

Annex 6 UN Reform***Evaluation Question***

UN reform, the Global Task Team (GTT) and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness all influence the context in which UNAIDS operates. The impact of these changes on how UNAIDS is viewed (by countries, cosponsors, donors and staff) and on how it works to meet its mandate (particularly in countries), should be assessed. Implications and choices for the future should be identified.

1 Introduction

1.1 UNAIDS is an institution and not an organisation, which has implications in terms of understanding how it can be expected to work. As well as looking at the internal processes within the secretariat and the ten cosponsors, it means understanding the formal rules, conventions and informal rules that dictate how they relate to each other and how these are enforced. Therefore, a major question with UN reform and wider efforts to enhance aid effectiveness is the degree to which it has changed, or will change, the formal and informal rules and conventions that dictate how the ten cosponsors and secretariat interact with each other and collectively with external stakeholders, and whether any such changes have had either positive or negative effects on the effectiveness of UNAIDS.

2 UN reform**Key policy initiatives**

2.1 To understand how UN reform may have enhanced how UNAIDS is viewed (by countries, cosponsors, donors and staff) and how it works to meet its mandate, it is first necessary to look at the evolution of UN reform and who the key actors have been. Then it is possible to identify how UN reform would be expected to have affected the work of UNAIDS as an institution.

2.2 In practical terms this means starting with the Secretary-General's report "Renewing the United Nations: A Programme for Reform" (A/51/950), presented on 16 July 1997 to the United Nations General Assembly, which outlined proposals for a comprehensive reform process in the UN and outlines the major rationale for reform of the UN's operational activities during the evaluation period. These reforms sought to establish a new leadership and management structure, and through it, a culture leading to a greater unity of purpose, coherence of effort and capacity to respond by the UN agencies to international goals including those expressed in the Millennium Declaration. Key outcomes of the 1997 reform process included:

- Creation by the Secretary-General of the UN Development Group¹ as the Executive Committee for development cooperation, to lead the process of reform in UN

¹ UNDG was set up as a coordinating mechanism for the implementation of the Secretary-General's reform programme as adopted in Resolution 52/12B with the addition of UNESCO and FAO in 2001, and ILO and UNIDO in 2002, the UNDG now comprises all agencies with resident missions at the country level. The World Bank has joined as an observer. The membership of UNDG is at present: UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP,

development operations. The role of UNDG, which comprises the UN programmes, funds and agencies engaged in development and related activities, is to help to enhance and facilitate joint policy formulation, decision making and programme coordination amongst all UN entities involved in development activities. UNDG aims to sharpen the contribution that each member makes towards the overall objectives of the UN, with a view to realising greater management efficiencies. All ten cosponsors and the secretariat participate in UNDG.

- Establishment of the United Nations Development Group Office (UNDGO)² to fulfil the dual role of Secretariat to the UNDG and its Executive Committee and to support UNDP as funder and manager of the Resident Coordinator (RC) system. Core funding for the RC system is provided by UNDP; other UNDG Executive Committee members contribute through the assignment of senior staff.
- Strengthening UN operations at the country level, and in particular improving policy and programme coherence by creation of:
 - The UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).
 - The Common Country Assessment (CCA).
 - Moves to enhance harmonisation of procedures.
 - Strengthening of the RC system.
 - Rationalisation of administrative processes and services.

2.3 The Secretary-General's second major package of reform, "An agenda for further change", was issued in September 2002 (A/57/387), detailing proposals on:

- Aligning UN activities (meetings, reports, events) with the priorities agreed in the Millennium Declaration.
- Strengthening human rights.
- Enhancing public information.
- Servicing Member States better.
- Working better together.
- Allocating resources to priorities.
- Additional measures to improve human resource management.

2.4 Finally, the Secretary-General's High Level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence in the areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment delivered a 2006 report "Delivering as One" to the General Assembly with far-reaching proposals for a more unified, coherent UN structure at the country level. It is important to note that General Assembly has not issued a resolution supporting these 2006 proposals, in contrast to those proposed in 1997 and 2002, although work on Delivering as One has been on-going, in the form of the eight pilot countries.

UNDP, OHCHR, WHO, UNESCO, FAO, UNIDO, ILO, DESA, UNDP, UNOPS, UNAIDS, UNCTAD, UN-HABITAT, UNIFEM, UNODC, UNHCR, UNEP, OHRLS, IFAD, Regional Commissions. Observer status: Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, UNFIP, OCHA, Spokesman for the Secretary-General, Director Office of the Deputy Secretary-General, and the World Bank.

² UNDGO was renamed, as part of a wider re-organisation within the UN, the UN Development Operations Coordination Office (DOCO) in 2008.

Has UN reform enhanced the work of UNAIDS at the global level?

2.5 The key question is whether UN reform has changed, or will change, the formal and informal rules and conventions that dictate how the ten cosponsors and secretariat interact with each other and collectively with external stakeholders at the global level. The main conclusion is that it has not and changing these rules is not a significant focus of current reform plans.

2.6 Effective coordination of UN operational activities for development is a complex task that involves balancing several objectives which are often difficult to reconcile. Firstly, to actively support the voluntary and nationally-led nature of the policy coherence process. Secondly, to respect the mandates of the respective funds, programmes and specialised agencies. And thirdly, to promote adequate intergovernmental coordination and guidance of UN system development priorities and objectives.

2.7 The evaluation found little evidence that the focus of the UNDG has been on coordination of the work of agencies at the global level or the establishment of global level mechanisms for joint programming by agencies.

2.8 Within this context, changes in the rules that are relevant to UNAIDS – both formal and informal – dictating how the cosponsors relate to each other at the global level, would have required changes in how ECOSOC and the Chief Executives Board (CEB) operated during the evaluation period. As already highlighted in Annex 8, Box 2, the relationship between ECOSOC and the specialised agencies reflects the approach adopted in the founding charter of the UN, is severely constrained and was not reformed during the evaluation period. The evaluation has found no evidence that fundamentally undermines the conclusions of the 2006 Report of the Secretary-General's High-Level Panel³ on the operation of these two bodies:

58. ECOSOC's mandate has been far greater than its exercise of it. Despite many attempts to strengthen its role, ECOSOC continues to lack effectiveness and influence. Its oversight of the funds and programmes remains perfunctory and is almost nonexistent for the specialized agencies. ECOSOC needs to improve its operational and coordination functions with regard to the entire system.

63. The UN Chief Executives Board, established in 2000, has led to some improvement in interagency coordination. The High-level Committees on Programmes and Management have developed more coherent approaches to system-wide themes and coordinated approaches to reform business processes. But the Board's potential has been underexploited, its decision-making role underused. An effective results-oriented Chief Executives Board as a counterpart to a better functioning Economic and Social Council would enhance coherence throughout the system.

2.9 Looking to the future, Member States have engaged in extensive informal consultations on UN system-wide coherence during the Sixty-first and Sixty-second sessions of the General Assembly (GA). This included an informal consultation on governance on 17 April 2008, which

³ UN (2006) Delivering as One. Report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance, and the Environment. Agenda Item 113 (A/61/583) of the Sixty-first Session of the General Assembly. United Nations, New York. November 2006

highlighted that the broad consensus on further strengthening of governance of UN operational activities for development implied that it should be based on the following principles:

- The comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development is an effective legislative framework within which the GA establishes key system-wide policy orientations for the development cooperation and country-level modalities of the UN system.
- Changes to governance structures should focus on strengthening existing intergovernmental bodies such as the ECOSOC and the governing boards of UN entities.
- Changes to governance structures should contribute to greater efficiency in the delivery of operational activities for development of the UN system at the country level.
- Intergovernmental oversight should promote enhanced development effectiveness at the country level and full access of programme countries to UN resources, including those of specialised agencies.

2.10 In terms of UNAIDS and its operation, there is little evidence that the Member States are considering fundamental reform of the UN agencies and how they are coordinated at global level, but rather incremental improvement in how the present systems and procedures are applied.

Has UN reform enhanced the role of the regional functions in inter-agency coordination?

2.11 Reform of the regional function within the UN, in terms of coordination, was initiated in Southern Africa in 2003, in response to the Triple Threat – AIDS, Food Security and Governance. This led to development of the Regional Directors' Team (RDT) approach. This approach was adopted by the CEB in 2005 and six RDTs were created during 2005 and 2006 covering:

- Asia-Pacific,
- Eastern and Southern Africa,
- West and Central Africa,
- Europe-CIS,
- Arab States,
- Latin America and the Caribbean.

2.12 With regard to the RDTs providing a stronger oversight role of coordination and holding country level heads of agencies accountable for enhanced coordination, it is important to note that:

- Initially the RDTs only comprised regional directors from the 4 ExCom agencies. RDT membership expanded to include regional directors from the specialised agencies in Latin America and Caribbean (2005), Eastern and Southern Africa (2006) and Asia-Pacific (2009).
- Practice in the RDTs has varied significantly and most only have a small Secretariat. Each RDT has appointed a Regional Coordination Specialist, who works to the RDT Chair.
- RDT Chairs are always the relevant UNDP Regional Director and all are based in UNDP headquarters in New York, and not in the regions.

- The roles of the RDTs were only formalised in 2008⁴.
- A system for holding the RDTs accountable to the Chair of the CEB for their work (including on coordination) was only agreed in August 2008, with agreement on a management and accountability system for the RC system.
- RDTs have had a role in assessing the ‘quality’ of the UNDAF, but this role was comparatively undeveloped during the evaluation period and only strengthened in 2008, again with agreement on a management and accountability system for the RC system.
- The role of the RDT in assessing the annual performance of the RC as a coordinator of the UN Country Team (UNCT) was introduced in 2008.

2.13 The RDT approach did not therefore significantly affect the effectiveness of coordination mechanisms at country level during the evaluation period, although it may in the future. Looking to the future, RDT roles and responsibilities will probably vary from region to region, as will how they address coordination of work on HIV. In 2008 in East and Southern Africa, the RDT assumed overall control of all activities including HIV. In contrast, the RDT in Asia-Pacific has chosen to build upon an existing coordination mechanism in the area of HIV, the Regional Directors Forum (RDF) on HIV. This approach reflects a concern that subsuming HIV into the general work of the RDT will lead to a loss of focus on HIV. In this case, synergies between the RDT and RDF will hopefully be captured by arranging meetings of the RDT and RDF back-to-back to enable Regional Directors to participate in both meetings.

2.14 The overall reform process has also highlighted the role of the regional function in quality assuring joint planning processes by the UN at country level. Evidence from all 12 of the country visits showed consistently that this had not happened. The evaluation has found no evidence from review of other documentation to suggest that this finding is not true for the wider population of countries.

Has UN reform enhanced the work of UNAIDS at the country level?

2.15 Reform of how the UN agencies interact with each other to achieve greater coherence of UN support at country level has been the major area of UN reform during the evaluation period. In terms of institutional reform, key approaches in the reform process have been:

- Introduction of the UNDAF and CCA processes from 1998, which aimed to get UN staff to plan and prioritise together,
- Development of guidance material by UNDGO and provision of training from the UN System Staff College (Turin) from 1998 onwards,
- The Management and Accountability System of the UN Development and RC System including the “functional firewall” for the RC system introduced in August 2008,
- At the political level there has also been a significant effort by agency senior management to transmit to staff members that harmonisation is a priority, using high level statements, events, requests for reporting and distribution of materials.

2.16 Progress here has been held back in a number of ways. A review in 2006 found:

⁴ Agreed roles from 2008 are: (i) provision of coherent technical support to RCs and UNCTs; (ii) quality assurance of the UNDAF/UN programme; (iii) performance management; and (iv) trouble-shooting in difficult countries, dispute resolution etc.

“... the difficult problem of focus and prioritisation remains. Individual agencies do not want to admit their programming has less priority than that of another, and that they want to give up some areas in one country because another agency might be able to do it better. Outputs of the UNDAF are often tied to individual agencies. Outcomes still remain too broad, and there is a minimal amount of strategic alignment, i.e. how far the UN is positioning itself relative to other donors, and identifying where it has more critical mass or where it can work more effectively in areas compared with other donors (e.g. rights-based approach).

Setting priorities is a problem: outcomes still cover all bases and there is a great reluctance to say one thing came before another, or that the activities of one agency are more pressing than another. There is a plethora of terms in some UNDAFs: ‘measures’, ‘themes’, ‘action areas’, ‘areas of cooperation’, ‘cross-cutting themes’ and ‘new joint programmes’.

There is no pooling of funds. This cannot be solved at country level because the institutional system does not encourage agency teams to take those steps. Agencies tend to refer to their mandates when designing actions, as opposed to what is strategically best for the country, or for the UN as a whole at country level. UNCTs find it hard to take the difficult decisions regarding prioritisation and sequencing of activities, and because of this UNDAFs were usually weak in identifying the UN’s comparative advantage. Priorities were not set and UNDAFs still reflected the idea of ‘business as usual’.”⁵

2.17 There has been little comparable investment in changing the rules – both informal and formal – that drive how UN agencies and their staff interact at country level. For example, excluding the changes related to the recruitment and role of the RC, recruitment policies, performance assessment and promotion continue to take little or no account of efforts by the individual to promote harmonisation between UN agencies. The recommendations of the 2006 Report of the Secretary-General’s High-Level Panel⁶ would have directly addressed the issue of the rules/incentives found in the UN system. However, these recommendations were not fully accepted by the Member States, and those aspects that were taken forward only started to be implemented from late 2008, after the evaluation period.

2.18 UN reform at country level has, however, undoubtedly affected the context within which UNAIDS’ approach has been implemented over the evaluation period. As noted in Longhurst (2006):⁷

“... there is some evidence of various positive UNDAF slipstream effects. First, there has been a continued strengthening of the collective identity of the UN and teamwork, drawing in more agencies from further afield (i.e. the usually non-resident). The process has generated much enthusiasm among the technical staff just below managerial level. This was a universal comment from UNCTs. Some agencies decided to work more closely together on issues outside the UNDAF. This can open up possibilities between UN agencies and external partners. Second, although UNDAFs and UNCT work are not without their weaknesses, as documented later in this section, so PRSs also have their

⁵ Longhurst, R. (2006) Review of the Role and Quality of the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs). Overseas Development Institute. May 2006 page 18

⁶ UN (2006) Delivering as One. Report of the Secretary-General’s High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance, and the Environment. Agenda Item 113 (A/61/583) of the Sixty-first Session of the General Assembly. United Nations, New York. November 2006

⁷ Longhurst, R. (2006) *ibid*

deficiencies and the skills and collective identity developed in UNDAF formulation should allow the UN to make a greater impact in any future national priority setting (e.g. Accession, MCA, MDGs as well as PRSS follow up) provided the timing and other conditions are favourable.”

2.19 While several of the country visits found that the rhetoric of UN reform was signalling that greater cooperation and coordination was the direction that the UN would need to move in, none of those interviewed in the 12 countries could identify evidence of the broader reform process having directly enhanced the effectiveness of the approach adopted by UNAIDS at country level. As discussed in greater detail in the main report on the status of implementation of the joint team concept, the reform process has yet to significantly affect the rules – both formal and informal – that drive relationships between the UN agencies.

Box 1: Vietnam as a pilot – room for optimism?

The One Plan Management Plan (OPMP) is the closest document to a common vision within the UNCT of the reform process and where it is aiming to go. Whilst not complete, the underlying vision is of a UN that is ‘Delivering as One’ rather than of a ‘One UN’ as implied in the original proposals and the road map.

The issue of ‘joint programming’ is one of the key gains emerging from the pilots; that is, the UNCTs are truly exploring how the UN can respond to national priorities by joint analysis, joint thinking, joint prioritisation and joint budgeting. The OPMP suggests that the Vietnam pilot has the potential to push this further than most other pilots through the use of the Programme Coordination Groups (PCGs). Vietnam is one of three pilot countries that are organising themselves to carry out joint programming across the whole programme. In contrast, the One Programmes in the other pilot countries are made up of joint programmes, and significant aspects of the overall programmes remain outside of the One Programmes. The potential advantage of the Vietnam approach is that the reform process allows the whole programme to be addressed in a more systematic manner.

Key to the implementation of the One Plan is the new harmonised and streamlined annual planning and review process that has been established through 11 inter-agency PCGs responsible for the UN’s results in five outcome areas. The PCGs are modelled on experience with the UNAIDS Joint Programme. Each PCG is responsible for developing common annual work plans, carrying out joint annual reviews and planning meetings with implementing partners, defining efficient ways of working together (such as through virtual and/or physical meetings), and eventually co-locating in the One UN House. The PCGs introduce the concept of dual accountability; PCG team members are accountable to both their individual agencies and to the PCG. If the PCGs are successful this would represent a radical change in roles and responsibilities within the UNCT and hence significant reform in how the UN works, allowing development of:

- Accountability to the group rather than only to the agency.
- Peer pressure between groups based on divergent performance.
- Development of a results-based management approach based on managing for outcomes.
- Avoidance of the need to proceed at the pace of the slowest, which is implicit in an approach based on inclusiveness rather than prioritisation, since one should expect different PCGs to develop differently and at different paces.

Vietnam has developed a code of conduct for the whole UNCT senior management and also outlines the boundaries for the actions and authority of the RC; it is the only country to have developed a Memorandum of Understanding that specifically defines the role and responsibility of the RC.

One UN has benefited from experience with UNAIDS and the joint team – during the past 18 months reforms have enabled a more coherent mobilisation of international support. Respondents found it difficult to say exactly how it has benefited: experience of a tested coherent approach to HIV; the joint programme already in place; and a dedicated role of UNAIDS Secretariat country office in advocacy and coordination were three ideas put forward.

3 The impact of the Paris Declaration on UNAIDS at country level

3.1 The evaluation question is focused on whether the implementation of the Paris Declaration has affected how UNAIDS is viewed (by countries, cosponsors, donors and staff) and on how it works to meet its mandate, not whether Paris has affected the way in which UNAIDS has supported country processes nor on the area where the Paris Declaration most obviously impacts upon how HIV is addressed, which is through implementation and effectiveness of the Three Ones (launched 2004):

- **One** agreed HIV/AIDS Action Framework that provides the basis for coordinating the work of all partners
- **One** National AIDS Coordinating Authority, with a broad-based multisectoral mandate
- **One** agreed country level Monitoring and Evaluation System

3.2 One agreed HIV/AIDS Action Framework closely accords with the Paris Declaration principles of ownership by countries and alignment with countries' strategies, systems and procedures. One agreed Monitoring and Evaluation System, in turn, accords with the Paris Declaration principles of managing for results and mutual accountability. One National AIDS Coordinating Authority chimes with the need for national ownership highlighted under Paris, although Paris is silent on the issue of multisectoral coordination.

3.3 In terms of internal incentives for UN agencies and staff to engage in the Paris agenda, the 2008 Evaluation of the UN's contribution to the implementation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness⁸ found that:

“When assessing incentive systems in place, the findings are discouraging. Those who are expected to take primary responsibility in implementing the Paris Declaration, the Resident Coordinators, find incentives specific to this endeavour weak. The performance evaluation of Resident Coordinators (which include an assessment from agencies forming part of UNDG) directly addresses Paris Declaration-related responsibilities. However, for the many other UNDG member staff involved in the implementation of the Paris Declaration, this dimension is assessed in their performance evaluation only indirectly, mainly through agreed work programmes. Incentives to implement the Paris Declaration to become effective therefore cannot only rely on traditional incentive systems focusing on the immediate actors concerned; the approach to incentives requires a broadening through addressing directly the factors that stand in the way of greater progress, especially with respect to harmonisation.”

⁸ H. Wyss, J.M. Eriksen., and N. Matshalaga (2008) Evaluation of the UNDG Contribution to the Implementation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (First Phase). Report prepared for the Evaluation of the Implementation of the Paris Declaration, February 29, 2008. Paragraph 4

3.4 These findings echo many of the findings on the status of incentives for enhanced cooperation and coordination between UN agencies at country level found by this evaluation.

3.5 Moving to the main evaluation question and whether there is evidence that Paris has affected the broader environment, so making it easier for UN agencies to adopt the approach promoted by UNAIDS, the main findings from the 12 country visits were that:

- There is little evidence to suggest that the implementation of the Paris Declaration has directly affected, or enhanced the effectiveness, of the work of UNAIDS at country level,
- In seven countries (Swaziland, Indonesia, Ukraine, India, Côte D'Ivoire, DRC and Iran) the Paris Declaration has not been a significant policy agenda. In most cases this reflects the fact that these are middle-income countries with only a relatively limited number of donor agencies or that the country is in a post-conflict situation and therefore political commitment has yet to be translated into operational differences,
- Donor coordination and the Paris Declaration were an important policy issue in two of the case study countries, Vietnam and Ethiopia
 - In Ethiopia, the impact of the new planning approach introduced by the Government, which builds on the Paris Declaration commitments, has already affected the way that the UN operates. In terms of acceptance of One Plan and One Monitoring approaches, new systems, championed by the Ministry of Finance, are already in place and were used for the first time in 2008. However, as these new systems are sector based, they have also tended to make it more difficult for the joint team to engage as one with the government on HIV, as participation in the new systems is agency based;
 - In Vietnam, the impact of Paris has been limited to date, but introduction of Harmonised Programme Management Guidelines that will prescribe how agencies interact with Government in future may significantly affect the way that the UN operates. However, implementation of the new approach will only really start in 2009 and it is too early to tell what real impact the Guidelines will have.

3.6 Responses to the general web survey about whether there is strong evidence that implementation of the Paris Declaration has improved the effectiveness of the UNAIDS Joint Team or Theme Group approach at country level (Table 1) provide a slightly different picture to the other findings. The largest single category was of 'no opinion', which suggests a very low level of awareness about the implications of Paris. Leaving aside that category, the majority opinion was that Paris had enhanced the effectiveness of the joint team approach.

Table 1: Web survey responses on whether there is evidence that implementation of the Paris Declaration has enhanced effectiveness of the joint team approach

	Percentages of responses		
	Yes	No	No opinion
Overall (n=623)	36	26	37
Secretariat staff (n=190)	48	25	27
Cosponsor staff (n=90)	36	20	44
Other UN staff (n=66)	30	29	41
National government staff (n=33)	36	21	42
Civil society (n=181)	30	28	42
Bilateral donor staff (n=17)	29	24	47
Other international fund or programme, or foundation (n=20)	25	35	40
Researcher/academic institution (n=26)	27	38	35

3.7 In terms of UNAIDS, experience with trying to implement the Paris Declaration clearly shows the challenges of attempting to foster greater coordination and cooperation between government and a range of autonomous organisations, each with their own rules and procedures. The Synthesis Report on Implementation of the Paris Declaration⁹ found that incentives for aid effectiveness were mixed and included:

In partner countries:

- Most reportedly have to rely heavily on intrinsic professional or personal motivation as well as some occasional ancillary benefits of involvement in aid projects.
- Institutional interests may be disincentives, e.g. existing project links or parallel Project Implementation Units, the flexibility to use international or donor systems for immediate efficiency advantages.
- Especially in sectors or programmes where the role of aid is small, national or institutional policy direction may be strong, but career recognition and tangible compensation for this work are inadequate.
- Project Implementation Units are seen to offer more incentives and a clear and important mission and responsibilities.

In development partner agencies:

- Organisational and individual targets and career recognition for effectiveness work are uneven. They are reported to be sufficiently built-in for only a small minority of agencies. Intrinsic professional or personal motivation is a key incentive.
- Pressures remain strong in a majority of agencies to maintain the visibility and attribution of their individual contributions. A minority have modified expectations, and/or receive credit for leadership in aid reform.
- Pressures remain strong in almost all agencies to satisfy their individual fiduciary and accountability requirements – a disincentive to recognising and managing the risks in promoting greater country ownership (e.g. “zero tolerance” on corruption).
- Half of the agencies report the responsibility to pursue non-developmental national objectives in aid programmes – foreign policy, commercial and/or institutional interests or advocacy priorities – which is a disincentive to full commitment.
- The pressure for disbursements, ‘maximum development for the money’ and ‘getting things done quickly’ reportedly remains strong in almost all agencies.
- The near-universal perception of unexpectedly difficult transitional adjustments and perhaps continuing increased transaction costs for donors in the new aid approaches is now a disincentive to further movement, especially without additional resources to grapple with them.
- An over-reliance on expatriate technical assistance and seconded staff to execute and build capacity in programmes is reported, tending to undermine ownership.
- A disincentive exists where there are reservations, sometimes arbitrary, about the legitimacy of ownership in a partner country – particularly between central government agencies and other stakeholders.
- A final disincentive to successful implementation exists in the dangers of ‘mechanical’, doctrinaire or high-pressure implementation of Paris, rather than allowing countries to adapt it to their priorities, e.g. pushing harmonisation over alignment.

⁹ Wood, B., D. Kabell, N. Muwanga and F. Sagasti (2008) Implementation of the Paris Declaration – Synthesis Report. May 2008.

4 Alternative institutional models for cooperation and coherence exist within the UN

4.1 The introduction of a 2007 paper¹⁰ presented to the PCB states that:

“Even the recent UN Secretary-General’s report on United Nations system-wide coherence, ‘Delivering as One’ made no mention of UNAIDS in its review and recommendations despite the critical relevance of UNAIDS experience to the subject of the report.

While the unique configuration of UNAIDS may well distinguish it in a category of its own as ‘other entity’ the principles of UNAIDS and how it functions—working towards system-wide coherence should become increasingly central, rather than peripheral, to all UN system entities.”

4.2 The evaluation found no evidence that directly contradicted this assessment and the implicit conclusion that UNAIDS is seen as one rather than the principal model of how the UN can be reformed to enhance coordination. This can clearly be seen in the ongoing work examining how to strengthen the coherence and impact of the UN’s gender work. Key points in this process that are relevant to how the UNAIDS’ approach is viewed more widely include the following:

- The Deputy Secretary-General prepared three papers to facilitate informal consultations within the GA on reform of the gender architecture. These were not drafted on an assumption that the UNAIDS model is the default for how to reform the UN institutionally.
- While UNAIDS is identified in the documentation, UNAIDS’ experience of how to coordinate the support of a number of agencies is not discussed at all.

4.3 This does not however mean that the UN has done nothing else in terms of addressing inter-agency coordination and coherence at the global level. Two significant alternative approaches – the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the United Nations System Influenza Coordination (UNSIC) mechanism are described in Box 2.

Box 2: Basic facts about OCHA and UNSIC

OCHA As part of the Secretary-General’s programme of reform in 1998, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) was reorganised into the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). OCHA facilitates the work of operational agencies that deliver humanitarian assistance. It is a department of the UN Secretariat and operates through a network of field offices which support UN Humanitarian Coordinators and country teams. It also maintains regional support offices and Regional Disaster Response Advisors in Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America, the Middle East and Asia-Pacific. The UN Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) has overall responsibility for ensuring coherence of relief efforts in the field. OCHA supports the HC in needs assessments, contingency planning and the formulation of humanitarian programmes. OCHA also provides response tools and advocacy and information services. The head of OCHA, as Emergency Relief Coordinator, chairs the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), which comprises all major humanitarian actors, including the Red Cross Movement and three non-

¹⁰ UNAIDS (2007) UNAIDS and UN Reform. Report presented at the 20th Meeting of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, Geneva, Switzerland, 25-27 June 2007. UNAIDS/PCB (20)/07.12. Paragraphs 4 & 5.

governmental organisation (NGO) consortia. By developing common policies, guidelines and standards, the IASC assures a coherent interagency response to complex emergencies and natural and environmental disasters. The IASC also ensures inter-agency decision making in response to complex emergencies. These responses include needs assessments, consolidated appeals, field coordination arrangements and the development of humanitarian policies. OCHA also chairs the Executive Committee for Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA), which develops common UN positions on humanitarian issues.

UNSIIC The position of Senior UN System Influenza Coordinator was created in September 2005 following increased recognition of the potentially far-reaching implications of a human influenza pandemic – both for global health and for the operational continuity of the UN system. The first initiative was taken by the Deputy Secretary-General and the Director of UNDG. The post now reports to the Deputy Secretary-General, and the Coordinator’s work is subject to review and direction through a high-level inter-agency Steering Committee on Avian and Human Influenza chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General. Members of the Committee include the heads of UN agencies, funds and programmes, the UN Secretariat, the World Organisation for Animal Health and the World Bank. UNSIC is designed to be a time-bound coordination mechanism – it currently has a mandate until August 2009 – with a maximum of 33 staff. Essentially UNSIC is the Coordinator, with a support team to administer travel, finance, and work on specific products such as the progress report; as well as a Bangkok office and a Pandemic Influenza Contingency team that will be moved under the authority of OCHA as part of the winding-down of UNSIC.

4.4 A recent evaluation of the UNSIC approach¹¹ identified a number of related reasons why the approach had been successful, including:

- **The nature of the problem:** Avian/Human Influenza was recognised as a multisectoral, global problem with a sense of urgency. Some interviewees noted that the sense of imminent threat to Western nations also heightened this urgency. While the level of threat of a human pandemic remained the same as in 2003, the perception of threat stemmed from H5N1 moving out of Asia, a spike in the number of human cases and ensuing media and political interest in 2005 combined with an internal realisation that the UN system was not ready for a pandemic. Lessons were also learnt from the SARS outbreak in 2002-2003 in terms of the lack of preparedness for such an event and coordination of the response when it became evident that the effects extended beyond the health sector.
- **Funding was available:** This is linked to the urgency and perception of threat. In situations where agencies have to compete less for funding, as during the Asian tsunami response, this can foster a more collaborative environment.
- **The role of leadership** The character of the leader in terms of his energy and ‘forceful catalysis’ and the authority that came from strong public and private support of the Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General was crucial, as well as significant political support from key donors.
- **The approach:** Defining its role by the interests of stakeholders and taking a structured but informal approach to coordination.
- **The international aid environment:** Coordination is increasingly valued as an important activity, and coordination between diverse groups was seen as necessary.

4.5 In addition, the evaluation noted:

¹¹ B. Willitts-King, Smith, A. And Sims, L. (2008) Evaluation of United Nations System Influenza Coordination (UNSIIC). Final Report. Submitted 22 July 2008

“UNAIDS was mentioned by many interviewees as being the most relevant comparison to UNSIC, and in many ways this is just such an expanded institutional approach. HIV/AIDS is a global threat which has implications beyond the health sector and which requires a response by many agencies working together. Most interviewees felt that for AHI, the UNAIDS model of a more extensive structure, with a normative role, greater regional and field presence and more formal relationships, would not have been as successful as the light approach taken by UNSIC.

Some commented that the experience of UNAIDS meant that donors were reluctant to support any similar agency being formed which would become large and expensive with its own momentum that made it difficult to consider closing down when its initial purpose had been fulfilled.” Ibid page 30/31

4.6 The evaluation concludes that an UNSIC-type approach should be considered when there is:

- a rapidly evolving issue with potential for significant global impact,
- high media and political interest,
- multisectoral and multi-agency involvement, and
- no pre-existing coordination mechanism.