joint Programmes have a tendency to grant non-cost extension, the AA is entitled to a direct cost charge of USD 5,000 per year out of the different sources of funds of a given Joint Programme to cover the cost of continuing to render AA services for the period (rounded to whole years) that the operational life span of the Joint Programme (from the date of signing the MOU up to actual operational end date of the Joint Programme) is extended beyond five years. This applies unless additional donor contributions are received during that period proportional to the amounts required for establishing a Joint Programme, and for the period (rounded to whole years) that the financial closure of the Joint Programme surpasses the maximum period of two years after operational closure of the Joint Programme due to delays of PUNOs in financially closing their part of the Joint Programme. This direct cost charge is meant as a concrete disincentive to Steering Committees and PUNOs for keeping extending the operational life time of PUNO projects and/or delaying its financial closure⁶.

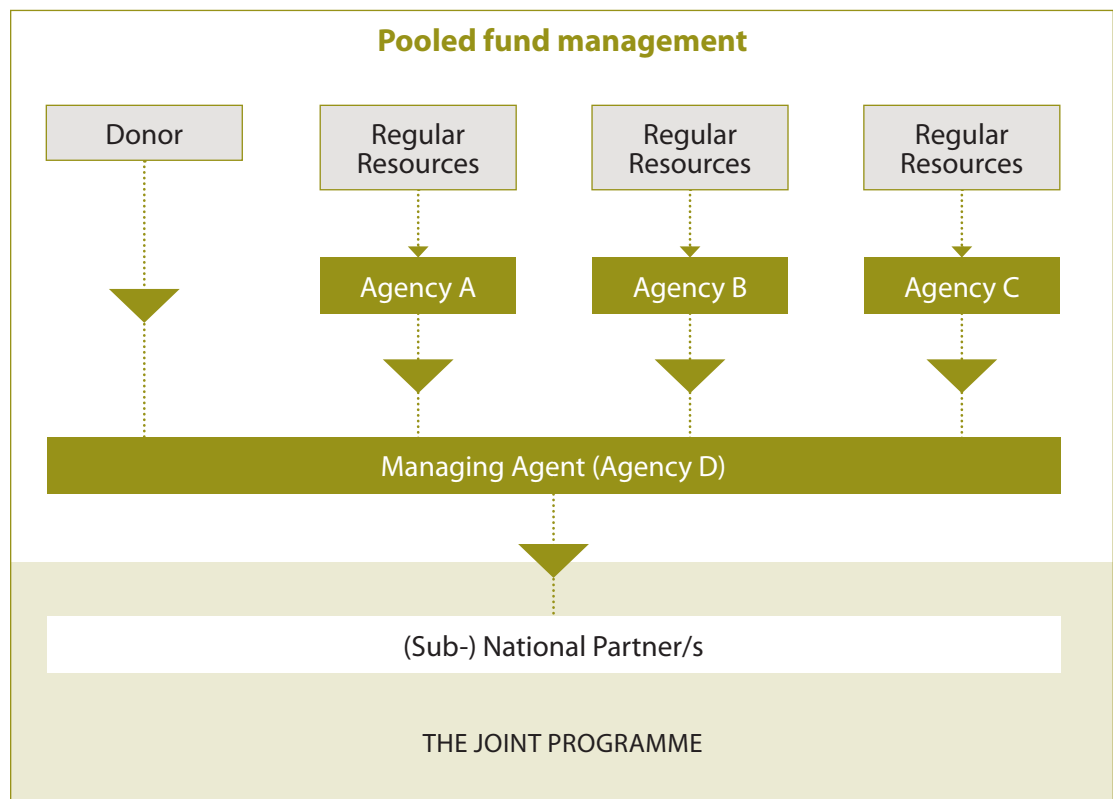
⁶ The UNDG will undertake a separate analysis of the actual experience with closing PUNO projects, the accountability for timely closing of projects and the possible incentives that can be put in place to promote timely closure, which may result in a recommendation to adjust the figure of USD 5,000.

4. POOLED FUND MANAGEMENT MODALITY: OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE



4.1. OVERVIEW

This fund management modality is likely to be the most effective and efficient when participating UN organizations, using mostly their own core resources, work for common results with one or more **common national or sub-national partner/s** (e.g. Department, provincial office, NGO) and/or in a common geographical area. Under this modality, participating UN organizations transfer pooled funds together to one UN organization, called the **Managing Agent (MA)**, chosen jointly by the participating UN organizations.



For the pooled fund management modality, the threshold for establishment is that the overall expected contributions from UN organizations should be at least USD 200,000. Exceptions to this

threshold for establishment should be brought to the attention of the UNDG Fiduciary Management Oversight Group (FMOG) by the Managing Agent on an annual basis.

4.2. Process of establishing a pooled Joint Programme

4.2.1. Governance

For a Joint Programme using pooled funding modality, the Steering Committee provides strategic direction and oversight, and has decision making authority. The Managing Agent, which has

the status of an independent contractor, is responsible for technical as well as financial coordination and reporting; and the participating UN organizations and potential donors pool their resources under the management of the Managing Agent. Existing structures should be utilized to the extent possible rather than creating new ones.

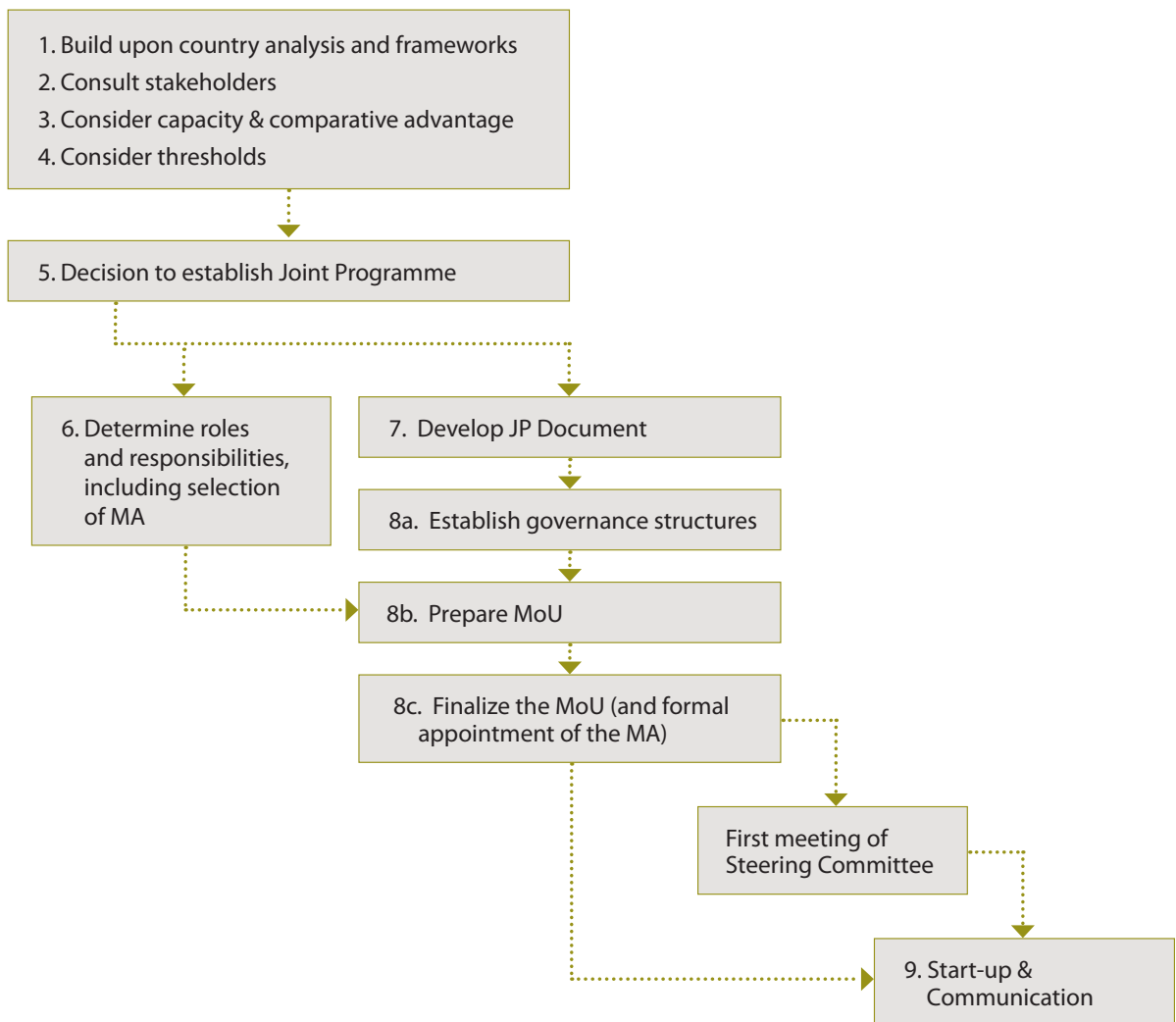


Coordination: The Managing Agent shall coordinate technical inputs by all participating UN organizations.

4.2.2. Establishment process

The steps outlined below may be taken to establish a Joint Programme using the pooled funding modality.

Selection of the Managing Agent: When selecting the MA, the organizations that have pooled their funds will take the following elements into consideration: i) UN organization, ii) Expertise in the area covered by the Programme (comparative advantage), iii) Existing relationship with national counterparts, and; iv) In-country financial/administrative management capacity.



4.2.3. Required documentation

A Joint Programme using pass-through funding modality requires the following documentation:

- Joint Programme Document
- Memorandum of Understanding between participating UN organizations and the Managing Agent

4.3. Process of managing a pooled Joint Programme

4.3.1. Finance

Accounting/Budget: The Managing Agent shall establish and manage a separate ledger account for the receipt and administration of funds received, and will account for the income received to fund the Joint Programme in accordance with its financial regulations and rules.

The MA will prepare a budget for the Joint Programme, consistent with its procedures, and covering the mutually agreed components of the programme, for endorsement by the participating UN organizations. Since reporting needs to be by UNDG approved harmonized budget categories, it is preferable that the budget be set up in these categories.

Indirect Costs: The MA will recover indirect costs in accordance with its financial regulations and rules. This will be documented in the Memorandum of Understanding signed with the participating UN organization(s) and in any funding agreement signed with the donor(s).

Revisions: Agreed upon revisions of the grant, such as no-cost extension, increase or decrease of total budget and reallocation between budget categories will be approved by the Steering Committee. Changes of activities that affect outputs and outcomes must also be approved by the Steering Committee, and the Joint Programme Document needs to be amended, the annual work plan revised and the budgetary framework adjusted to accommodate new or

changed allocations. Significant programmatic or financial deviations of the Joint Programme Document (e.g., budget revisions above 15%, changes to implementation timeline, scope, objective, target groups and/or location of activities) may require discussions with donors (including participating UN organizations) and respective amendments of the MoU.

4.3.2. Monitoring

A Joint Programme is monitored throughout its duration in accordance with Joint Programme Document. Monitoring is the continuous function of using the systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide the key stakeholders of the Joint Programme with indications of the degree of progress and achievements of objectives of the Joint Programme (including progress in the use of allocated funds). Monitoring should be done against targets and indicators and progress should be reported in the narrative report.

The Managing Agent is responsible for monitoring in accordance its regulations, rules and procedures applicable, and the Joint Programme Document. A Monitoring Plan should include roles and responsibilities for monitoring, timing and methodology. Monitoring is linked to evaluation since it facilitates data collection toward targets, though additional data collection and different frameworks for analysis are needed for evaluation.

4.3.3. Evaluation

Evaluation is the systematic and objective assessment of the Joint Programme which aims to determine the relevance and fulfillment of objectives as well as the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the Joint Programme (and when feasible, its impact). Evaluation of Joint Programmes should inform learning, decision-making and guidance on how to implement the modality.

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THE
MANAGING
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AND THE JOINT
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DOCUMENT

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EVALUATION
OF A JOINT
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SHOULD BE
UNDERTAKEN IN
ACCORDANCE
WITH GUIDANCE
FROM THE UNITED
NATIONS
EVALUATION
GROUP (UNEG)

Evaluation of a Joint Programme should be undertaken in accordance with the guidance from the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) (e.g., relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability) with an emphasis on results and on the Joint Programme process. A joint evaluation, wherein the evaluation units of all concerned organizations participate in the Evaluation Management Group, is the preferred option for evaluation of a Joint Programme. Participating UN organizations should share information and progress updates, and undertake joint monitoring and evaluation where appropriate. Refer to [Resource Pack on Joint Evaluations](#) for different options to organize a joint process.

An indicative allocation of 3% to 5% of funds should be allotted for monitoring, reporting and evaluation/s. This provision for the evaluation of the Joint Programme may be budgeted under the components of any of the participating UN organizations. For Joint Programmes that last 3 years or longer, a mid-term evaluation is recommended.

4.3.4. Reporting

The Joint Programme will have one consolidated annual report (including programmatic and financial reports), which should be harmonized with other reporting formats such as UNDAF or One UN Country Results Report to the extent possible. Reporting deadlines stated in the legal instrument (e.g., MoU) should be adhered to. All reports have to be endorsed by the Steering Committee and will be shared with all relevant stakeholders through the Steering Committee.

The Managing Agent shall provide the Joint Programme Steering Committee with the following statements and reports prepared in accordance its regulations, rules and procedures applicable and the Joint Programme Document: annual and final **narrative progress report** for each twelve-month period for which the Managing Agent may use its own format or use the default standard [generic annual and final narrative reporting progress report template](#), and annual and final **financial reports**, using the UN-wide harmonized budget categories. Financial

reports include: annual financial reports as of 31 December each year with respect to the Joint Programme Account, uncertified financial report, and a final certified financial statement.

In addition to annual reports, quarterly or semi-annual field updates, e.g., to the Steering Committee, are encouraged for effective management of Joint Programmes, though these updates are unofficial (i.e., not certified by agency headquarters) and may involve a level of detail not meant to be captured in official annual reports.

4.3.5. Audit and Investigation

Internal Audit: A similar risk-based prioritization approach to determining if the Joint Programme will be subject to a joint audit will be applied as for the Pass-through fund management modality.

The Managing Agent's IAS will carry out the audit of the Managing Agent, and review of the implementation of programme components by other PUNOs will be carried out by those PUNOs' IAS, with a summary consolidation of results into one joint audit report. The joint audit report will be public.

The joint audit report may be supplemented by further internal audit reports on issues specific to particular PUNOs and be published by the IAS of that/these PUNO(s). There may be circumstances where a specific audit of the implementation of one PUNO's component of a Joint Programme is determined as needed by that PUNO's management or IAS, even where a joint audit is not planned. In such cases, the audit will be carried out by that PUNO's IAS in accordance with the PUNO's regulations and rules, and the publication of the resulting audit report will follow the PUNO's disclosure policy;

Recommendations of the joint audit will be followed by the IAS of one PUNO on behalf of all PUNOs, as agreed among the IAS of PUNOs; recommendations from additional reports issued by the IAS of a PUNO to its management will be followed by that IAS only, according its internal procedures.

The cost of all internal audit activities related to the Joint Programme will be covered by the Joint Programme.

External Audits: The matter of external audit of the particular joint undertaking has to be referred to the External Auditors of all participating agencies.

Administrative Investigations: The same approach will be adopted as for the Pass-through fund management modality.

4.4. Process of closing a pooled Joint Programme

4.4.1. Closure

Operational: The Managing Agent informs the Steering Committee in writing when all activities under the approved programmatic document have been completed. For a Joint Programme, the operational end date is the date in which the Managing Agent completes its activities. If the Managing Agent or its implementing partners have not finished the activities by the end date envisaged in the Joint Programme document, then the programme cannot be closed yet and a (no-cost) extension has to be requested. The MA prepares a final narrative report after the completion of the activities.

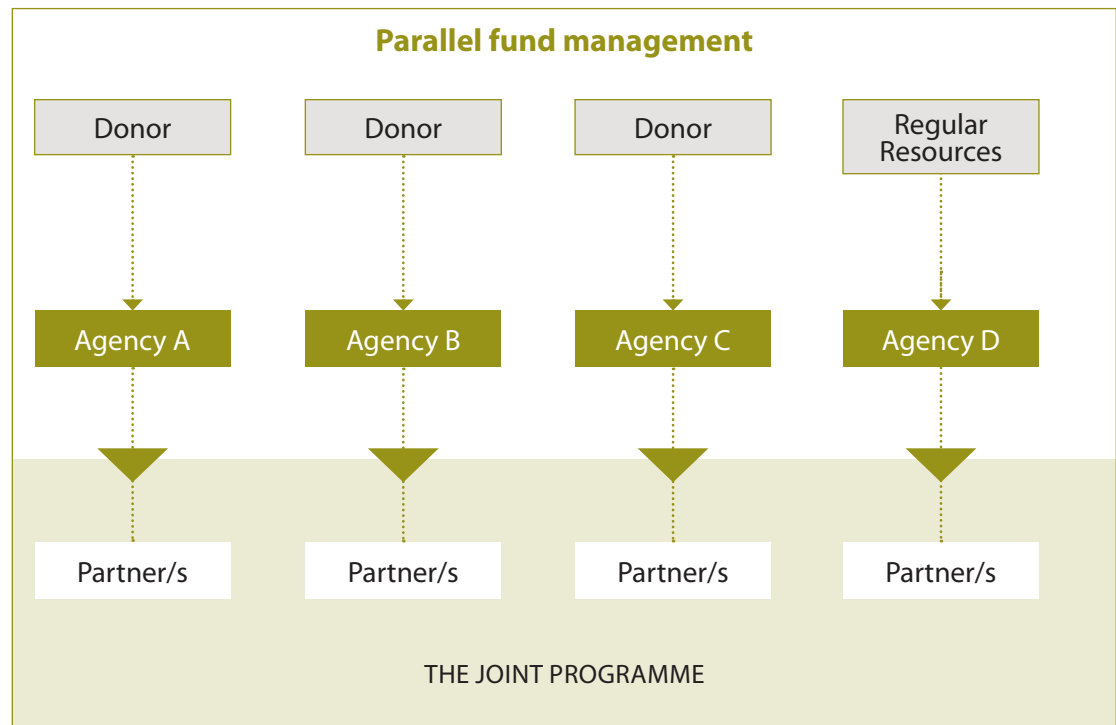
Financial: No expenses should be charged after operational closure. Between operational and financial closure, the implementing partner is required to identify and settle all financial obligations and to return any unutilized funds to the MA. The disposition of any balance of funds remaining at the end of programme implementation will be in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding signed with the participating UN organization(s) and in any funding agreement signed with the donor(s). The financial closure of accounts of each participating UN agency will be done in accordance with each UN agency rules and procedures, which in most instances takes place 12 months after the operational closure of the programme. The MA shall issue the final certified financial report after all legal obligations are settled or terminated.

5. PARALLEL FUND MANAGEMENT MODALITY: OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE



5.1. Overview

This fund management modality is likely to be the most effective and efficient when donors want to earmark funds to a specific agency and when the interventions of participating UN organizations are aimed at common results, but with **different national, sub-national and/or international partners**. Under this modality, each organization manages its own activities within the common work plan and the related budget, whether from Regular Resources or Other Resources.

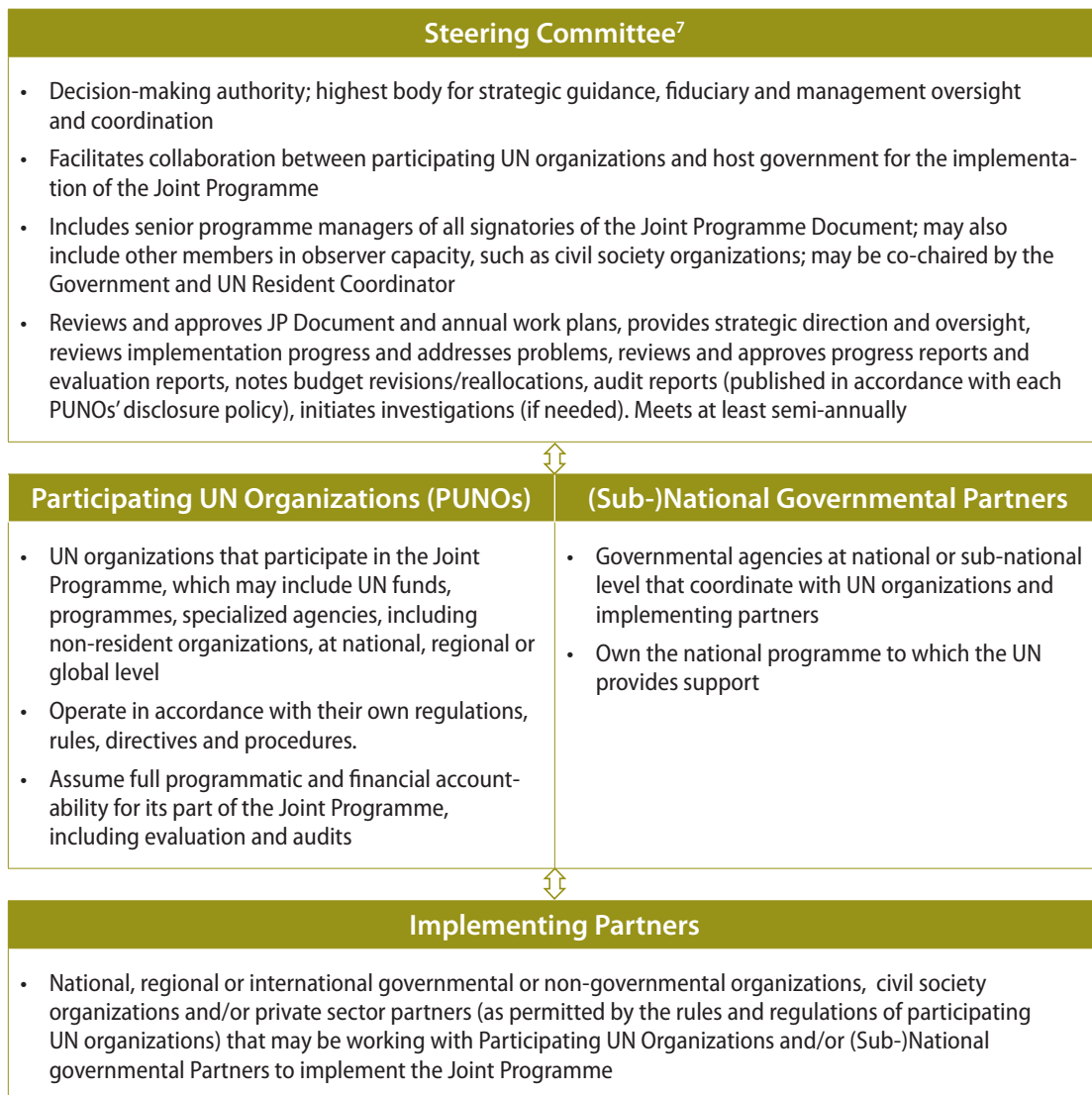


5.2. Process of establishing a parallel Joint Programme

5.2.1. Governance

For a Joint Programme using the parallel funding modality, the Steering Committee provides strategic direction and oversight, and has

decision-making authority. Each participating UN organization has programmatic, financial, and reporting responsibility for its part of the Joint Programme. Existing structures should be utilized to the extent possible rather than creating new ones.



⁷ In line with the Delivering as One SOPs guidance, the UNCT should reach an agreement on the Government's role in the Steering Committee with regard to strategic direction as well as in the resource allocation processes.

Coordination: Once all components of the Joint Programme work plan have been agreed to by (sub-) national governmental partners and each of the participating UN organizations, roles and responsibilities for coordination of the various interventions and for producing a single consolidated report should be documented. Due consideration should be given to the need of dedicating sufficient human resources for such functions. All participating UN organizations should share the costs of coordination. Additional human resource requirements for the purpose of coordination, if any, could be included in funding proposals.

5.2.2. Establishment process

The steps outlined below may be taken in order to establish a Joint Programme using the parallel funding modality.

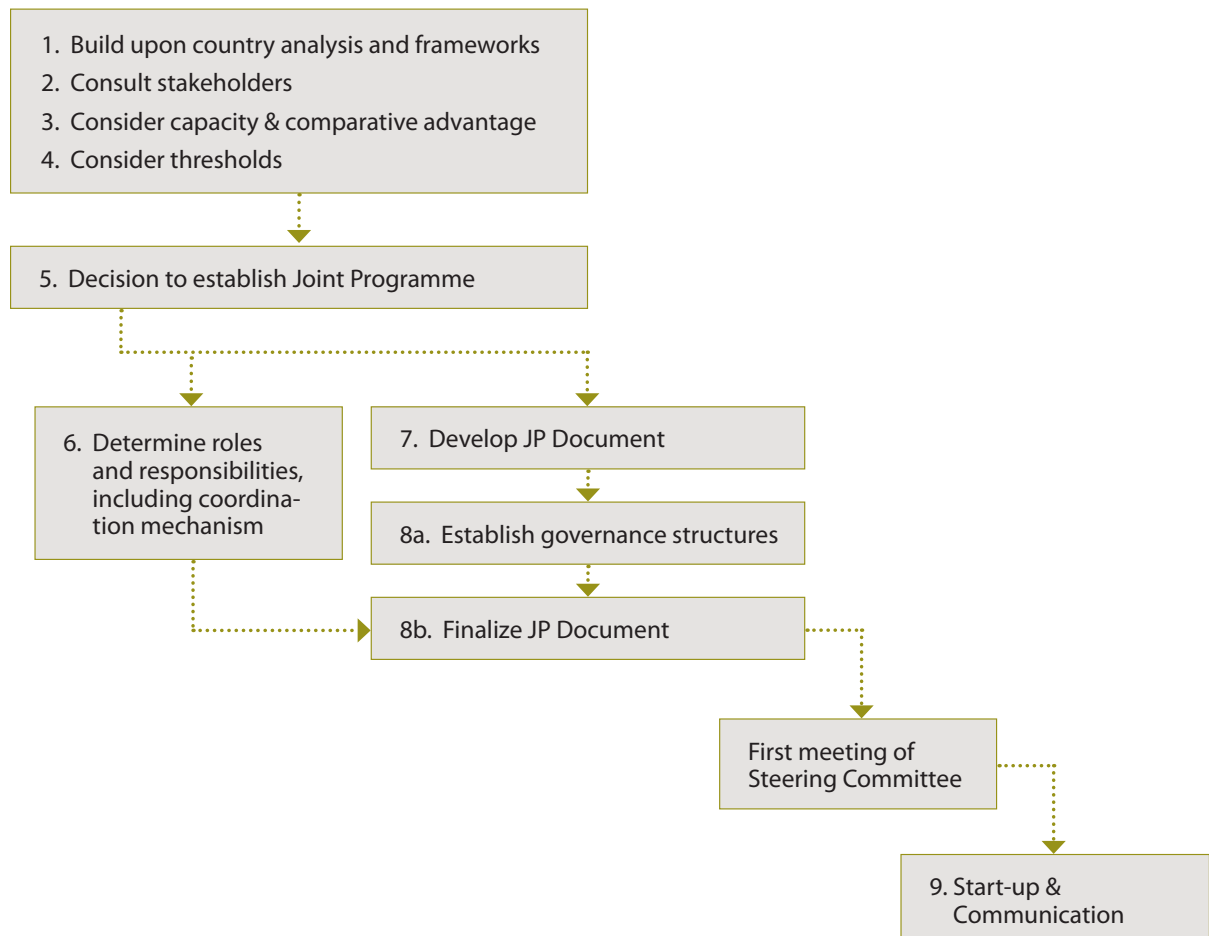
5.2.3. Required documentation

As with all Joint Programmes, a Joint Programme Document is required.

5.3. Process of managing a parallel Joint Programme

5.3.1. Finance

Budget Preparation: Each participating UN organization will prepare a separate budget, consistent with its procedures, and covering the mutually agreed components of the programme it will manage. Since reporting needs to be by UNDG approved harmonized budget categories, it is preferable that the budget be set up in these categories. Responsibility should be assigned for preparing an aggregated/consolidated budget, showing the budget components of each participating UN organization/implementing partner(s).



Accounting: Each UN organization will set up a separate ledger account for the Joint Programme and will account for the income received to fund its programme components in accordance with its financial regulations and rules.

Indirect Costs: Each participating UN organization will recover indirect costs in accordance with its financial regulations and rules and as documented in the funding agreement signed with the donor.

Revisions: Revisions of the grants and contracts, such as no-cost extension, increase or decrease of total budget and reallocations between budget categories, will be handled through each participating UN organization's separate governing bodies and/or particular donor and are subject to the Terminal Obligation Date (TOD) and the Disbursement Date (DD).

Changes of activities that affect outputs and outcomes must be approved by the Steering Committee, and the Joint Programme Document needs to be amended, the annual work plan revised and the budget framework adjusted to accommodate new or changed allocations.

5.3.2. Monitoring

A Joint Programme is monitored throughout its duration in accordance with each participating UN organization's procedures and as reflected in the Joint Programme Document. Monitoring is the continuous function of using the systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide the key stakeholders of the Joint Programme with indications of the degree of progress and achievements of objectives of the Joint Programme (including progress in the use of allocated funds). Monitoring should be done against targets and indicators and progress should be reported in the narrative report.

Each PUNO is responsible for monitoring its contributions. A Monitoring Plan should include roles and responsibilities for monitoring, timing and methodology. Monitoring is linked to evaluation since it facilitates data collection toward targets, though additional data collection and different frameworks for analysis are needed for evaluation.

5.3.3. Evaluation

Evaluation is the systematic and objective assessment of the Joint Programme which aims to determine the relevance and fulfillment of objectives as well as the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the Joint Programme (and when feasible, its impact). Evaluation of Joint Programmes should inform learning, decision-making and guidance on how to implement the modality.

Evaluation of a Joint Programme should be undertaken in accordance with the guidance from the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) (e.g., relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability) with an emphasis on results and on the Joint Programme process. A joint evaluation, wherein the evaluation units of all concerned organizations participate in the Evaluation Management Group, is the preferred option. Participating UN organizations should share information and progress updates, and undertake joint monitoring and evaluation where appropriate. Refer to [Resource Pack on Joint Evaluations](#) for different options to organize a joint process.

An indicative allocation of 3% to 5% of funds should be allotted for monitoring, reporting and evaluation/s. This provision for the evaluation of the Joint Programme may be budgeted under the components of any of the participating UN organizations. For Joint Programmes that last 3 years or longer, a mid-term evaluation is recommended.

5.3.4. Reporting

The Joint Programme will have one consolidated annual report (including programmatic and financial reports), which should focus on results and be harmonized with other reporting formats, such as UNDAF or One UN Country Results Report, to the extent possible. All reports have to be endorsed by the Steering Committee and will be shared with all relevant stakeholders through the Steering Committee.

Each participating UN organization will prepare narrative and financial reports in accordance with its policies and procedures, and operational policy guidance. For the **narrative report**, each agency

may use its own narrative reporting format or the default [generic annual and final narrative progress reporting template](#) and for the **financial report**, the UN approved harmonized budget categories are required.

Responsibility should be assigned for the preparation of a consolidated narrative and financial report for submission to the Steering Committee. The consolidated narrative and financial report should be clearly identified as a compilation of the participating UN organizations' narrative and financial reporting. The Steering Committee may agree that each participating UN organization prepare one report with proper introduction to the different parts of the report and attributions of funding and results.

In addition to annual reports, quarterly or semi-annual field updates, e.g., to the Steering Committee, are encouraged for effective management of Joint Programmes, though these updates are unofficial (i.e., not certified by agency headquarters) and may involve a level of detail not meant to be captured in official annual reports.

5.3.5. Audit and Investigations

Internal Audit: A similar risk-based prioritization approach to determining if the Joint Programme will be subject to a joint audit will be applied as for the Pass-through fund management modality.

The IAS of each PUNO will be responsible for auditing its own contribution to the Joint Programme, following each PUNO's regulations and rules, with a summary consolidation of results into one joint audit report coordinated by one PUNO IAS agreed by the participating IAS. The joint report will be public.

The issuance of each PUNO's internal audit report will be done according to that PUNO's disclosure policy for internal audit reports, and the recommendation follow-up be undertaken according to the procedures in force in that PUNO.

The cost of said internal audit will be charged to the PUNO administrative fee received from the Joint Programme.

External Audit: The matter of external audit of the particular joint undertaking has to be referred to the External Auditors of all participating agencies.

Administrative Investigations: The same approach will be adopted as for the Pass-through fund management modality.

5.4. Process of closing a parallel Joint Programme

5.1. Closure

Operational: Each participating UN organization informs the Steering Committee in writing when all activities under the approved programmatic document have been completed. For a Joint Programme, the operational end date is the date in which the last participating organization completes its activities. If one participating UN organization has not finished the activities by the end date envisaged in the Joint Programme document, then the programme cannot be closed yet. Each participating UN organization prepares a final narrative report after the completion of the activities. As part of the sustainability plan, the coordination mechanism should remain operational for a period of at least three months after operational closure of the Joint Programme.

Financial: No expenses should be charged after operational closure. Between operational and financial closure, the implementing partner is required to identify and settle all financial obligations and to return any unutilized funds to the donor. The disposition of any balance of funds remaining at the end of programme implementation will be in accordance with the agreements between the participating UN organizations and the implementing partners as well as donors where applicable. The financial closure of accounts of each participating UN organization will be done in accordance with each UN organization's rules and procedures, which in most instances takes place 12 months after the operational closure of the programme. Each participating organization shall issue a final certified financial report after all legal obligations are settled or terminated.

6. JOINT PROGRAMMES – AUDIT AND INVESTIGATION GUIDELINES AS PROVIDED BY UN RIAS



INTERNAL AUDIT

The Representatives of Internal Audit Services of the UN (UN-RIAS) all adopt the Professional Practices Framework of the Institute of Internal Auditors. Under that Framework, internal auditing is defined as an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve an organization's operations. It helps an organization accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of its governance, risk management and control processes.

In accordance with the risk-based approach required under international internal auditing standards that form part of the Professional Practices Framework, the Internal Audit Services (IAS) of the UN organizations participating in Joint Programmes (PUNO) will collectively review and prioritize on risk-based principles, those joint programmes which would be considered for internal audit coverage through joint audits. Joint audits will be carried out by the IAS of the PUNOs following the relevant established framework for joint audits.

Internal audits of Joint Programmes will entail:

- The joint programme's governance and administration which will be undertaken jointly by IAS of the PUNOs involved and the report thereon being issued to the Joint Programme Steering Committee and to the United Nations Development Group, and disclosed publicly;
- Those activities of the joint programme undertaken jointly by several PUNOs – the audit will be conducted jointly by the IAS of the PUNOs involved in those activities; reporting thereon may be integrated with that on joint programme's governance and administration, or be separate, and will be issued according to the policies of disclosure of internal audit reports of the PUNOs involved; and
- The portion of the joint programme activities separately undertaken by each PUNO, which

will be audited in accordance with each PUNO's Financial Regulations and Rules. In view of the diverse policies of disclosure of internal audit reports across the United Nations system, each IAS will follow the one in force in that PUNO; and in addition, provide a high level summary of its key findings and recommendations to the IAS chosen to consolidate and provide a high level report to the Joint Programme Steering Committee and to the United Nations Development Group.

The total cost of internal audits of the Joint Programme will be covered directly by the Joint Programme and a budgetary provision will be included from the onset to cover for these costs, should the IAS of the PUNOs involved decide to undertake an audit of the Joint Programme.

INVESTIGATIONS

UN staff and individual contractors, implementing partners, vendors and any third parties which are involved either in joint activities or only in those of a PUNO must adhere to the highest standard of ethical conduct as defined by each PUNO.

To this end, each Participating UN Organization will maintain standards of conduct that govern the performance of its staff, Individual contractors, implementing partners, vendors and any third party with which it is in a contractual

JOINT
AUDITS WILL BE
CARRIED OUT
BY THE IAS OF THE
PUNOS FOLLOWING
THE **RELEVANT**
ESTABLISHED
FRAMEWORK **FOR**
JOINT AUDITS

relation, in the prohibition of fraud and corruption, and other unethical behavior, in any activity related to the Joint Programme.

The parties as defined above must not engage in proscribed practices which include:

- “Corrupt practice” which means the offering, giving, receiving, or soliciting, directly or indirectly, of anything of value to influence improperly the actions of another party;
- “Fraudulent practice” which means any act or omission, including misrepresentation, that knowingly or recklessly misleads, or attempts to mislead, a party to obtain a financial or other benefit, or to avoid an obligation;
- “Collusive practice” which means an arrangement between two or more parties designed to achieve an improper purpose, including influencing improperly the actions of another party;
- “Coercive practice” which means impairing or harming, or threatening to impair or harm, directly or indirectly, any party or the property of the party to influence improperly the actions of a party;
- “Unethical practice” which mean the conduct of behavior that is contrary to staff or supplier codes of conduct such as those relating to conflict of interest, gifts and hospitality, post-employment provisions and
- “Obstructive practice” which means acts or omissions intended to materially impede the exercise of contractual rights of audit, investigation and access to information, including destruction, falsification, alteration or concealment of evidence material to an investigation into allegations of fraud and corruption.

Investigations of allegations of wrongdoing by PUNO staff and individual contractors, implementing partners, vendors and any third parties related to the Joint Programme will be conducted by the Investigation Service (IS) of the PUNO with whom the potential subject of investigation is contracted, in accordance with that PUNO’s administrative pronouncements.

That PUNO’s Investigation Service will share information as appropriate with the IS counterparts in the other PUNOs to determine whether the alleged wrongdoing is limited to one PUNO or extends to others.

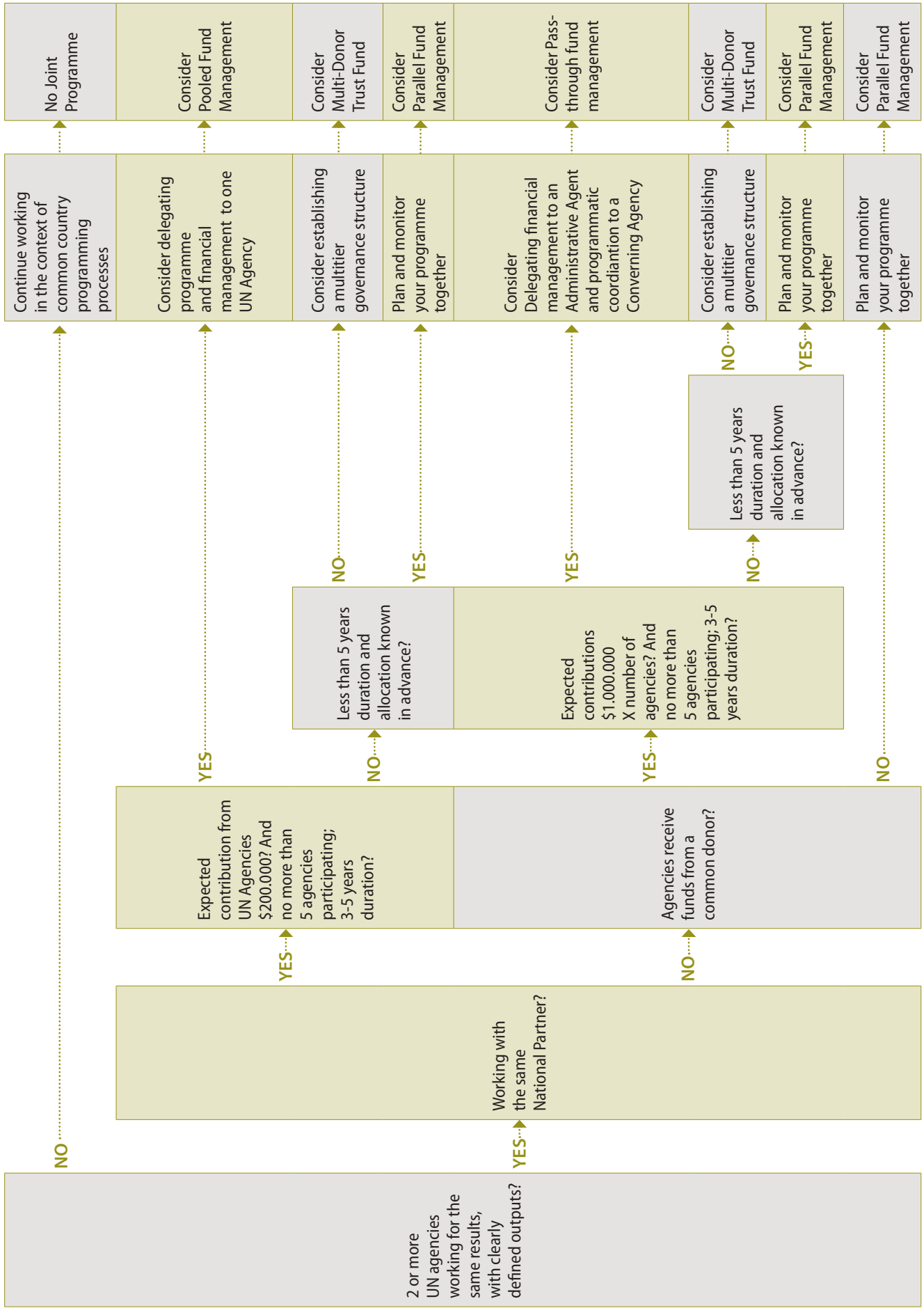
In the event that one or more IS of PUNOs determine that an allegation in relation to the implementation of activities affecting the Joint Programme is credible enough to warrant an investigation, that IS it (or one on behalf of the several Services involved) may promptly notify the Steering Committee and the Administrative Agent of the Joint Programme, to the extent that such notification does not jeopardize the conduct of the investigation.

Where a potential subject of an investigation is contracted to more than one PUNO, the Investigation Services of the PUNOs concerned may consider conducting joint or coordinated investigations and determine the investigation framework to use.

The resulting investigation report(s) will be provided to the relevant bodies or individuals of the PUNOs involved, following each PUNO’s internal procedures. Upon completion of the investigation, the PUNO(s) will also inform the Steering Committee and the Administrative Agent about the results of the investigation(s).

If the IS report(s) concludes that fraud or corruption has occurred, disciplinary and/or administrative measures will be taken by each PUNO according to its administrative pronouncements on disciplinary and/or administrative measures, including vendor sanction mechanism, as appropriate. Information on measures taken will be shared with the Administrative Agent and the Steering Committee of the Joint Programme by the competent body of the PUNO(s) concerned.

ANNEX A. DECISION-MAKING FLOW CHART FOR CHOOSING FUND MANAGEMENT MODALITY



ANNEX B. STANDARD JOINT PROGRAMME DOCUMENT (APPROVED BY UNDG IN APRIL 2008)

STANDARD JOINT PROGRAMME DOCUMENT

Cover Page

Country: _____

Programme Title: _____

Joint Programme Outcome(s): _____
(where different from the UNDAF)

Programme Duration: _____ Anticipated start/end dates: _____ Fund Management Option(s): _____ (Parallel, pooled, pass-through, combination) Managing or Administrative Agent: _____ (if/as applicable)	Total estimated budget*: _____ Out of which: 1. Funded Budget: _____ 2. Unfunded budget: _____ * Total estimated budget includes both programme costs and indirect support costs Sources of funded budget: • Government _____ • UN Org _____ • UN Org _____ • Donor _____ • Donor _____ • NGO _____
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Names and signatures of (sub) national counterparts and participating UN organizations

Adequate signature space should be provided in order to accommodate name (person), title (head), organization name/seal of all participating UN organizations and national coordinating authorities, as well as date of signature.

This joint programme document should be signed by the relevant national coordinating authorities. By signing this joint programme document, all signatories – national coordinating authorities and UN organizations - assume full responsibility to achieve results identified with each of them as shown in Table 1 and detailed in annual work plans. . For regional and global joint programmes, endorsement or signatures of participating countries (at least three, if there are more than three countries) are required.

UN organizations	National Coordinating Authorities
Replace with: <i>Name of Representative</i> <i>Signature</i> <i>Name of Organization</i> <i>Date & Seal</i>	Replace with: <i>Name of Head of Partner</i> <i>Signature</i> <i>Name of Institution</i> <i>Date & Seal</i>
Replace with: <i>Name of Representative</i> <i>Signature</i> <i>Name of Organization</i> <i>Date & Seal</i>	Replace with: <i>Name of Head of Partner</i> <i>Signature</i> <i>Name of Institution</i> <i>Date & Seal</i>

Joint Programme Document Outline

A joint programme document enables UN organizations (including specialized and non-resident agencies)⁸ and implementing partners to implement harmonized, results focused joint programmes with a minimum of documentation. A standard joint programme document should include the following sections:

1. Cover Page - **one page**
2. Executive summary – **one page**
3. Situation analysis – **one to two pages**
4. Strategies including lessons learned and the proposed joint programme– **two pages**
5. Results framework – **two to three pages**
6. Management and coordination arrangements – **two pages**
7. Fund management arrangements – **one page**
8. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting – **two pages**
9. Legal context or basis of relationship – **one page**
10. Work plans and budgets - **two to three pages**

A brief description of the expected content for each of these sections is provided below.

1. Cover Page (One page)

The cover page contains the joint programme outcome(s), total estimated budget, funded and unfunded components, sources of funding and signatures of national coordinating authorities(s) and participating UN organizations.

2. Executive Summary (One page)

The executive summary contains a comprehensive summary of all sections focusing on the significance and relevance of the joint programme, its contribution to national priorities and international commitments, the results

expected to be achieved, intended beneficiaries, donors and implementing partners.

3. Situation Analysis (One to two pages)

This section provides a brief evidence-based causality analysis which may be obtained from the Common Country Assessment, the national development framework, UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) or the relevant humanitarian action plan⁹. It outlines the economic, social, political, environmental and institutional context of the joint programme. It identifies the development or human rights challenges to be addressed; provides specific, current and disaggregated data on these challenges, key causal factors, and the interventions that are necessary and sufficient for the achievement of the planned results. This is to be supplemented with references to the identified baselines presented in the Joint Programme Monitoring Framework in Section 8, relevant recent research reports and/or reports and recommendations of international and regional treaty bodies and supervisory committees.

4. Strategies, including lessons learned and the proposed joint programme (Two pages)

The subsections to be covered include:

Background/context: The intention of this subsection is to describe how the joint programme will contribute through the UNDAF or other applicable frameworks to the achievement of national priorities and international commitments, including MD/MDGs and humanitarian obligations, among others. It should also identify other outputs and stakeholders contributing to the achievement of the respective UNDAF or other applicable frameworks' outcomes. It specifies the relevant stakeholders not involved in this joint programme: UN organizations, government, non-government institutions, and donor organizations active in the area relevant to the joint programme.

⁸ Each UN organization participating and signing this joint programme document will be party to the existing framework (UNDAF, Common Humanitarian Action Plan, or Transitional Framework etc.) which the programme is addressing. The Organization will operate on the basis of its legal agreement with government.

⁹ This Joint Programme also has reference to the Country Programme Action Plans (CPAPs) that may have been signed by Funds and Programmes and governments.

Lessons Learned: This sub-section provides a summary of relevant lessons learned from experiences, opportunities and challenges which may support or constrain achievement of results. Statements of agreed lessons are particularly important where there is a significant departure from previous programmes or strategies. This sub-section should also indicate how recommendations and observations of Human Rights treaty bodies to the respective State Party have been considered and used in the design of the joint programme.

The proposed joint programme: This sub-section provides a justification on why a joint programme approach was chosen. It outlines the specific programme strategies adopted to achieve agreed outcomes, taking into consideration the lessons learned. It focuses on how the strategies address the key causes of the problems which have been identified, and the partners involved in each phase. It includes details on the intended manner in which the programme should unfold in its various phases. It provides a brief description of the division of labor between the UN partners, the added value of each to the intended joint programme outcomes, and the participating UN organizations capacity to deliver agreed outputs. The proposed joint programme strategy should confirm that the capacities necessary for the implementation were carefully considered and that the selected implementing partners have the capacity to achieve the intended results.

This section should also include a prior assessment of key cross-cutting concerns such as: human rights (in particular the key duty bearers and rights holders involved in the issue the joint programme is addressing and their capacity gaps which the joint programme will address); gender equality (the critical gender concerns that are relevant to the issue being addressed in the joint programme and how the joint programme would address these concerns); the key environmental issues that are relevant in this case and how the joint programme will address them; assessment of capacity gaps of key institutions and partners

that the joint programme will work with and the capacity development strategies that will be adopted for the purpose. Depending on the subject covered, this section may also include other types of ex-ante analyses, for example themes such as education, health, agriculture.

Sustainability of results: State how the results will be sustained including relevant capacities being developed among duty bearers and rights holders and government institutions and communities.

5. Results Framework (Two to three pages)

This section will contain a brief narrative and the results framework.

The narrative should briefly outline the logic of the results chain. The joint programme outcomes/outputs should directly contribute to the UNDAF outcome(s) or the relevant framework it is responding to. Proper justification should be provided, where any joint programme outcome falls outside the UNDAF (or other applicable framework under which the joint programme falls).

The Results Framework sub-section will contain a hierarchy of UNDAF outcomes (or other overarching outcome in other frameworks on which the joint programme is based), joint programme outcomes (if different from UNDAF outcome) and joint programme outputs, indicators, baselines and targets. As a minimum, this hierarchy should be presented in the format shown in Table 1 "Results Framework". The column entitled "Participating UN organization corporate priority" will provide the linkage of this joint programme to UN organizations' corporate priorities and mandates.

The results will be articulated in more detail in (annual) work plans and budgets. Please refer to the Section 10 for details of how these work plans should be prepared.

Table 1: Results Framework

UNDAF (or other relevant framework) Outcome										
Joint Programme Outcome (if different from UNDAF Outcome) , including corresponding indicators and baselines,										
JP Outputs (Give corresponding indicators and baselines)	Participating UN organization-specific Outputs	Participating UN organization ¹⁰	Participating UN organization corporate priority	Implementing Partner	Indicative activities for each Output	Resource allocation and indicative time frame*				
						Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Total
UN organization 1	Programme Cost **									
	Indirect Support Cost **									
UN organization 2	Programme Cost									
	Indirect Support Cost									
UN organization 3	Programme Cost									
	Indirect Support Cost									
Total	Programme Cost									
	Indirect Support Cost									

* Resource allocation may be agreed at either output or indicative activity level.

** Please read the [Explanatory Note on Harmonized Financial Reporting to Donors](#) and its Annexes for guidance on how these terms should be interpreted

6. Management and Coordination Arrangements (Two pages)

This section elaborates the programme planning and management responsibilities and commitments of partners and participating UN organizations. This joint programme document does not substitute for organization-specific arrangements required by respective internal policies. The management aspects of the different funding modalities (pooled, parallel or pass through) are detailed under section 7.

This section should also describe the arrangements for coordination and oversight, identifying individual participating UN organizations and national partners responsible as applicable. As specified in the this guidance note, “Once the

joint programme has been developed and agreed jointly by the participating UN organizations, the arrangements for monitoring, review, and coordination should be documented. The composition of the joint programme coordination mechanism (referred to in the standard agreements as Joint Programme Steering Committee) shall include all the signatories to the joint programme document. The coordination mechanism may also have other members”. Linkages to the existing coordination mechanisms, such as thematic groups, etc., should also be specified.

A list of implementation Focal Points should be developed and made available to the Joint Programme Steering Committee and other stakeholders. This is to be presented as an Annex to the joint programme document.

¹⁰ In cases of joint programmes using pooled fund management modalities, the Managing Agent is responsible/accountable for achieving all shared joint programme outputs. However, those participating UN organizations that have specific direct interest in a given joint programme output, and may be associated with the Managing Agent during the implementation, for example in reviews and agreed technical inputs, will also be indicated in this column.

THE FUND
MANAGEMENT
OPTIONS
MENTIONED ABOVE
AND THE TEMPLATES
OF INSTRUMENTS
HAVE BEEN
APPROVED
BY UNDG
MEMBERS

7. Fund Management Arrangements (One page)

There are three fund management options for joint programmes: a) parallel, b) pooled, and c) pass-through. This section should clearly specify the fund management option(s) being used. Under the parallel funding modality, whereby each organization funds and implements its activities in parallel with other participating organization(s), one organization should be responsible for consolidated reporting as agreed upon by the JP Steering Committee. The organization so identified should be stated in this section; any costs incurred by the assigned organization should be reflected in the joint programme budget as the organization's direct costs. If a pooled funding modality is decided upon, this section will state the Managing Agent. If pass-through fund management option is used, this section should state the appointed Administrative Agent.

These options can also be combined. For example, participating UN organizations might decide to pool funds under a Managing Agent for those parts of a joint programme to be managed jointly, while other parts of the joint programme would be managed through parallel funding, within the overall framework of the joint programme. In the case of joint programmes using combined fund management option, the Steering Committee will decide which participating UN organization will prepare the consolidated report.

The decision to select one or a combination of fund management options for a joint programme should be based on how to achieve the most effective, efficient and timely implementation, and to reduce transaction costs for national partners, donors and the UN.

The fund management options mentioned above and the templates of instruments have been approved by all UNDG members. Their use in operationalizing joint programmes without alterations does not require further approvals from headquarters. UNCTs therefore must endeavour to use the standard instruments. If for any reason the standard instruments cannot be used, HQ

has to be consulted on alternative options. The instruments and operational details on each of the fund management options can be found in the [Guidance Note on Joint Programming](#).

Transfer of cash to national Implementing Partners: This sub-section should specify the details of the agreed arrangement for transfer of cash to implementing partners.

Cash transfer modalities, the size and frequency of disbursements, and the scope and frequency of monitoring, reporting, assurance and audit will be agreed prior to programme implementation, taking into consideration the capacity of implementing partners, and can be adjusted in its course in accordance with applicable policies, processes and procedures of the participating UN organizations. For the Funds and Programmes, the provisions required under the [Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers](#) (HACT) as detailed in their CPAPs or in other agreements covering cash transfers will apply.

8. Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (Two pages)

Monitoring: The content of Table 2 "Joint Programme Monitoring Framework (JPMF)" should summarize monitoring arrangements for the joint programme, including monitoring activities that the participating UN organizations and/or national partners will undertake (such as baseline collection, reviews or studies if necessary to measure effect/impact, field visits, evaluation etc.), the timing of such activities and the respective responsibilities.

The Table 2 should be consistent with the UNDAF or any other relevant monitoring and evaluation plan and be an integral part of the broader UNDAF M&E Framework.

Annual/Regular reviews: This sub-section states arrangements and clear responsibilities for conducting regular reviews, including annual reviews where applicable. Review of joint programme may also form part of UNDAF annual review.

Table 2: Joint Programme Monitoring Framework (JPMF)

Expected Results (Outcomes & outputs)	Indicators (with baselines & indicative timeframe)	Means of verification	Collection methods (with indicative time frame & frequency)	Responsibilities	Risks & assumptions
From Results Framework (Table 1)	From Results Framework (Table 1) Baselines are a measure of the indicator at the start of the joint programme	From identified data and information sources	How is it to be obtained?	Specific responsibilities of participating UN organizations (including in case of shared results)	Summary of assumptions and risks for each result

Evaluation: This sub-section states the arrangements for, responsibility and timing of evaluation(s) of the joint programme. It should also state how the results of the evaluation(s) will be used by relevant stakeholders.

It should further state how the risks and assumptions identified in Table 2 will be managed to achieve the agreed joint programme results. These should at a minimum be reviewed at the annual/regular reviews and revised as appropriate.

Reporting: This sub-section should set out arrangements for common reporting on the joint programme results. A common reporting format should be adopted by all participating UN organizations¹¹.

9. Legal Context or Basis of Relationship (One page)

This section specifies what cooperation or assistance agreements¹² form the legal basis for the relationships between the Government and each of the UN organizations participating¹³ in this joint programme.

For the Funds and Programmes, these are standing cooperation arrangements. For the specialized Agencies, these should be the text that is normally used in their programme/project documents or any other applicable legal instruments.

The text specific to each participating UN organization should be cleared by the respective UN organization.

Table 3 below provides illustrative examples on various UN organizations' cooperation arrangements.

¹¹ The *Standard Progress Report* used by the Funds and Programmes or any other reporting format used by any other UN organization may be adapted for the purpose. Donor requirements should also be kept in mind. The reporting format should be approved by the joint programme steering committee.

¹² Such as: the Basic Cooperation Agreement for UNICEF; Standard Basic Assistance Agreement for UNDP, which also applies to UNFPA; the Basic Agreement for WFP; as well as the Country Programme Action Plan(s) where they exist; and other applicable agreements for other participating UN organizations.

¹³ Including Specialized Agencies and Non Resident Agencies participating in the Joint Programme

Table 3: Basis of Relationship (illustrative examples)

Participating UN organization	Agreement
UNDP	This Joint Programme Document shall be the instrument referred to as the Project Document in Article I of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement between the Government of [NAME] and the United Nations Development Programme, signed by the parties on [DATE].
UNIDO	UNIDO Office was established in accordance with the Agreement between the Government of [NAME] and [MOFCOM]. The Office as established in [YEAR].
FAO	The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Government of [NAME] signed agreement for the establishment of the FAO Representation in [COUNTRY] on [DATE].
UNESCAP-UNAPCAEM	The United Nations Asian and Pacific Centre for Agricultural Engineering and Machinery (UNAPCAEM) is a subsidiary body/ regional institution of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), based [COUNTRY]. Following the host country headquarters agreement signed between the Government of [COUNTRY] and the United Nations on [DATE]. UNAPCAEM began its operations in 2004.

The Implementing Partners/Executing Agency¹⁴ agree to undertake all reasonable efforts to ensure that none of the funds received pursuant to this Joint Programme are used to provide support to individuals or entities associated with terrorism and that the recipients of any amounts provided by Participating UN organizations do not appear on the list maintained by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999). The list can be accessed via <http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/committees/1267/1267ListEng.htm>. This provision must be included in all sub-contracts or sub-agreements entered into under this programme document.

10. Work plans and budgets (Two to three pages)

The work plans will detail the activities to be carried out within the joint programme and the responsible implementing partners, timeframes and planned inputs from the participating UN organizations. The basis for all resource transfers to an implementing partner should be detailed in the work plans, agreed between the implementing partners and participating UN organizations. According to the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT), the work plan should be signed by the implementing partners receiving cash (except NGOs and CSOs). In case

the implementation authority is delegated to a national/sub-national institution, the respective institution should be specified in the AWP. When partnering with NGOs CSOs, the participating UN organizations sign legal instruments in accordance with their procedures. Any additional management arrangements that may be set up by participating UN organizations to achieve results under their respective responsibility may be detailed in annexes as needed.

A revised work plan and budget will be produced subsequent to the decisions of the annual/regular reviews. The new work plan is approved in writing by the joint programme Steering Committee. The joint programme document need not be signed after each periodic review as long as there is written approval of it by all partners at, or following the annual/regular review. However, any substantive change in the joint programme scope or change in financial allocations will require revision of the joint programme document and signature of all parties involved.

The work plan should be attached as an Annex to the joint programme document and should follow the format represented in the table below.

¹⁴ Executing Agency in case of UNDP in countries with no signed Country Programme Action Plans

Work Plan for: (Insert name of the Joint Programme/Project) _____

Period (Covered by the WP)¹⁵ _____

JP Outcome										
UN organization-specific Annual targets	UN organization	Activities	TIME FRAME				Implementing Partner	PLANNED BUDGET		
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		Source of Funds	Budget Description	Amount
JP Output 1:										
(of UN organization 1)										
(of UN organization 2)										
(of UN organization 3)										
JP Output 2:										
(of UN organization 1)										
(of UN organization 2)										
Total Planned Budget										
Including*	Total UN organization 1									
	Total UN organization 2									
	Total UN organization 3									

* The Total Planned Budget by UN Organization should include both programme cost and indirect support cost

Signatures¹⁶:

UN organization (s)	Implementing Partner(s)
Replace with: <i>Name of Representative</i> Signature <i>Name of Organization</i> Date	Replace with: <i>Name of Head of Partner</i> Signature <i>Name of Institution</i> Date

¹⁵ Annual Work plans cover not more than a 12-month period. However, usually at the start-up of the programme, these may cover less than one year. In both cases, the corresponding period should be specified.

¹⁶ When CSOs/NGOs are designated Implementing Partners, they do not sign this Work Plan. Each participating UN Organization will follow its own procedures in signing Work Plans with CSOs/NGOs.



For more information: [UNDG.org](https://www.undg.org)



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