



Statement of Outcomes and Way Forward

Intergovernmental Meeting of the “Programme Country Pilots” on “Delivering as One” 19-21 October 2009 in Kigali (Rwanda)

21 October 2009

Introduction

Representatives of the governments of the eight “Delivering as One” (DaO) programme pilot countries (Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uruguay and Vietnam) as well as representatives of governments of countries that have indicated voluntary adoption of the DaO approach (Benin, Bhutan, Comores, Papua New Guinea, Kiribati, Malawi) met in Kigali, Rwanda, from 19 to 21 October 2009.

The participants of the meeting thank the Government of Rwanda for hosting the meeting and in particular H.E. the Right Honourable Prime Minister of the Republic of Rwanda Bernard Makuza for his inspiring words of welcome. The role of overall chair of the meeting assumed by H.E. the Minister of Finance and Economic Planning James Musoni is gratefully acknowledged.

The participants thank the Deputy Secretary General of the United Nations Ms Asha Rose Migiro for her active participation and contribution, the Chair of the United Nations Development Group for her statement and the Co-Chairs of the 62nd and 63rd General Assembly Informal Consultations on System-Wide Coherence for their support for the ‘Delivering as One’ initiative. The participants also thank representatives of the governments of Norway, Spain and United Kingdom for their participation as observers and support.

Special thanks are also due to staff of the United Nations for organizing and facilitating the event. The role of facilitator assumed by Mr Moustapha Soumare is gratefully acknowledged.

Introductory Comments

All Participants of the meeting, including those from countries that have indicated voluntary adoption of the DaO approach, take note of the findings and recommendations of the Seminar held in Maputo, Mozambique in 2008 and conclude that much progress has been achieved since then. Participants stress that the launching of the DaO in their countries took place at the express request of their national Governments. Expectations are high that the role and contribution of the UN system to national development will become more coherent, effective and

relevant and better support the governments in achieving Internationally Agreed Development Goals (IADGs), including the MDGs.

Participants acknowledge that while there was no blueprint for “Delivering as One” the pioneering efforts of the pilot countries have been crystallized into an approach under the principle of “No-One-Size-Fits-All” which has resulted in a certain degree of diversity of experiences and lessons learnt in the different programme pilot countries but at the same time has shown a number of common elements across the countries.

“Delivering as One” fits in with the implementation of the Paris Declaration at the country level with its objective of better coordination and coherence.

Programme pilot countries and countries voluntarily adopting the DaO approach have increased access to a wider range of mandates and resources on the UN system, including those of specialized agencies and non-resident UN organizations. National governments determine which resident and non-resident agencies best respond to national needs and priorities.

Participants stress that the UN organizations are called upon to provide support to capacity development in programme countries, including normative and policy advice in achieving poverty eradication, sustained economic growth and sustainable development, which requires a coherent and coordinated approach by the UN development system.

Participants stress the importance of South –South Cooperation as an emerging cooperation modality in the context of DaO. Participants further recognize the importance of the UN system in promoting and supporting such cooperation for capacity development, transfer of technology and know-how as well as sharing of best practices.

The reforms undertaken have given renewed government leadership to UN programmes, brought about greater coherence in to UN’s support to addressing national priorities, and has allowed the United Nations to become a more effective partner. However, while commendable progress has been made at the country level, reform must now be pursued with equal vigour at the global level. Agency headquarters, Executive Boards, the General Assembly and member states must all continue to support the reform process and work to realize change where it is required.

General Findings

The Governments of the eight programme country pilots draw the following lessons learned from their experiences since the adoption of the DaO approach:

The “Delivering as One” approach has provided benefits for achieving better development results through increased national leadership and ownership in the development partnership with the UN system. Experience thus far has confirmed that this approach is better than the fragmented UN development system that existed at the country level prior to the adoption of this approach. Participants agreed that in the pilot countries there is no going back to doing business in the manner prior to the “Delivering as One” initiative. The momentum should be

maintained and the process should only be taken forward in a strengthened manner addressing the challenges.

National ownership and leadership

National ownership and leadership in the development partnership with the UN system has increased through the DaO process. In all pilot countries, the role and contribution of the UN system is better integrated in national development processes and the UN system has become more responsive to national needs and priorities. The strategic role of the UN and the contribution that the UN development system can make to the achievement of national development priorities are clearer than before, though further improvement is required

The pilot countries, particularly in the implementation phase are increasingly working with sub-national levels of government as well as civil society giving them a strong sense of involvement and ownership of the development process and results.

Institutional frameworks for steering the process have been strengthened including in providing actual oversight of the implementation of the One Programme, and outlining programme priorities for the coming years.

One Programme and One Budgetary Framework

DaO is ensuring coherence, strategic focus and simplified programming at a country-level, ensuring aid effectiveness. A single, common country planning document has proved critical in the realization of these aims and contributes to the effectiveness of development results. Participants call for the effective implementation of OP 7 General Assembly resolution 63/311 on system-wide coherence¹.

The One UN Programme and its budgetary framework provide the governments with an overall view on what the UN system is doing in the countries and where it is spending funds. It shows in a transparent and holistic manner the work of the UN in the country and makes it easier for governments to lead and have country ownership of the strategic direction of the programme and guide the work of the United Nations. Although more mutual efforts are needed in terms of use of national financial and procurement systems, the coordination role of the governments has been strengthened vis-à-vis the UN family.

The adoption of the “One Programme” approach, including mechanisms for joint programming, has allowed countries to have better access to the range of mandates and resources of all organizations of the UN system, including those of specialized agencies and non-resident organizations.

The contribution of agencies is not determined by the residency status, but rather by the contribution that they can make to the development priorities. Increasingly non-resident agencies have contributed with their specialized expertise in joint programming and policy

¹ Also requests the Secretary General, in consultation with members of United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and the United Nations Group, to propose modalities to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session for the submission and approval of common country programmes on a voluntary basis, bearing in mind the importance of national ownership and effective intergovernmental oversight of the development process.

dialogue which has allowed the UN development system to draw upon the normative strength of the UN system.

There has been greater focus on issues such as gender, human rights, HIV/ AIDS, the environment, employment and decent work and disaster preparedness in country programming.

Co-ordination in programme implementation has improved with the creation of programme coordination mechanisms within the UN Country Teams.

Country-level UN staff capacity assessments have highlighted the need for the UN development system to provide a better mix between, on the one hand, programme management and implementation support, and on the other, technical and policy advisory as suited to the country situation.

Coordination with donors has improved with donors increasingly operating as a cohesive group in their inter-action with the UN Country Team.

The “One Budgetary Framework /One Fund” has been critical in promoting coherence and improved division of labour among UN system agencies. However, there is still room for improvement, including on greater predictability and timeliness of funding at the country level, and non-earmarking of contributions within the “One Fund”. The One UN Fund mechanism has facilitated the UN’s improved strategic focus and brought better management for results, as well as enhancing compliance with the Paris Declaration principles.

Participants of the pilot countries note with concern that there are still significant funding gaps in the implementation of One UN Programmes. They call upon donors and other countries in a position to do so to provide additional, predictable and multi-year contributions.

Participants note the risk that the development of programmes is driven by the availability of earmarked resources at the country level rather than by national needs and priorities and the specific comparative advantage of the UN system vis-à-vis other development partners at the country level. They call upon the donors to provide unearmarked funding and ensure that a minimum critical mass is made available for strategic programming to align the One UN Programme with the national priorities.

While the “One Budgetary Framework /One Fund” has the potential to enhance transparency of and accountability for financial flows of the UN system, it is observed that information provided by the UN system in this regard does not in all cases meet with budget information needs of programme country pilots. UN budget cycles should to the greatest possible extent be aligned with national budget cycles.

Participants of the programme country pilots welcome modalities that make use of and strengthen national implementation systems and practices especially in the areas of procurement and financial management.

In Middle-Income Countries, programmatic needs should determine funding of the One Programme through country funds and improved access to the Expanded DaO Funding Window through mechanisms taking into account the MIC’s needs for non-earmarked predictable

resources for policy advice and capacity development. However, participants also observe that the use of national systems and expertise by the UN system is still at a low level.

Participants welcome and appreciate the initiatives taken by Norway, Spain and the United Kingdom in establishing the Expanded DaO Funding Window for unearmarked funding of DaO and their strong commitment to predictable and long-term funding. Participants call upon other donors to join this mechanism.

One Leader and One Voice

Programme country pilots recognize the strengthened role of the resident coordinator within the UN Country Team and mechanisms adopted for the UN system to speak with “One Voice”. However, Pilot countries call for the RC to be provided with a level of authority matching the responsibilities and accountabilities placed on her/him. Participants also stress that the empowered resident coordinator would continue to work within the framework of national ownership and leadership of UN development assistance

Participants also recognize that the effectiveness of the operational activities of the UN system in general and the DaO approach in particular are contingent to both a well coordinated UN country team whose members have sufficiently delegated authorities from their headquarters, and a well coordinated government.

One Office and Transaction Cost and Savings

The UN system should operationally deliver as one.

Whilst recognizing the distinct specificity of each country, pilot countries and countries voluntarily adopting the DaO approach stress the importance of One House as a means not only to reduce transaction costs but also, more importantly, to ensure greater synergies among UN teams.

Participants of the programme country pilots note that there has been slow progress in the co-location of UN organizations. It is noted that the cost of common premises should, where necessary, be borne by additional funding and not be at the expense of programme funding.

Progress has been made in finding solutions in areas of common services, common procurement at the country level and information and communications systems which is being made available to other countries.

Participants appreciate the introduction of a single results report for the One Programme and call on UN organizations and their governing bodies to simplify reporting requirements by substituting individual organization reporting by the single result report. They also recommend harmonized and simplified monitoring and evaluation systems with a view to use national systems.

The UN system is requested to ensure that UN staff competencies, including those of the resident coordinator and other resident and non-resident staff, are at the appropriate level to respond to national capacity needs and priorities.

While reaffirming that the central aim of DaO is to achieve better development results, participants also recognize the importance of reducing the transaction costs in terms of resources, time and procedures.

The UN system should identify ways and means that savings resulting from cost reductions in operational activities accrue to development programmes in the same countries

The UN system is requested to further clarify, standardize and harmonize the concepts, practices and cost classifications related to transaction cost and cost recovery so that changes in transaction cost in DaO programme pilot countries can be measured and reported.

The UN system is requested to further simplify and harmonize financial and administrative rules and regulations as well as human resource policies that would allow for more flexibility in countries and better alignment with national systems.

Country-Led Evaluations

Welcome the initiative of seven of the eight programme pilot countries (Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uruguay and Viet Nam) to conduct country-led evaluations of their DaO initiatives in compliance with the TCPR Resolution and to share lessons learned among themselves, with countries that have indicated voluntary adoption of the DAO approach as well as with other countries. Pakistan being the biggest in terms of One UN Programme, the implementation of which started only after February 2009, will go for the country-led evaluation at a later date to be communicated.

Emphasize that the evaluations should be truly country led and respect the principles of independence, credibility and ownership.

Note with appreciation the technical support provided by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), notably through the evaluability assessment of programme country pilots and the Framework Terms of Reference, which are useful in developing country specific Terms of Reference.

Participants welcome methodological study to measure transaction cost to be conducted by Uruguay. Participants call for support to this initiative, the findings and lessons learned of which will be shared with the other DaO countries.

Agree that while being country specific, a set of common parameters should be considered in all the evaluations, namely: the objectives of the evaluations are to assess the contribution of the DAO initiative to the national development priorities; the evaluations will assess four core evaluation criteria (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the DAO); and the evaluation will cover the time period since DaO initiative started in the country.

Agree that the evaluation will be formative and will assess both processes and results of the DAO initiative in its five pillars, including strategic intent and progress towards the outcome areas of the DaO programme; will evaluate compliance with UN normative frameworks and cross cutting issues, and their concrete translation in the DAO initiative; will be based on

evaluation questions that are specific and rooted in the national context and that embody the concerns of all stakeholders.

Agree on the institutional arrangements to ensure the independence, quality and credibility of the evaluations. These will include: i) an evaluation management group at the country level chaired by the Government and composed of representatives from the Government, the UN and eminent national experts; the decision on the composition will be made by the Government; ii) an independent evaluation team, recruited by the EMG, who will have the relevant substantive expertise to assess the different areas of the DAO; and iii) a quality assurance panel set up by UNEG, which will provide written comments on the ToR, the inception report, the draft and the final reports.

Agree that the final evaluation reports, once they have been validated with stakeholders and quality assured by the panel, will be released to the public together with the written comments of the quality assurance panel and the management response prepared by the Government and the UN.

Link between country-led evaluations and the independent evaluation of lessons learned from Delivering as One

Welcome the provisions in the recent resolution on system-wide coherence (63/311) that the independent evaluation should be based on the principles of national ownership and leadership, be conducted in the context of system-wide norms and standards, and that it should be based on an inclusive, transparent, objective and independent approach.

Recognize that the independence, credibility and quality of the country-led evaluations will determine their usefulness for the independent evaluation of lessons learned requested in the TCPR and System-Wide Coherence resolutions.

Request the General Assembly to organize the independent evaluation in such a manner that national ownership and leadership by programme country pilots is fully respected in the evaluation process.

The Way Forward

To accelerate the implementation of General Assembly resolution 62/208 (TCPR 2007) and specifically to ensure the success of the DaO initiative, the participants of the meeting, including from the countries voluntarily adopting the DaO approach:

Reaffirm that there is no going back to doing business in the manner prior to the “Delivering as One” initiative. The momentum should be maintained and the process should only be taken forward in a strengthened manner addressing the challenges.

Underscore that the DaO approach should continue to be guided by the principle of national ownership and leadership and that national governments having the primary responsibility for their countries’ development and for coordinating all types of external assistance, including that

provided by multilateral organizations, in order to effectively integrate such assistance into their development processes.

Call upon agency headquarters, governing bodies, the General Assembly and member states to continue to support the reform process and work to realize change where it is required.

Call upon donors to support governments of pilot countries and countries voluntarily adopting the approach in sustaining efforts to mobilize timely, predictable, unearmarked and multi-year financial support to the DaO initiative through the country funds.

Welcome the announcement by the Government of Vietnam to host a high level intergovernmental meeting on Delivering as One in Hanoi, the date of which will be communicated at a later stage.

Agree that all country-led evaluation will be completed by 1 July 2010 as an input to the Inter-governmental meeting on DaO to be held in Hanoi, Viet Nam.