

## **Principles for Enhancing the Leadership Role of the Resident Coordinator for UN Operational Activities for Development and Accountability Framework of the Resident Coordinator System**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Resident Coordinator Issues Group (RCIG) of the UN Development Group (UNDG), in consultation with all agencies of the UNDG and the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), has developed an accountability framework for the Resident Coordinator within the context of the functioning of the Resident Coordinator System (RCS), as requested by the UN General Assembly in the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCPR) Resolution of December, 2004 (A/RES/59/250).

This accountability framework seeks to respond to the increased complexity in the functioning of the RC System in light of developments over recent years, including those associated with the implementation of the UN reforms since 1997, and the challenges to system-wide coherence of the UN development system in meeting the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs, as recognized by Members States and reflected in the 2005 Summit Outcome document.

The accountability framework draws on the existing 1999 ACC Guidelines on the Functioning of the Resident Coordinator System, and adds new elements emanating from later policy documents and instruments, including the 2004 TCPR (Res. 59/250), the 2005 World Summit Outcome document, the Framework for Accountability for the United Nations Security Management System, and recent CEB decisions.

The framework for accountability affirms that the RCS encompasses all organizations of the UN system (UNS) dealing with operational activities for development, regardless of their formal presence in the country<sup>1</sup>. The RCS is expected to play an important role in supporting the Government's efforts for a coordinated response to and integrated follow-up and implementation of global conferences, including through the CCA and UNDAF<sup>2</sup>. The RCS aims to achieve a coordinated multi-disciplinary response of the UN System at country level to national needs and priorities<sup>3</sup>. The national Government has the primary responsibility for coordination, on the basis of national strategies and priorities, of all types of external assistance, including that provided by multilateral organizations. The RCS aims to facilitate the integration of the UN system's operational activities for development with national plans and priorities, and with other sources of development assistance.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> ACC Guidelines, 1999. Para. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Para. 20

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Para. 16

<sup>4</sup> ACC Guidelines, 1999. Para. 13, 14.

The RCIG has examined the current system of management and accountability of the RCS, and it has also reached agreement on a number of principles. This paper describes agreed principles for enhanced RC leadership and accountability.

These principles are being set out to guide the formulation of operational guidelines and a programme of work.

### **Principles for enhancing the leadership role and accountability framework of the RC and RCS**

<b>PRINCIPLE</b>	<b>REFERENCE</b>
<b>The Resident Coordinator System</b>	
1. The RCS is owned by the UN development system as a whole, and its functioning should be participatory, collegial and accountable on behalf of all members of the UNCT (and: if designated HC the IASC; if designated DO/DSS).	A/RES/59/250 (TCPR 2004), para 59.  Report of CEB Retreat, October 2004, para 27.

<p>In each country (excluding HQ locations) the United Nations senior-most official is normally the Designated Official for security (DO). DOs, often United Nations RCs, are accountable to the Secretary-General, for the security of UN System personnel and their recognized dependants.</p>	<p>Framework for Accountability for the United Nations Security Management System.</p>
<p>2. “The management of the Resident Coordinator System continues to be firmly anchored in the United Nations Development Programme, while recognizing that many resident coordinators, especially in countries with large country teams, complex coordination situations or in situations of complex emergencies, lack the capacity to address equally well all tasks inherent to their functions, and in this regard requests that in such cases the UNDP appoint, within the existing programming arrangement, a country</p>	<p>A/RES/59/250 (TCPR 2004), para 60.</p>

<p>director to run its core activities, including fund-raising, so as to assure that resident coordinators are fully available for their tasks”.</p>	
<p>3. The UNDAF will be the recognized strategic framework for most UN operational activities for development in the country in response to national plans, priorities and strategies.</p>	<p>A/55/950 (1997), <i>Renewing the United Nations: A Programme for Reform</i>, para 153.</p> <p>Report of CEB Retreat, October 2004, para. 15, 17.</p> <p>A/RES/59/250 (TCPR 2004), paras 49-51.</p>
<p>4. The UNCT, in consultation with all its members and in close collaboration with national partners, will select a limited number of strategic priority areas for the UNDAF, reflecting: i) national priorities and national ownership, ii) the development goals and objectives agreed at the major UN conferences and summits -including those</p>	<p>CCA/UNDAF Guidelines for UN Country Teams 2004, para 1.1 (c).</p> <p>A/RES/59/250 (TCPR 2004), paras 49-50.</p>

<p>agreed at the Millennium Summit described as the MD/MDGs-, and iii) UN capacities at country level.</p>	
<p>5. The UN General Assembly “requests the Secretary-General, in full consultation with all agencies of the United Nations Development Group and the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, as appropriate, to develop by the end of 2005, a comprehensive accountability framework for resident coordinators to exercise oversight of the design and implementation of the Framework, in a fully participatory manner, in support and under the leadership of national Governments.”</p> <p>The UNDAF will incorporate a comprehensive accountability framework that will serve as a basis for performance appraisal</p>	<p>A/RES/59/250 (TCPR 2004), para 58.</p> <p>A/RES/59/250 (TCPR 2004), paras 55, 58.</p>

<p>of the RC and the UNCT by themselves and their supervisory bodies on achievement of results against plan.</p> <p>A system of mutual, reciprocal performance appraisal will provide for feedback among RCs, UNCT members from participating agencies and their supervisors on results achieved, contribution to the UNCT by its members, and on issues of collegiality and personal and professional integrity.</p>	<p>Standards of Conduct of the International Civil Service</p>
<p>6. The RC and UNCT members (following due process) will have the prerogative to bring to the attention of the relevant UN or Agency authorities, issues relating to personal and professional integrity, commitment, fairness and equality, and cultural adaptability and sensitivity</p>	<p>Standards of Conduct of the International Civil Service</p>

<p>7. Agencies' accountability for UNDAF results will not imply RC authority over agency mandates, resources (staff or financial) or implementation choices.</p>	<p>A/55/950 (1997), paras 154, 160.</p>
<p>8. Operational programmes for development of UNCT members will be developed to support the UNDAF priorities. However, due to specific sector needs and on request of national authorities, additional activities may be required complementary to UNDAF priorities.</p>	<p>CCA/UNDAF Guidelines (2004): Section 2. A/RES/59/250 (TCPR 2004), para 50.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The Resident Coordinator</b></p>	
<p>9. "The role of the senior resident official, whether special representative, resident coordinator or humanitarian coordinator, should be strengthened, including appropriate authority, resources and accountability; and a common management, programming and</p>	<p>A/60/L.1 (2005 World Summit Outcome), para 169.</p>

<p>monitoring framework”.</p>	
<p>10. “The principle guiding coordination for operational activities emanates from the General Assembly. It establishes that recipient Governments have the primary responsibility for coordinating, on the basis of national strategies and priorities, all types of external assistance, including that provided by multilateral organizations.’</p> <p>The RC is the designated representative of the Secretary-General and [empowered]* leader of the UNCT for the entire UN System, regardless of their presence in the country.</p> <p>“The RC, on behalf of the UNS and in consultation with country representatives of organizations of the UNS, assumes overall responsibility for, and coordination of, the operational activities for development of the</p>	<p>ACC Guidelines (1999), para 13.</p> <p>ACC Guidelines (1999), para 6 and 9.</p> <p>RCIG Discussions of 10 June, and 13 December 2005</p> <p>ACC Guidelines (1999), para 9.</p>

<p>UNS carried out at the country level. This is done in conformity with the objectives and priorities of the Government and mandates and objectives of the UNS organizations.”</p> <p>*FAO, UNESCO and WHO fully acknowledge the leadership role of the RC, as described in the TCPR, 2004. However, as the term "empowered leadership" has not been defined, deletion of the word empowered is preferred.</p>	
<p>11. The RC should be selected from a pool of assessed candidates from the entire UN System, and nominated by the Secretary-General, following an inter-agency consultative process.</p>	<p>ACC Guidelines (1999), paras 7-8, 38.</p>
<p>12. The RC will exercise oversight of the design and implementation of the UNDAF, in a fully collegial and participatory manner, in support to and under the leadership of national governments.</p>	<p>A/RES/59/250 (TCPR 2004), para 58.</p>

<p>In cases of disagreement, the RC will be responsible for the UNCT's final decision on UNDAF priorities, subject to review by designated managers of the UNCT representatives.</p>	<p>RCIG Discussion of 13 December 2005</p>
<p>13. The RC will have responsibility to monitor implementation of the UNDAF and to report* on UN agencies' progress against their commitments to UNDAF results.</p> <p><i>*The RC reports to the Secretary-General in the latter's capacity as Chair of the CEB, through the UNDP Administrator, as Chair of the UNGD.</i></p>	<p>A/RES/59/250 (TCPR 2004), para 58.</p>
<p>14. The RC will have responsibility to support advocacy and resource mobilization for the UNDAF as a whole, complementing the efforts of UN system agencies participating in</p>	<p>A/RES/59/250 (TCPR 2004), para 61.</p>

<p>the UNDAF.</p>	
<p>15. The RC will be the primary interlocutor for the UNCT with the Head of State or Government in support of the UNCT, its members and its UNDAF results, accompanied by agency representatives when agency specific matters are discussed.</p> <p>“RCs are accredited by letter of the Secretary-General to the head of Government. This arrangement does not affect the relations between government and individual UNS organizations or the direct lines of authority and communication between representatives of these organizations and their executive heads.”</p>	<p>A/55/950 (1997), Action 10(b).</p> <p>ACC Guidelines (1999), para 17.</p> <p>ACC Guidelines (1999), para 10.</p>
<p>16. The RC function is increasingly important and complex. Ideally, it should be performed on a full-time basis, and the RC should not</p>	<p>RCIG Discussion of 13 December 2005</p>

have any operational implementation responsibilities.	
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