



UNITED
NATIONS
DEVELOPMENT
GROUP



**TOGETHER
POSSIBLE:
GEARING UP
FOR THE
2030 AGENDA**

**EXECUTIVE
SUMMARY
OF 2015 RESULTS
OF UNDG
COORDINATION**

In 2015, Member States adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals. In anticipation of this historic agreement, the UN Development Group (UNDG) focused on the preparation, alignment and communication for this transformative agenda. Working closely with governments and partners, the UNDG prepared the way at global, regional and country level to channel effective support to Member States as they begin to implement the 2030 Agenda.

The 131 UN Country Teams serving 165 countries and territories laid the foundation necessary to support government and multi-stakeholder coalitions to launch early actions on the Sustainable Development Goals. By the end of 2015, less than 100 days after the adoption of the new Agenda, 52 United Nations Country Teams had been approached by governments requesting assistance on implementation of the 2030 Agenda. This number grew to 95 UN Country Teams by July 2016.

This summary synthesizes the key trends and results of the Resident Coordinator system in 2015 funded through the UNDG cost sharing agreement. It demonstrates both the value and necessity of sustained investment in a collaborative and coordinated United Nations development system at the country, regional and global level. For a complete account of 2015 results, the full UNDG annual report will be available at www.undg.org.

GLOBAL-LEVEL RESULTS

INTEGRATED POLICY ADVICE AND THOUGHT LEADERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

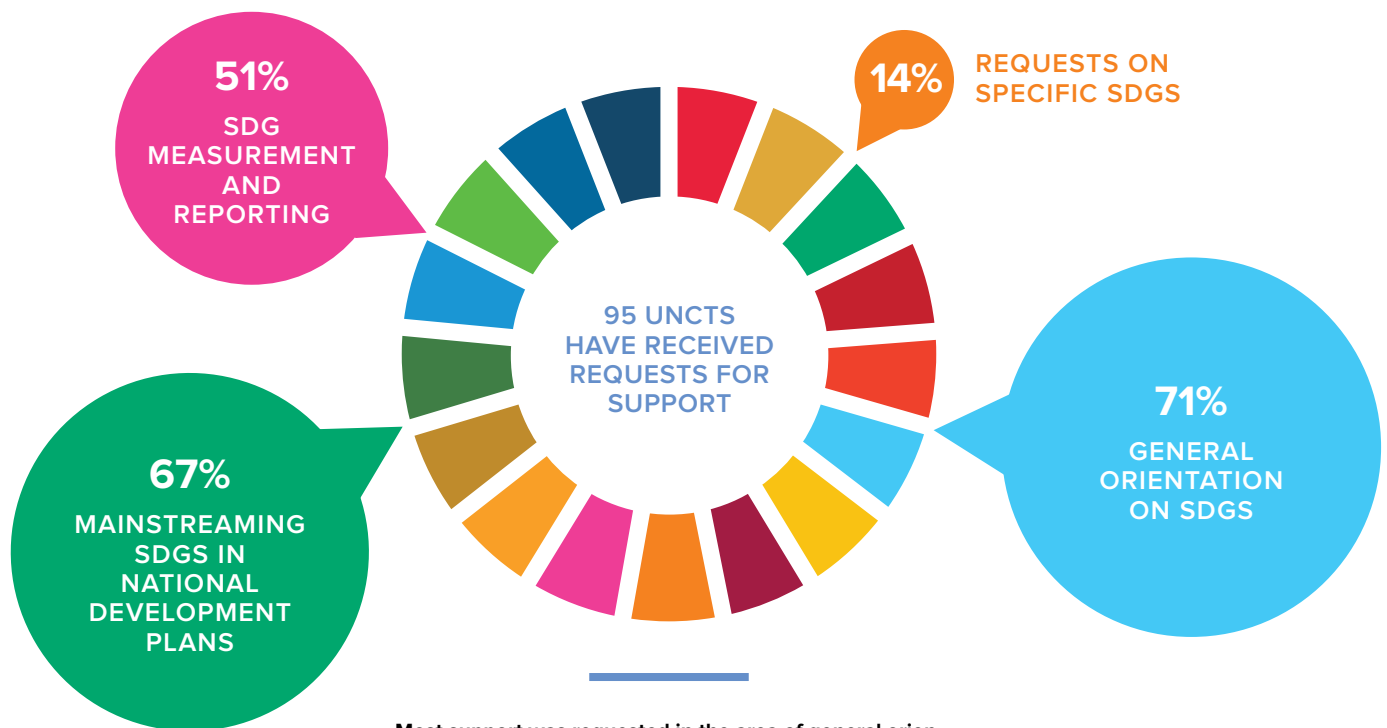
TRANSFORMATIVE, EMPOWERED LEADERSHIP

As the cornerstone of the UN development system, 129 Resident Coordinators continued to lead development cooperation at country level. Diversity increased in 2015: over 40 percent of Resident Coordinators are women, are from the South and are from agencies outside UNDP. 2015 actions resulted in a new leadership model to meet the demands of the 2030 Agenda and created support tools to align competency profiles in all stages from attraction to performance management. The design of a new UNDG performance appraisal system for Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams continued in 2015; the new system will advance mutual accountability and draw on all relevant assets of the system for joined up policy and programmatic interventions to support national priorities.

By the end of 2015, the UNDG had designed, assessed and committed to a set of policy, programme and operational tools that leverage strengths throughout the UN to embed the new agenda at country level. A framework for the UN and national partners to mainstream the 2030 Agenda into national frameworks, accelerate progress and provide integrated policy support is now available for use at country level to support these efforts. Through robust consultations and analysis across the UN system, the UNDG recast the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) in 2015, resulting in interim guidelines for country-level strategic plans and partnerships that will drive policy coherence within sustainable development and promote integration across the pillars of the UN Charter. Other results in thought leadership include UNDG-wide positions on the humanitarian-development nexus, and theories of change for pooled funds for recovery in fragile and conflict-affected countries.

MOST REQUESTS FROM GOVERNMENT TO UN COUNTRY TEAMS PERTAIN TO GENERAL ORIENTATION ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND THEIR MAINSTREAMING INTO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS.

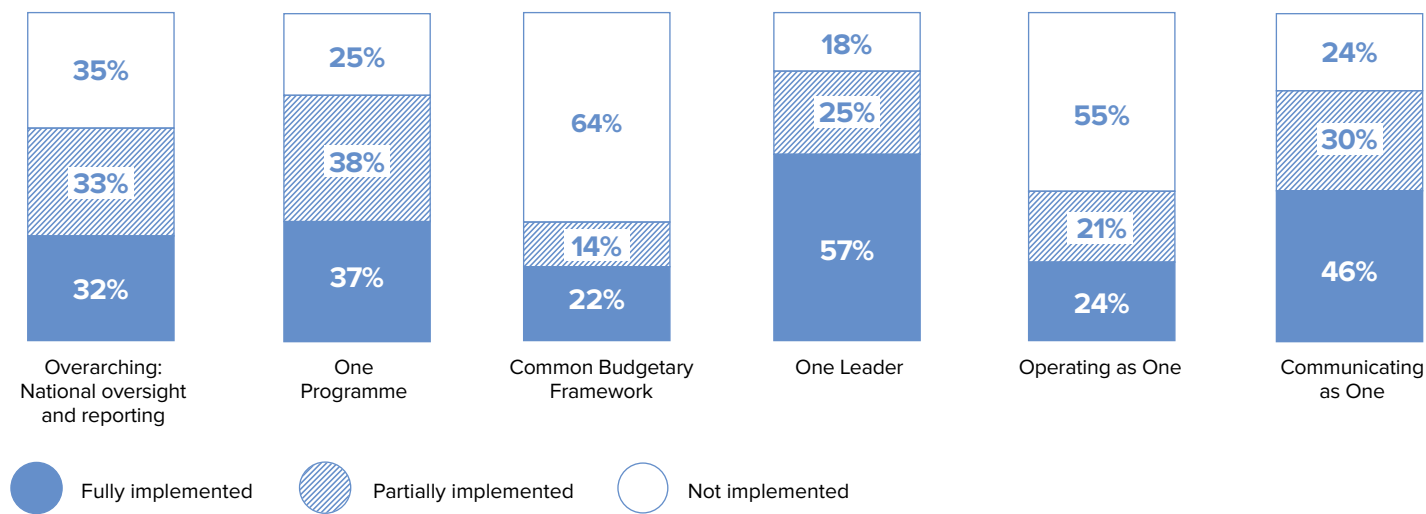
The figure illustrates the type of government support requests UN Country Teams have received for the 2030 Agenda. Overall, 95 UNCTs have received at least one request for support for the SDGs.



Most support was requested in the area of general orientation on the Sustainable Development Goals (67 UNCTs) and mainstreaming SDGs in national development plans (64 UNCTs), followed by support on SDG measurement and reporting (48 UNCTs).

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR COUNTRIES ADOPTING THE 'DELIVERING AS ONE' APPROACH: THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF IMPLEMENTATION SEEN VIA THE 'ONE LEADER', 'COMMUNICATING AS ONE' AND 'ONE PROGRAMME' PILLARS.

PERCENTAGE OF UN COUNTRY TEAMS



A new generation of integrated planning and programming is emerging. UNDAFs are beginning to include more honed priority areas and to support national partners to collect, monitor and report on data. They are starting to provide a framework to national partners in South-South and triangular cooperation, and offer new methods for crowdsourcing and futures-oriented sustainable development planning. As an indication of the direction of change, the percentage of UNDAFs with specific results on gender equality increased from 45 percent in 2014 to 61 percent in 2015.

INTEGRATED NORMATIVE SUPPORT FOR GLOBAL AGREEMENTS, NORMS AND STANDARDS

Promotion of human rights was propelled in 2015 by the 2030 Agenda anchored in human rights and the Secretary General's Human Rights up Front initiative. UNDG action taken in 2015 resulted in new guidance to help Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams move the human rights agenda forward through policy, advocacy, programming and partnership with national stakeholders. A set of policy and operational messages disseminated this year provide guidance to 165 countries on aligning the 2030 Agenda with countries' existing human rights obligations; fulfilling the pledge to leave no one behind; ensuring meaningful participation in all phases of the design, implementation and monitoring of the new agenda; and ensuring robust accountability mechanisms. The UNDG at the global level supported UN teams at country and regional levels to strengthen their human rights capacities and engage strategically

and coherently on human rights, most prominently through the continued deployment of 12 human rights advisers including two at the regional level.

SUPPORT FOR COUNTRIES IN SPECIAL SITUATIONS: CONFLICT, DISPLACEMENT AND DISASTERS

As an outcome of joint work with a range of Secretariat partners, the UNDG worked together to contribute a system-wide development perspective into 2015 Member State reviews of the UN system's engagement in peace operations and peacebuilding. In addition to informing Member State dialogues on 'fit for purpose' and the UNDG's own interim UNDAF Framework guidance, the process of coordinating this input served to increase attention to the need to grow pooled funding mechanisms and to explore the use of assessed contributions for programmatic peacebuilding activities. To support sustainable recovery in crisis and post-crisis situations, steps were taken towards an independent review of capacities of agencies, funds and programmes in sustaining peace and, together with the Inter-agency Standing Committee, towards a set of system-wide guiding principles on resilience for global policy and country-level interventions.

77 percent of UN Country Teams provided support to South-South development cooperation in 2015.

DATA, INNOVATION, TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

To advance quality, accessible, timely and reliable data for the 2030 Agenda, the UNDG made a formal commitment to ensure coordinated and joint support to data and national statistical capacity strengthening, where possible, drawing on expertise from across the UN system. Global mechanisms established in 2015 will help to coordinate support to Member States as they prepare national reports on the SDGs, increase transparency through the use of data standards and improve country-level capacity for data innovation. In 2015, 116 out of 131 UN Country Teams provided support for national statistical capacity, including capacity development, direct data collection and financial support.

Building on the Standard Operating Procedures for countries adopting the 'Delivering as One' approach, the UNDG now has guidance and prototypes for frequent and real-time monitoring designed to inform course correction and keep pace with mobile and web-based technological advances. As evidence of the step change in progress, 43 percent of UN Country Teams reported that they had applied innovation of various kinds during UN country programming in 2015.

2015 saw advances towards more transparency and accountability in the drive to improve public accountability and understanding of the UN's work at country level. In 2015, 11 UNDG members and two observers published data according to the International Aid Transparency Initiative standard used by more than 400 development partners globally. To promote greater financial transparency and accountability in pooled funding, the UNDG also adopted an updated and harmonized set of policies and standard legal agreements for pass-through funding modalities which channel about US\$1 billion a year.

MODERN, EFFICIENT, JOINED UP BUSINESS PROCESSES

Investments in 2015 led to an expanded range of joint operational services, increased synergies via shared offices, and reduced financial transaction costs for partners through increased uptake in the harmonized approach to cash transfers. The UNDG now has evaluation-based evidence from five countries of the efficacy of country-level inter-agency business operations strategies for volume discounts and lower transaction costs. Following the formal evaluation of five UN Country Teams that had piloted business operations strategies, 81 UN Country Teams received advisory and implementation support to develop business operations strategies that cut costs and enhanced the quality of common support services. A model for a joint operations service centre was piloted in Brazil, with the support of the UNDG and the UN High-Level Committee on Management, to test a prototype for reducing costs and increasing the quality of operational support.

PARTNERSHIPS, KNOWLEDGE SHARING, SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION

To amplify development knowledge and trigger the creation of coalitions for change, the UNDG's partnership efforts in 2015 broadened the knowledge base in South-South cooperation. These efforts simplified partnership arrangements in fragile and conflict-affected countries, revised methods and renewed commitment among the UN, the World Bank and the European Union for joint Post-Conflict Needs Assessments. To establish multi-stakeholder consultation as a regularized part of UN programming, the UNDG also now has prototypes for building on and improving broad-based people's engagement in sustainable development.

RESULTS FROM 131 UN COUNTRY TEAMS

The following highlights present the results achieved using data from 131 UN Country teams, covering 165 countries and territories.

2015 results that indicate the ripple effect created by a more coordinated UN Development system include:



In the area of **strategic analysis and planning**, 16 new UNDAFs were signed in 2015 and 34 percent of UN Country Teams entered the design phase of strategic plans. An average of 16 UN agencies per country participated in UNDAFs in 2015. As part of strategic planning, 61 percent of UN Country Teams conducted a Common Country Analysis, serving as the UN's unique mandate-based and value-driven perspective on country context, opportunities and challenges encompassing human rights, gender equality, sustainability and peace and security.



As part of **oversight of the UN programme cycle**, 893 inter-agency groups are in place to drive coherence across the UN's sustainable development work at country level. About half of these are Results Groups as defined by the Standard Operating Procedures in the 52 countries adopting the 'Delivering as One' approach (as of December 2015).



In the area of **representation of and support to the UN Secretariat and non-resident agencies**, 58 percent of UN Country Teams have up to four non-resident agencies (or regionally-based, agencies), providing national partner access to specialized expertise across the UN system in a cost-effective way.



Significant improvements were noted via the UN's joint efforts to **support national coordination systems and processes** in 2015. Countries are both recipients and contributors in global development, with 77 percent of UN Country Teams providing support to South-South development cooperation. 52 percent of UN Country Teams engaged in capacity development of national aid modalities and aid management, ensuring alignment and effectiveness of national aid and development effectiveness mechanisms.



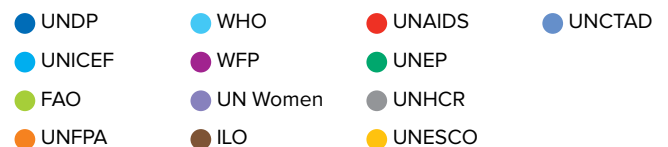
On shared operational support services, more UN Country Teams report that they are implementing Business Operations Strategies for modern, efficient, joined-up operations – an increase from 26 percent in 2014 to 29 percent in 2015. 81 percent of UN Country Teams are using the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers, reducing transaction costs for partners in the course of financial transfers.



In the area of **crisis management preparedness and response**, 89 percent of UN Country Teams provide support to governments on disaster management, 81 percent of which are undertaken as inter-agency efforts. 33 percent of UN Country Teams have agreements with key partners for better joined-up crisis response to assist in delivering immediate, effective and coordinated recovery assistance to affected governments and populations.

SHARED UNDG LEADERSHIP TO ACHIEVE THE SDGs

The figure depicts the share of agencies that are chairing or co-chairing inter-agency groups, which are set up to support UN Country Team coordination. Globally, 893 interagency groups are in place.





UN Country Team progress in **external communications and advocacy** improved in 2015. Some 83 percent of UN Country Teams have a joint UN communications group (up 13 percent from 2014) and 70 percent have a joint communications strategy (up 14 percent from 2014). These structures increased the visibility of the UN and called attention to national and international development objectives and global normative frameworks such as the 2030 Agenda.



UN Country Teams expanded the range of tools used in the area of **human rights and development**: 67 percent of UN Country Teams have engaged in the preparation, reporting or follow-up of the Universal Periodic Review. Placing the normative agenda at the heart of sustainable development, 73 percent of UN Country Teams have facilitated government follow-up of human rights treaty body recommendations and 43 percent of UN Country Teams have facilitated UN engagement on Special Procedures recommendations.



In joint **resource mobilization and fund management**, 30 percent of UN Country Teams developed Joint Resource Mobilization Strategies, designed to ensure adequate funding of UNDAFs and Joint Programmes, and limiting competition within the UN for donor resources. In 2015, seven UN agencies, acting as fund administrators, mobilized and transferred a total of US\$1 billion to 37 agencies delivering results on the ground. The largest share was channeled to the humanitarian sector.



In the area of **general UN Country Team oversight and coordination**, the nuts and bolts that serve as the foundation for substantive collaboration across UN entities, notable progress was achieved on the 15 core elements of the Standard Operating Procedures for countries adopting the 'Delivering as One' approach in 2015. The exception was the Common Budgetary Frameworks, where slow progress is understood to be related to discrepancies in definitions, a problem that will be rectified with the revised UNDAF guidance.

REGIONAL-LEVEL RESULTS

Results at the regional level in 2015 signal the emergence of a mutually supportive, normative-based and context-based approach driven by Regional UNDG Teams' support to UN Country Teams. The UNDG is driving a substantive regional 2030 Agenda, with an increased focus on issues of resilience, migration and displacement, greater integration across the humanitarian, peace, human rights and development nexus, and the response to the changing landscape in middle income countries.

Strategic leadership and advice was provided by the Regional UNDG Teams to the UN Country Teams in the six regions, re-positioning the UN system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda. Regional UNDG Teams provided guidance and quality assurance for the formulation of 22 UNDAFs/UN Strategic Partnership Frameworks.

Actions taken by the UNDG in 2015 resulted in a stronger basis for partnership with UN Regional Economic Commissions, with specific commitments and collaboration on data and statistics, common approaches for mainstreaming the new 2030 Agenda, and joint communications.

Priority given to regional UNDG engagement on the human rights agenda was evident through the regional quarterly reviews of human rights issues, co-led by the Regional UNDG Chairs and their counterparts in the UN Department of Political Affairs. This led to improved early warning of potential crisis situations, and to the deployment of surge support of human rights expertise to select UN Country Teams in fragile settings.

The emergence of UN cross-country crisis platforms and shared strategic planning on the humanitarian-development nexus, was a priority, particularly in the Arab States/Middle East, North Africa and Great Lakes regions.

Recognizing that the Standard Operating Procedures for countries adopting the 'Delivering As One' approach are the new business model for the UN development system, the Regional UNDG Teams have been at the forefront in advocating and promoting institutional change in all 131 UN Country Teams. Targeted strategies were put in place by the Regional UNDG Teams to raise awareness and build capacities at the country level on the Standard Operating Procedures for countries adopting the 'Delivering as One' approach.

Below are some highlights of key achievements by Regional UNDG teams:

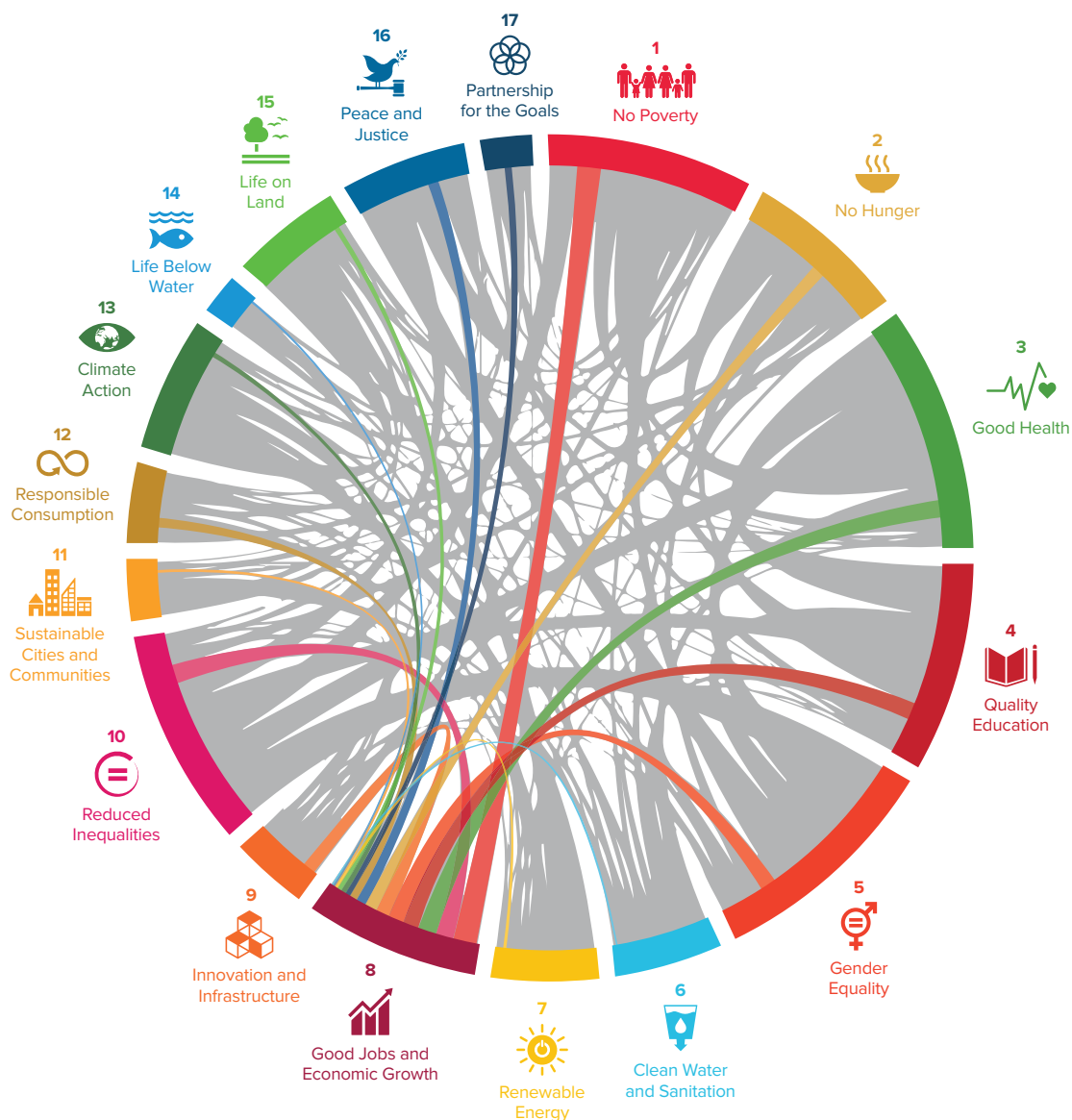
- A UN Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework was prepared, covering 18 countries in the Caribbean subregion. This led to a more coherent UN response to regional and national needs.
- In response to the growing number of middle income countries in Africa, a status now achieved by 22 of the 48 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, the regional UNDG developed a strategy on how UN Country Teams can best support these evolving development needs.

- In the Arab States, the regional UNDG was instrumental in creating the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan 2015-2016 for the Syria crisis, promoting resilience response efforts for host communities and affected populations.
- In Europe and Central Asia, the regional UNDG played a key role in promoting human rights-based law, policy and practice in countries in the region. This included the development of a Justice for Children Strategy in Albania, and facilitating a dialogue on introducing a moratorium on the application of the death penalty in Belarus.

- The Asia-Pacific regional UNDG supported UN Country Teams to enhance their preparedness, crisis response, post-crisis transition and peacebuilding efforts in countries such as Nepal, Myanmar, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and Bangladesh.

HOW THE UN IS ADDRESSING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN THE SDGs

The figure depicts how the UN development system is responding to an integrated sustainable development agenda. Across 131 UN Country Teams, each of the 893 interagency groups addresses more than one SDG, and often several of them. The figure shows, for example, that the inter-agency architecture set up to advance **Good Jobs and Economic Growth** is linked to **Quality Education**, **Gender Equality**, **Good Health**, and **Reduced Inequalities**.



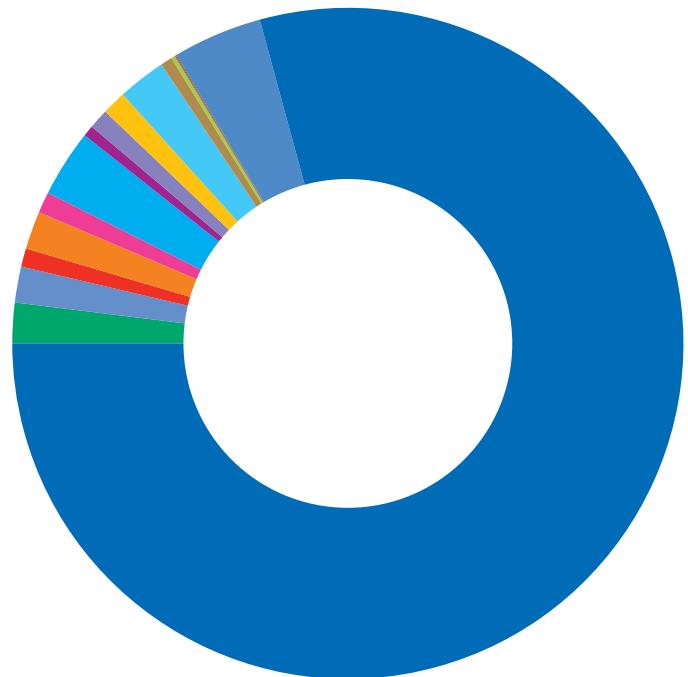
UNDG COST SHARING 2015: DELIVERING DESPITE FUNDING CONSTRAINTS

Since 2007, UN Member States have called for increased financial, technical and organizational support for the Resident Coordinator system,¹ and requested the governing bodies of the entities of the UN development system to approve a cost-sharing agreement to fund coordination.² The UNDG cost-sharing agreement was executed for its second year in 2015. Although agreed-upon amounts for contributions remained steady, not all UNDG agencies met their obligations and the Resident Coordinator system remained underfunded. Of the 18 member entities of the UNDG responsible for contributing to the cost-sharing modality, 10 contributed fully, while seven UNDG entities fulfilled their cost-sharing requirements only partially for the 2014/2015 biennium. For a second consecutive year, the UN Secretariat did not deliver on its commitment as per the UNDG cost sharing agreement. Its contribution will be subject to the approval of the General Assembly during its consideration of the programme budget for 2016-2017. This persistent investment shortfall presents a significant challenge for the coherence and collective impact of the UN development system.

The 2030 Agenda, with its emphasis on integration and universality, highlights the importance of coordination and increases the demands on the Resident Coordinator system to ensure coherence across programmes, operations and policy advice to Member States. In light of growing demands for coordination, the UN development system must deliver on its commitments to invest in coordination at national, regional and global levels. These coordination funds catalyze and synthesize results across the UN system. Demonstrating the high demand for coordination resources, expenditures have increased in the second year of the implementation of the UNDG Cost Sharing for the Resident Coordinator System, rising from 94 percent in 2014 to 98 percent delivery at the global, regional, and country levels combined in 2015.

¹ GA Resolution 62/208 on the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review, 2007.
² ECOSOC Resolution 2013/5 and ECOSOC Resolution 2015/L3.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE UNDG COST SHARING AMONGST PARTICIPATING MEMBERS FOR 2015



- FAO: US\$ 2,181,353
 - ILO: US\$ 1,940,293
 - UNAIDS: US\$ 990,716
 - UNFPA: US\$ 2,050,114
 - UNHCR: US\$ 1,135,256
 - UNICEF: US\$ 3,633,493
 - UNOPS: US\$ 594,122
 - UN Women: US\$ 1,074,870
 - WFP: US\$ 1,301,554
 - WHO: US\$ 2,600,000
 - IFAD: US\$ 628,686
 - WMO: US\$ 50,000
 - ITU: US\$ 50,000
 - UNWTO: US\$ 50,000
 - UNIDO: US\$ 175,000
 - UNDP's share of cost-sharing: US\$ 4,815,32
 - UNDP backbone: US\$ 88,746,632
- Total amount: US\$ 112,017,411



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The United Nations Development Group (UNDG) unites the 31 UN funds, programmes, specialized agencies, departments, and offices that play a role in development. Since 2008, the UNDG has been one of the three pillars of the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, the highest-level coordination forum of the United Nations system.

At the regional level, six Regional UNDG Teams play a critical role in driving the UNDG priorities by supporting UN Country Teams with strategic priority setting, analysis and advice.

At the country level, 131 UN Country Teams serving 165 countries and territories work together to increase the synergies and joint impact of the UN system.

The Development Operations Coordination Office (DOCO) is the secretariat of the UNDG, bringing together the UN development system to promote change and innovation to deliver together on sustainable development.