



PROGRESS REPORT ON UNEP'S ENGAGEMENT IN THE "DELIVERING AS ONE" PILOT COUNTRIES

April – September 2007

1. Introduction

The creation of the "One UN" Pilot Countries was recommended in the report of the Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence –Delivering as One. Eight countries (Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uruguay and Vietnam) volunteered to become "One UN" pilots in December 2006.

The recommendations of the High Level Panel are currently under discussion at the UN General Assembly (UNGA). Regardless of what decisions are made, the elements that form the core of the One UN pilots – "One Programme", "One Budgetary Framework", "One Leader", and "One Office" - are likely to continue to drive the UN reform process at the national level.

The One UN process presents UNEP with a unique opportunity to:

- a) Be more responsive to country needs which will further help step up the implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan;
- b) Strengthen and mainstream the environment in UN country plans and operations, (especially through the UNDAFs) and enable UNEP to work more closely with the Resident Coordinators, the UN country teams and the UNDG;
- c) Align its country programmes and operational components of its global Programme of Work with national priorities reflected in the UNDAFs;
- d) Work more closely with other UN partners, especially UNDP, and implement its activities within the UNCT through joint programmes (also helping to work through the incompatibilities of administrative and other processes and mechanisms);
- e) Become "One UNEP" and to present more coordinated support to countries and regions through the one channel of its regional offices.

Recognizing this opportunity, the Executive Director asked for a strategy and implementation plan to be drawn up for UNEP's engagement in all of the One UN pilots. The strategy was developed with the help of the Regional Directors and discussed by the UNEP Senior Management Team (SMT) in March 2007 and the implementation plan developed with inputs from all Divisions, reviewed and approved by the SMT in April 2007.

The experience of engaging with the One UN pilots has been mixed, as can be seen from the analysis below. It has, in particular, highlighted the difficulties that UNEP has in terms of processes and procedures to undertake activities at the country or operational level within the UN Country Team (UNCTs). Nevertheless, UNEP's engagement in the pilots have already led to a number of recommendations which will not only enable UNEP to better engage with the Delivering as One processes in the future, but also to better engage with the UN processes at the national level beyond the pilots countries.



2. Progress to date

The Delivering as One country pilots have also been true pilots or test cases for UNEP. In engaging with UNCTs UNEP has been able to experiment with different arrangements that will help narrow down the best approaches, processes and procedures for UNEP's involvement at country level. These arrangements addressed both the needs of responding to the fast pace of the UNCTs in the pilots and the need of increased interdivisional cooperation and increased programmatic coherence at national level.

Below are some of the achievements to date from UNEP's engagement in the One UN pilots. Annex I presents a summary of each pilot country in more detail.

- (a) **UNEP involvement and support to the UNCT in the 8 pilot countries:** UNEP staff have participated in One UN planning processes in all eight pilot countries, raising the profile of UNEP and helping to incorporate or strengthen the environmental components of the UN country programmes. Rwanda is the country where UNEP advanced most both in terms of cooperation within UNEP and within the UNCT (see Box 1 below). The environment is a key result area of the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) in Rwanda and UNEP has taken on the role of co-Chair of the Environment Thematic Group in support of the entire UNCT. In Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, and Uruguay, UNEP worked with the UNCTs on the development of One UN programme documents ranging from the UNDAF *plus*, to the UNDAF results matrix, and was able to bolster the environmental components of these programmes.

Country	UNDAF	Status
Albania	UNDAF 2006-2010	UNEP was instrumental to develop a new result area on environment in the UNDAF
Cape Verde	UNDAF 2006-2010 reviewed in 2007	Environment is a key area and UNEP participated in the revision of the UNDAF
Mozambique	UNDAF 2007-2009 finalized in 2006. <i>UNDAF plus</i> prepared in 2007	Environment is part of the <i>UNDAF plus</i> and UNEP is engaged. Leading technical role in development of the MDG Joint Programme which is part of the One Programme ¹
Pakistan	UNDAF 2004-2008	UNEP working with Government and UNCT in the development of the One Programme
Rwanda	UNDAF 2008-2012 finalized in 2007	UNEP participated in the UNDAF. Environment is a key area and UNEP has a leading role as co-Chair of the Environment Thematic Group
Tanzania	UNDAF 2007-2010 finalized in 2006. No review in 2007	Environmental priorities not clearly represented in the UNDAF and UNEP has difficulties to contribute at this stage
Uruguay	UNDAF 2007-2010	UNEP participating in the development of the One Programme
Vietnam	UNDAF 2006-2010	UNEP working with Government and the UNCT in the development of the One Programme

¹ One Programme is the UNCT common plan for implementation of the UNDAF under the pilot exercises.



- (b) **Inter-Divisional Collaboration and Division of Labour:** Inter-Divisional collaboration and the commitment of Divisional time and financial resources is a key element of successful engagement with the pilots. While achieving such collaboration and securing the commitment has not been easy, some positive changes can already be seen. In Rwanda, Mozambique, and Tanzania, DRC (PEI) and DEWA (AEIN) are coordinating activities, combining national stakeholder meetings, and planning to work through one single project document. In Albania, ROE is coordinating a UNEP virtual “Country Team”. In Uruguay, ROLAC in coordination with DEWA, DTIE, DGEF and DELC have contributed to the development of the One Programme. The experience of the Delivering as One is making the case for internal cooperation and increased country level coherence. Different projects and divisions are able to know other UNEP activities in the same countries, revealing opportunities for joint work.

BOX 1: Successful UNEP Inter-Divisional Collaboration: the example of Rwanda

The Poverty and Environment Initiative (PEI) has been working in Rwanda since 2005 and has been able to influence the UNDAF process from the beginning. The Post Conflict and Disaster Management Branch (PCDMB-DEPI) is about to start a major environmental assessment in the country (National Assessment Project). DEWA is working on the African Environment Information Network (AEIN). In discussions with the three areas, it was agreed that:

- DEWA, PCDMB and PEI will coordinate activities in the country (PCDMB and DEWA to discuss specific cooperation for the assessment project);
- PEI will continue to support UNEP’s presence in the country and continue to act as main focal point for UNEP’s One UN work;
- The project manager of the assessment project (funded by PCDMB) will also coordinate UNEP’s programme, and support the UN Country Teams (UNCTs) as a whole in the area of environment. She/he will have three distinct responsibilities (captured in the ToR for the post): managing the assessment project, provide support to the UNCT, and act as Programme Coordinator for the whole UNEP in Rwanda.

This division of labour and coordination allowed UNEP to undertake a leading role in Rwanda as co-Chair of the Environment Thematic Group together with UNDP. If not the only, this is one of the rare cases where a non-resident agency is taking a leading role in the UNDAF implementation and in the work of the UN family as a whole at country level. A similar process is underway in Mozambique, where PEI (DRC) is willing to, in addition to the specific tasks of the Initiative, act as Programme Coordinator for the UNEP as a whole.

- (c) **Network of Divisional Focal Points:** In the initial stages of the Delivering as One pilots the Divisional focal points (established in March 2007) played a key role in matching country requirements reflected in the UNDAFs with what Divisions (and UNEP as a whole) could provide to support the national processes (or activities already underway that matched the country needs).



- (d) **Regional Office Coordination and UNEP virtual Country Teams:** In a second phase, the work proceeded with direct involvement of UNEP substantive teams with the UN Country Teams under the Regional Office coordination (UNDAF development and review, formulation of UN operational documents, and joint programming). This second phase involves what could be called the UNEP *virtual* Country Teams (group of substantive staff from different divisions and areas of expertise working from different locations in the same pilot country).
- (e) **UNEP National Staff:** Model ToRs have been drafted for UNEP staff working in countries. The ToRs combine functions related to the management of substantive programmes (such as PEI or Post Conflict), with support to the Delivering as One process and the UNCTs, as well as coordinating of UNEP national operations (see Box 1). This means that staff already being recruited for the implementation of specific UNEP project in countries will now also have UNEP wide responsibilities. Staff with Delivering as One/UNEP national programme coordination responsibilities are being recruited for Rwanda (Post-Conflict) and Mozambique (PEI).
- (f) **Fundraising:** US\$ 600,000 has been raised by ED to ensure UNEP's initial engagement with the Delivering as One. This is the "One UN Project". Other "One UN projects" were developed and are under consideration of donors (Norway, EC).
- (g) **Staff Training:** Some 90 UNEP staff have been trained in UN common country programming processes and methodologies including Human Rights Based Approach/Results Based Management (HRBA/RBM, coordinated by the SIT). This will enable their active engagement in national UN planning processes. The first training workshop was held in July 2007 in Nairobi by the Strategic Implementation Team (SIT) and DRC.
- (h) **Information exchange:** A section of the new UNEP intranet is dedicated to information on the Delivering as One pilot countries (www.intranet.org/ONE).

3. Major challenges

- (a) **Knowledge of and experience with UN country planning and tools:** UNEP has not had the experience of having the country as a platform for planning nor familiarity with the UN planning tools at country level. As such, UNEP staff have found it challenging to engage with UN Country Teams in the One UN programme planning process.
- (b) **UNEP operates outside the UNDAF framework:** The UNDAF is the most important UN planning process at country level (although still an imperfect process). UNEP has rarely participated in the development of the UNDAFs. UNEP activities at the country level are undertaken separately and parallel to the UN's operations. Environmental priorities have not been well reflected within the UNDAFs and UNEP's activities are not part of the framework of the UN's operations at country level.
- (c) **In-house coordination mechanisms and programmatic focus:** There is no over arching UNEP "country programme" to ensure separate Divisional activities (in many cases related to regional projects) form a coherent UNEP presence at country level. As such,



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UNEP country activities are wide-ranging, small scale, geographically spread, overlapping and have limited impact. Delivering as One poses first and foremost a challenge of coherence to UNEP itself (One UNEP).

- (d) **Engagement in the Delivering as One is time and resource intensive:** The Divisional focal points had a key role in UNEP's involvement in the pilot countries. However, they had the Delivering as One as an additional task on top of many others and haven't been able to allocate the necessary time for the tasks, particularly if we consider the need to respond to the fast pace of activities in the pilot countries.
- (e) **Ensuring Divisional collaboration and commitment:** Divisional activities are confined to the Programme of Work and redirecting staff and financial resources for One UN activities or to finance national priorities captured in the UNDAFs has been difficult.
- (f) **UNEP has had little involvement in developing the tools of UN country programming:** In general, UNEP has not been involved in important spheres that shape the tools, the processes and staff practices of the UN teams at country level. For example, the main training package offered by the UN System Staff College for UN country programming is the Human Rights Based Approach/Results Based Management (HRBA/RBM). Although environment is one of key principles for the development of the UNDAF, environment is not incorporated in the training. Developing a training module on environmental sustainability and incorporating it into the UN country programming training would help mainstream environment in UN planning beyond UNEP's direct engagement in country level processes.
- (g) **Ensuring direct contact with RCs:** The RCs have a central role in facilitating the participation of Non-Resident Agencies. UNEP senior management had limited contact with the RCs in some of the pilots.
- (h) **UNEP and UNDP at Country level:** In most pilot countries UNDP has been the leading agency in the area of environment. In some cases, this seemed to be a barrier to UNEP's initial engagement as UNEP may be perceived as a threat. In countries where there is a strong UNDP unit working on Environment, it is difficult for UNEP as a NRA to find its space and role. In cases like in Tanzania, Vietnam and Pakistan, UNEP has been unable to agree on a more positive cooperation with UNDP. This is not only an issue at UNCT level. The UNDP Strategic Plan 2008-11 is clear in its proposed role for UNDP as leading agency for environment at country level. How this influences UNEP and UNDP cooperation is unclear.
- (i) **Environment and Development in the UNCTs:** Although environment is a concern to the UNCTs, their capacity to incorporate environment into their planning seems to be limited in most cases. Therefore, UNEP has been welcomed in the UNCTs. However, articulating environment and development is a challenge to UNEP itself. Engagement with the UNCTs relies very much in being able to craft environment in the broader picture of development, particularly within the context of so many competing agendas and priorities.



- (j) **Rhythm of national operations:** National UN processes have a faster rhythm, as in the last six months as UNEP engaged in ongoing processes of UNDAF finalization and review, and One Programme definitions. UNEP will have to change the way it works to cope with the pace of programming and action at the country level and respond adequately to the need for a presence in the country during the key moments of UNDAF development/implementation processes.
- (k) **Involvement of line ministries responsible for the environment:** In many cases the line ministries responsible for the environment have not been involved in the UNDAF processes. Therefore, contributions and priorities from the part of Governments did not incorporate the environmental dimension in a number of cases.

4. Recommendations

UNEP faces important challenges in its engagement with the UNCTs. First, it must overcome the disadvantage of being a Non-Resident Agency, with lack of experience with UN country planning tools. Second, it needs to build greater coherence and mutual support among its own programmes/projects delivered at country level (many of them of a regional scale). Third, UNEP needs to build capacity to re-orient its planning practices towards results based management and defining more strategic goals for its engagement at country and regional levels. Some of the critical steps for strategic country engagement include:

- a) Programme coordination, in-house division of labour and UNEP country presence
 - 1. **Increase the commitment and involvement of Divisions:** Without the full commitment of Divisions, including financial commitment, UNEP's involvement in country processes will remain *ad hoc* and limited. UNEP operational activities need to be reflected in the PoW and funds set aside to work with the UNCT during the development of the UNDAFs as well as for the subsequent implementation of specific activities. These funds will have to be loosely earmarked under Technical Cooperation as they will need to be tailored to country needs and each UNDAF.
 - 2. **Strengthen the coordination role of Regional Offices:** The current system of all Divisions and Regional Offices implementing activities separately in countries leads to confusion, duplication and gives UNEP a bad image in the country. For the Delivering as One pilot countries the Regional Offices have been considered as the one UNEP channel for engagement. This should now be extended for all national activities of UNEP and Regional Offices provided with the capacity to manage this core responsibility.
 - 3. **Increase UNEP division of labour at country level:** Where a Division/programme has a substantial level of activities in a given country (multi annual projects with major funding, resident staff, etc.) it can undertake the role of coordinating UNEP's activities in that country in collaboration with the Regional Office. These arrangements would vary according to countries specific contexts. For example, in Botswana where the Common Country Assessment is about to be developed and DEWA is already engaged through the AEIN it could lead UNEP's participation in the CCA/UNDAF development in coordination with ROA.



4. **UNEP virtual Country Teams and “national programmes”:** The Delivering as One exercise provides one platform for common planning and coherence at UNEP. Programmatic coherence should be developed for each country and reflect all UNEP activities in that country. The responsibility for this would lie primarily with the Regional Offices and the substantive areas involved in the country (*virtual Country Teams*, see page 3, (d)). Importantly, as many of the members of UNEP CTs will be related to projects that operate at the regional scale, this would also help:
 - Incorporating a regional perspective into National UN planning;
 - Facilitating the development of other CTs and “country programmes” in the same region.
- b) In-house capacity building and guidance
5. **Undertake Periodic and Ongoing Training:** Training on RBM/HRBA has been fundamental to help UNEP staff understand UN common country programming processes, language and tools. The training also helps to build a UNEP team with shared values and a common view of the importance of the CCA/UNDAF process.
6. **Develop internal guidance on country level engagement:** There is an urgent need for development of administrative guidelines on how to work with other UN organizations at the national level in areas such as fund management and hiring of staff. A “*UNEP Manual for National Operations and Activities*” needs to be developed urgently to guide UNEP staff in their national operational activities.
7. **Incorporate country disaggregated information in UNEP’s information systems:** UN Country Teams demand information at country level. Many UNEP projects are of regional scale and it has been extremely difficult and time consuming to gather country level information (e.g. allocation of funds per country).
- c) Working with UN Country Teams and other UN spheres
8. **Link UNEP approaches at Global, Regional and Country levels:** Improve involvement at regional and global spheres that influence processes at country level, and increase internal coordination of action between global, regional and country level initiatives.
9. **Develop tools and training on environmental sustainability for the UN System:** There are virtually no tools, guidance or training to UN staff on how to incorporate environment in the UN planning process at country level. UNEP could develop such tools and work with the UN System Staff College and the UN Development Group to ensure these materials are incorporated into the ongoing programme training (alongside RBM/HRBA) and programming guidelines (CCA/UNDAF Guidelines).
10. **Fully participate in the CCA/UNDAF process:** The CCA/UNDAF is the core of the UN programme in a country. UNEP’s presence at key moments in the UNCT is critical to make sure environment is considered as a relevant dimension of development and as part of the UN’s development assistance. On another hand, UNEP should take the UNDAFs into consideration in the development of any activity at country level.



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d) Working with line ministries responsible for the Environment

11. Support Environmental Authorities to ensure their priorities also reflected in UN programming: In addition to the common UN work with Governments in the development of the CCA/UNDAFs, UNEP should support line ministries responsible for the environment to participate in or influence the UNDAF processes. Supporting the line ministries and their participation in the process is a potential role for UNEP.