



2015 Final Results Report UNDG LAC

Introduction

2015 for Latin America and the Caribbean has been marked by economic stagnation and political unrest, decreasing donor funding, stronger ownership by national governments, and continued calls from Member States for the UN to become more “relevant, innovative, agile, inclusive, coordinated, and results-oriented”.

The emphasis of the UNDG LAC work in 2015 was placed on the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, Rights Up Front, Delivering as One, and the discussions on Fit for Purpose. The UNDG LAC focused its efforts in supporting the UNCTs, emphasizing the need for the UNCTs to strategically position themselves be more relevant actors, and use the 2030 Agenda as an opportunity to do so. In the same light, the UNDG LAC made the acceleration of implementing the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) a focus of its activities. In particular, the UNDG LAC agreed to focus on the UNDAF roll-out countries as entry points for advancing SOPs implementation, incorporating the 2030 Agenda, and maximizing effectiveness and coherence. Finally, the UNDG LAC agreed to continue to emphasize human rights, and the integration of humanitarian and development agendas.

It is important to mention that the UNDG LAC had a high level of turnover in its membership, with the replacement of the Regional Directors of FAO, ILO, OCHA, UNEP (ad interim), and UNFPA (ad interim). Additionally, the UNDG LAC Secretariat went through a period of transition that included several months with an understaffed office.

Key accomplishments on joint work:

1. Promoting Coherence in the Caribbean and Strengthening Partnership with CARICOM.

UNDG strategic priority or strategic approach: Promote coherent development results across the entire UN development system to improve transparency and accountability; Develop effective partnerships and multi-stakeholder engagement

a. Multi-country Sustainable Development Framework (UN MSDF)

Early 2015, the UN in the Caribbean agreed to develop a Multi-country Sustainable Development Framework (UN MSDF) that will cover a total of fifteen countries, and replaces 6 national UNDAFs. This decision was made in light of the UN’s ongoing efforts to become increasingly fit for purpose and the possibility of harnessing the mandates and capacities of the UN system regionally to address the common challenges facing the Caribbean. Other factors considered were the middle-income country context, with decreasing aid flows, a changing set of needs for support from multi-lateral partners, and a clear strong momentum for integration.

During the internal roll-out workshop (Barbados, May 2015), there was an agreement on the roadmap and principles of engagement for preparing the UN MSDF. Over 50 UN senior staff participated, including the UNDG LAC Chair and UNDG LAC members, 5 Resident Coordinators and members of all the UNCTs in the Caribbean, as well as personnel from the regional offices and UN DOCO.

Following the roll-out workshop, a Steering Committee composed of the 5 Resident Coordinators met regularly to discuss process. A member of the UNDG LAC (Regional Director of UNICEF) was designated mentor for the process, while the UNDG LAC Secretariat deployed a designated staff to Barbados to support the process. The UNDG LAC also supported the Strategic Planning Retreat (Trinidad and Tobago, December 2015), in which a total of 5 Resident Coordinators, representatives of 17 Governments, CARICOM and OECS,



as well as 23 UN staff participated. The Strategic Planning Retreat defined 4 priority areas for the UN MSDF and proposed 10 outcomes. The ideas presented and agreed upon during the Strategic Planning Retreat were derived from consultations that took place in 15 countries. In addition, a Monitoring and Evaluation Task Team was composed. The UN MSDF is on track to be signed on March 2016.

Because the UN MSDF is anchored in the 2030 Agenda, there are 2 key factors necessary for its success: 1) the UN's ability to measure progress towards the Sustainable Development goals and 2) creating a clear dialogue with the general public building on the 2030 agenda. Towards these ends, UNDG LAC was awarded \$210 000 from the UN UNDAF Innovation Facility. The financing went towards the development of platforms for interaction, including a webpage, Facebook, and forums as well as an integrated information management system (IMS) to measure progress towards the SDGs.

b. Mapping of UNS Activities in the Caribbean

In addition, the Interagency Working Group (IAWG) on the UNS Engagement with the CARICOM and Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) was established to facilitate greater interaction with the Caribbean Community as well as the definition of appropriate modalities for facilitating the efficient and effective implementation of the S.A.M.O.A. Pathway in Caribbean SIDS. The IAWG finalized the mapping of UN activities in the Caribbean (including support provided to CARICOM Secretariat), and presented it in the 8th UN-CARICOM General Meeting (Guyana, July 2015). An updated version reflecting CARICOM's comments will be submitted to CARICOM in early 2016.

2. Accelerating the Implementation of the SOPs for “Delivering as one”

UNDG strategic priority or strategic approach: Implementation of the SOPs for “Delivering as one”; Accelerate simplification and harmonization of business practices

While the UNDG LAC continued to facilitate reform efforts, providing support to Delivering as One (DaO) countries (Uruguay, El Salvador, Venezuela and Nicaragua, Jamaica, and Guyana), the team has concentrated efforts in accelerating the implementation of the UNDG Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in the region.

In that regard, the UNDG LAC jointly signed a letter requesting that UNCTs accelerate the implementation of the SOPs in their respective countries and advocating for the acceleration of the SOPs, which lagged in comparison to the other regions. In addition, in order to be able to provide better support, the UNDG LAC has revamped the Peer Support Group (PSG) and planned capacity building sessions on the SOPs for the PSG and Coordination Officers in the region, while continuing to provide and enable capacity building trainings in specific areas of the SOPs. Of particular note was a regional BOS Training of Trainers for the LAC region (Panama, November 2015), which had the participation of 28 participants from 11 countries and included external consultants. The UNDG LAC also supported DOCO in virtual presentations on various pillars of the SOPs as needed. Examples include the UNCTs of Colombia and Peru receiving specific presentations on the Business Operations Strategy (BOS), and Honduras on the SOPs in general.

As a result of these activities, the LAC region as a group made an approximately 12% increase in the implementation of the SOPs.¹ More importantly, the awareness and recognition of the importance of the SOPs has increased significantly within the UNDG LAC and UNCTs. This is evidenced by the fact that all UNCTs are making progress in the SOPs and the UNDG LAC will consider SOPs implementation as a key factor during the RC/UNCT Performance Appraisal for 2016.

¹ This measurement is based on the results of a survey (checklist) conducted by the UNDG LAC in December 2015, and measuring it against results of the initial survey conducted by DOCO in August 2015.



3. UN Country Team Support

a. UNDAF roll-out support

UNDG strategic priority or strategic approach: Promote coherent development results across the entire UN development system to improve transparency and accountability; Enhance integrated planning, programming and policies

In 2015, the UNDG LAC provided quality assurance and technical support to the 2014 roll-out countries (Argentina, Colombia, El Salvador, Panama, and Uruguay) and 2015 countries (Barbados and OECS, Belize, Brazil, Guyana, Jamaica, Honduras, Peru, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago). The RC/UNCTs from Panama and Uruguay benefited from the demand-driven mentorship programme. As a result, all 5 2014 roll-out countries signed UNDAFs with their respective governments, at the outcome level in accordance with the SOPs and in the context of the 2030 Agenda. These countries are also advancing in the development of their Joint Work Plans and Results Groups.

The 2015 roll-out countries that were not located within the English and Dutch speaking Caribbean (Brazil, Haiti, Honduras, and Peru) advanced with the development of their roadmaps, CCA, and comparative advantages analysis. For the Caribbean UNDAF roll-out countries, a roll-out workshop (Barbados, May 2015) was organized to develop an MSDF to replace the individual UNDAFs, which was followed by a Strategic Planning Retreat later in the year. The Retreat involved the participation of government officials and UN RC/UNCT Members, and resulted in agreed upon outcome areas.

The UNDG LAC, through the PSG, coordinated the provision of the following technical support and missions to UNDAF roll out countries:

- Conference call with the RC of Honduras regarding the request for extension of the programmatic cycle, and an ad hoc meeting with the Coordination Officer of Honduras to provide technical advice and support for the implementation of the UNDAF process.
- Mission of the UNDAF expert to Argentina to facilitate the SPR.
- Mission of Co-chair of the Inter-Agency Working Group on M&E to implement a workshop on the programmatic principles of RBM and capacity development.
- UNDG LAC Secretariat mission to provide support and advice during the SPR of Brazil.
- Facilitation of the liaison between the UNDAF roll-out countries and the Inter-Agency Working Group on M&E to provide advice on the implementation of UNDAF evaluations of Brazil, Guyana and Honduras; and TORs of the M&E task group of the UN MSDF.

Additionally, an Associate Network of Experts in UNDAF is operational, with the aim of establishing Long Term Agreements with 10 experts for quick deployment in support of UNDAF processes. Finally, the UNDG LAC endorsed the updated TOR of the PSG as well as the support strategy to implement the SOPs and the UNDAF support strategy.

b. Human Rights.

UNDG strategic priority or strategic approach: Promote coherent development results across the entire UN development system to improve transparency and accountability; Strengthen capacity development as a core function of the UN development system; Enhance integrated planning, programming and policy

Through the Human Rights Advisor, the UNDG LAC provided support to UNDAF roll-out countries in HRBA trainings for the UNCTs of the Caribbean and the UNCT in Brazil, Peru, and Costa Rica. During the trainings, the discussions focused on UPR, treaty bodies, and special procedures recommendations, and highlighted the



importance of incorporating international human rights recommendations in UN programming and planning processes.

Furthermore, following the adoption of the Secretary General Rights up Front Action Plan (RuF), the Human Rights Advisor participated in the implementation process of the RuF in the LAC region. A presentation of the Rights up Front Action Plan was made to the UNCT of Panama, while videoconferences to explain the plan with several RC Offices took place, which included the RC Offices in Argentina, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Venezuela. Finally, as the RuF plan includes the creation of the online human rights course for UN staff, the UNDG LAC revised and provided comments to the draft modules and provided examples from the LAC region. The Spanish version of the course will be available in March 2016.

In addition, teleconferences were conducted with the RC of Nicaragua on Business and Human rights, with the RC of Trinidad and Tobago on the death penalty, and with the RCO of Belize on persons with disabilities.

c. Troubleshooting.

UNDG strategic priority or strategic approach: Functioning of the RC system as participatory, collegial, and mutually accountable

The UNDG LAC agreed that a joint mission to Haiti was necessary, both due to its ongoing transition period and the issue of deportations of Dominicans of Haitian descent to be enforced in 2015. Prior to the mission, the UNDG LAC discussed the deportation situation with the RCs of both Haiti and Dominican Republic during the 27 August 2015 UNDG LAC Meeting. The UNDG LAC requested that both the UNCTs of Haiti and Dominican Republic share information and engage in continuous dialogue to the end of ensuring that the deportations were conducted in accordance to the principles of the UN, that the UNS had space in participating in the process, and that both UNCTs had the capacity to respond in case the situation escalated to a crisis.

During the mission, the UNDG LAC provided strategic guidance to not only the deportation situation, but to the country's long term development as well. The mission resulted in the agreement between the UNCT Haiti and the UNDG LAC to nullify the previous agreement for extending the Integrated Strategic Framework (ISF) for another year and instead deciding to roll out a new UNDAF for the years 2017-2021. This decision will align the UNCT's programmatic cycle with the National Development Plan.

d. Support through Interagency Working Groups (IAWGs).

UNDG strategic priority or strategic approach: Positioning of the UN development system to optimally contribute to the post-2015 development agenda

The UNDG LAC has restructured its IAWGs, revamping the Peer Support Group, and strengthening support to RCs and UNCTs, which included dialogue in troubleshooting situations. For 2016, a new reform of the UNDG LAC Mechanism is envisioned to ensure further alignment with global mandates and policies.

Apart from the mentorship to roll-out countries, the UNDG LAC held meetings/teleconferences with Brazil, Colombia, Nicaragua, and Haiti to discuss country-specific issues and to provide strategic guidance, as well as foster an environment for communication and information sharing to strengthen cohesiveness. In particular, the role of the mentorship was crucial for providing support to the countries involved in the United Nations Multi-country Sustainable development Framework in the Caribbean.

The UNDG LAC, also through its IAWGs, provided support to the UNCTs on the implementation of global initiatives, such as the UNiTE Campaign to End Violence against Women in LAC and the implementation of the Plan of Action of United Nations for Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience in Panama and Uruguay. The



UNDG LAC, through the UNAIDS Cosponsors Regional Group, provided critical peer reviews of draft concept notes to the Global Fund, and implemented, through the Gender Group, two Regional Inter-agency Flagship Initiatives: 1) affecting legislative changes that will eliminate all legal exceptions to the legal age of marriage in LAC, and 2) increasing women's access to land and property in LAC.

e. Additional support.

UNDG strategic priority or strategic approach: Promote coherent development results across the entire UN development system to improve transparency and accountability

The UNDG LAC organized the annual Coordination Workshop for strengthening capacities in a wide range of issues such as the SOPs for Delivering as One. The Secretariat also organized a Webinar entitled, “Innovative Ideas for UN Day Activities in Celebration of its 70th Anniversary”, inviting a senior official from the Department of Public Information (DPI) as guest speaker, and having over 30 coordination and communications colleagues participating from over 30 countries. Through information sharing and general guidance from DPI, the webinar contributed to improving coherence in the region with regards to the celebration of the 70th Anniversary events, and supporting RCOs in their preparation.
