

REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS COUNTRY TEAM (UNCT) RETREAT

21-22 August 2019

Lake Kariba Inn Resort-Siavonga, Zambia

Introduction

The United Nations in Zambia through the Partnership Framework (UNSDPF) aims to achieve transformational results in support of Zambia's development priorities in the period 2016-2021. It abides by the UN system's Delivering as One Standard Operating Procedure, which seeks transformation in the way UN agencies work together to strategize, plan and deliver support to national priorities in the new sustainable development world. Based on this, the UN in Zambia is taking a much stronger Delivering as One (DaO) approach, in line with the UN Reforms, and aims to better position the United Nations operational activities in Zambia, for development to support countries in their efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The new business model is expected to strengthen national ownership and align activities with national priorities within the framework of the 7th Zambia National Development Plan (7NDP). The 7NDP At the same time, government has also been implementing the 7th National Development Plan (7NDP) with the SDGs being localized into targets specific to Zambia through the 7NDP.

To enhance understanding of the DaO approach and realign the results groups to enable the UNCT effectively implement the UNSDPF in support of Zambia's development agenda and the SDG agenda, the UNCT organized a two days retreat for UNCT members facilitated by the UNFPA East and Southern Africa Regional Monitoring and Evaluation Adviser with support from the Regional Development Coordination Office (DCO) Advisor.

The United Nations in Zambia Sustainable Development Partnership Framework (UNSDPF)

On 19 November 2015, the UN and the Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) jointly signed the Zambia-United Nations Sustainable Development Partnership Framework 2016-2021 ("the Partnership Framework"). The Country Analysis (CA) for Zambia, jointly produced by the GRZ and the United Nations Country Team (UNCT), provided the analytical base for the Partnership Framework, which replaced the previous UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) when it expired at the end of 2015 and sought to incorporate the concepts of the new Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 and the SDGs. Among other things, the CA sought to ensure alignment of UN efforts with national development priorities and internationally agreed goals, in particular the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Partnership Framework is premised on the Delivering as One approach, which seeks to transform the way UN agencies together strategize, plan and deliver support to national priorities. The UN's new business model is expected to increase efficiency and effectiveness, reduce transaction costs and strengthen national ownership.

The Zambia 7th National Development Plan: “Accelerating Progress towards the Vision 2030 without leaving anyone behind”.

While the Partnership Framework represents an agreed partnership between Government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) and the United Nations in Zambia, GRZ, as part of its national development planning process and ensuring progress towards the Vision 2030, has formulated the 7th National Development Plan (7NDP), which was launched in June 2017. Developed under the theme, “Accelerating Progress towards the Vision 2030 without leaving anyone Behind”, the 7NDP represents a shift from a sectoral and silo-approach to an integrated and multi-sectoral approach, in line with the demands of the SDGs agenda. GRZ has mainstreamed the SDGs in the 7NDP.

Consequently, coordination arrangements were established by GRZ to support the implementation of the 7NDP. These include,

- i. National Development Coordinating Committee (NDCC),
- ii. Cluster Advisory Groups (CAGs),
- iii. Technical Working Groups (TWGs),
- iv. Provincial Development Coordinating Committees (PDCCs), and
- v. District Development Coordinating Committees (DDCCs), as well as
- vi. Ward level development committees.

Mid-Term Review of the Zambia Sustainable Development Partnership Framework

Following the Mid-Term Review of the Partnership Framework and governance arrangements which took place between October and December 2018, the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) recommended realignment of its Results Groups and associated UN Theme Groups to the 7NDP focus areas of the Seventh National Development Plan to better support the delivery of the Zambia UNSDPF. Eleven results groups were realigned to 5, which mirror the following 7NDP strategic areas:

- ❖ Economic Diversification and Job creation;
- ❖ Reducing poverty and vulnerability;
- ❖ Reducing developmental inequalities;
- ❖ Enhancing human development; and
- ❖ Governance and Human rights.

In addition, the following three new Theme Groups to address cross-cutting issues were established to enhance coordination, provide policy advice and strategic guidance, and ensure adherence to the UN Sustainable Development Agenda and programming principles. The new Theme Groups are as follows:

- a. Leaving No One Behind (LNOB);
- b. Humanitarian-Development Nexus; and,
- c. Data.

These new coordination structures were to be piloted for 6 months and later reviewed to assess their effectiveness and fit for purpose.

The UN Country Team retreat from 21-22 August 2019, Siavonga, Zambia

Broadly, the retreat aimed to achieve three main objectives;

- A. To understand the UN in Zambia's DaO approach in line with the UN Reform agenda, the Implications of the reforms on UNCT work, and what is meant by A New Generation of UNCT
- B. To review the 2018 UNCT ARC assessment and address identified gaps
- C. To revisit and the re-aligned Result Groups (RGs) and re-affirm shared leadership and mutual accountability of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) and processes and structures with the 7th National Development Plan (7NDP).
- D. To review the 2018 ARC assessment and to jointly make relevant recommendations;
- E. To jointly review the management accountability framework for a common understanding and commitment,
- F. To develop a code of conduct and to jointly assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the Partnership Framework's coordination and management structures at the end of the 6 months pilot period.

Specifically the retreat aimed to facilitate conversations among UN Country Team towards harmonised views and shared understanding on the following subject matter:

1. UN in Zambia's Delivering as One Approach in line with the UN Reform agenda;
 - a. Implications of the reforms on UNCT work and what is meant by A New Generation of UNCT
 - b. Importance of joint strategic planning and programming in light of the UN reform
 - c. Renewed commitment to the Mutual Accountability Framework -shared leadership for common results
 - d. Agreed upon final UN coordination and management structures as well as their co-chair-ship following lapse of the pilot phase
 - e. Engagement with government structures and processes follow re-alignment, including for localising the SDGs through the 7NDP and subsequent national development plans as well as other supporting processes and instruments the
2. Strengthened ability as a network of senior leaders to share roles and responsibilities in advancing the implementation of the SDGs through the 7NDP and the Partnership Framework
3. Agreed action on the recommendation from the 2018 ARC assessment
4. Adopt a UNCT code of conduct

Expected Outcomes were as follows

1. Strengthened understanding of UNCT's strategic direction to advance UN Coherence in Zambia within the context of the UN reforms.
2. Strengthened adherence to team work and DaO in Zambia
3. Relevance and Alignment of the Partnership Framework to the national development priorities for the GRZ vis-a-vis the approach, structure and mechanisms.

Method of Delivery and Scope of Work

The retreat was facilitated by a facilitator from UNFPA Regional Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor with support from the Regional Development Coordination Office (DCO) Advisor. The Facilitator made necessary preparations, including produce material needed for the retreat, in consultation with the UN Resident Coordinator's Office, and facilitated the UN Country Team retreat. The Facilitator prepares a concise high-level report of the retreat, summarizing the process, discussions and decisions taken, as well as providing expert recommendations on a way forward. Retreat agenda (See attachment Annex 2). The retreat lasted for 2days.

Participants:

UNCT Members: Resident Coordinator, UNDP, UNICEF, UNECA, UNFPA, WHO, ILO, IOM, UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNODC, IFAD, WFP, UNHCR, RCO Staff, NRA Heads – See attached attendance list Annex 1.

Day 1: Purpose: Sharing Leadership – transforming UN business approaches

The sessions of the day focused on repositioning of the UN development system in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the UN system in line with a new generation of UN Country Teams. How the UNCT in Zambia sees itself as “A New Generation UNCT”; as an effective leadership partner for government, through their leadership of Results Groups and their leadership as Heads of Agency.

Session 1: Opening remarks (DCO regional director Mr. Munyaradzi Chenje and the Resident Coordinator for Zambia Dr. Coumba Mar Gadio)

- **Mr. Munyaradzi Chenje** who spoke through a skype call emphasized that we are together not because of our agency mandates but because of our common mandate:
 - To free the human race from the tyranny of poverty and want and to heal and secure our planet.
 - To take the bold and transformative steps which are urgently needed to shift the world on to a sustainable and resilient path.
 - To leave no one will behind?1 If you think that is a more recent mandate, and perhaps peripheral to who we are collectively, what about this mandate to:
 - To achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion.
- He echoed the words of the UN Secretary-General António Guterres that "The goal of reform is a 21st-century United Nations focused more on people and less on process, more on delivery and less on bureaucracy. The true test of reform will be measured in tangible results in the lives of the people we serve and the trust of those who support our work."
- Mr. Chenje highlighted that the DCO has been decentralized from UN HQs to the regional level to provide strategic and timely support to RCs and UNCTs, with the DCO Regional Director working closely with other Regional Directors.
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- He indicate that the work at the DCO regional office is structured as follows:
 - 70%: Country – RCs and UNCTs in responding to the needs of the countries that they serve. Providing strategic guidance to resident coordinators and UNCTs to ensure quality and timely support to Member States in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
 - 20%: Regional – transboundary and thematic issues affecting two or more countries in the region, engaging with regional stakeholders on issues of regional significance.
 - 10%: Global – international processes, including but not limited to GA, ECOSOC, HLPF and other UN oversight bodies. Strengthening partnerships.
- **Dr. Coumba Mar Gadio** remarks highlighted the following issues;
 - This is the first retreat following the actual commencement of the implementation of the UN Reform as well as the implementation of recommendations from the mid-term review of the partnership framework.
 - The UNCT retreat is among the most important coordination processes that could help us improve our ability to accelerate and effectively implement the Partnership Framework to realise the desired impact in transforming the lives of people in Zambia.
 - With the requirement of the UN reform, we have an enormous task as a new generation UNCT to ensure that we achieve a re-positioned UN development system that is stronger, reliable, accountable and effective partner to the Government for achieving the 2030 Agenda.
 - She concluded by saying that, as a new UN Resident Coordinator, she intends to bring the UN Country Team together, to work closely together, to communicate better and effectively to each other as well as to be more transparent and accountable to each other. Once we achieve this, she had no doubt that Zambia could have a re-positioned UN development system as envisioned by the UN reform.
- **Session 2:** The facilitator (**Dr. Reginald Chima**) led the session by posing a series of question which triggered open discussions from the retreat participants which stimulated the deliberations. The key message was that the UN agencies need to realize that our mandate is to support members states realize their development agenda in line with the UN charter, thus, we need to align our mandates with national priorities. **See questions on below and the responses from the UNCT members are on the attached Annex 2.**

Question to UNCT
1. What are we doing here?
2. Do we understand how things work in this country?
3. How does change happen in this country?
4. What are the drivers of change in this country?
5. Who are the agents of change in this country?

6. Do we understand the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework Cycle?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is in it for us? • Who is working with us in this country? • What are our modes of engagement in this field? • How do we work with different interest groups in this country?
7. Implementation Resource mobilization
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What planning approach are we using? Resource based or output based planning? • Do we have sufficient resources to catalyze change?
8. What informs what we do?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Development Plan? • Our agency mandates? • UN Charter? • UN Leadership Framework? • UNSDG? • UNSDCF Principles?
9. What kind of programs do we need in this country to communicate our development change mantra?
10. How do we communicate what we are doing in this country?
11. How do we communicate with each other on development change programs?

These questions provided the opportunity for the heads of agencies to share a common understanding about the context, the strategic approaches to enhance the UN engagement with the National Government and to align themselves with the harmonized modes of engagement with the relevant beneficiaries and demographic in the country. They were targeted at creating a shared objective among the heads of agencies and to identify bottlenecks that could be unraveled by a well-organized intervention framework with the framework of the Zambia UNSDPF

Session 3: Prevention of sexual Exploitation and Abuse (Ms. Anna Stone – PSEA Focal point)

The presenter highlighted the following issues;

- According to the Management and Accountability Framework of the UN Development system, the Resident Coordinator has system-wide responsibility for developing collective PSEA strategies and ensuring that PSEA action plans are implemented, and assisting victims of sexual exploitation and abuse.
- The PSEA network has been formed consisting of 15 UN Agencies, 7 INGOs, 19 NGOs
- The network with support from the PSEA focal point has developed Guiding Documents, namely, PSEA Network Strategy & TOR, PSEA Communications Group TOR, and BCFM Group TOR. The network is also considering developing information Sharing Protocol, Responding to a report of SEA – information sharing lines.

- The presenter indicated that UNCT should be thinking now about their reporting requirements and ensuring that they are on track to achieve these expectations. She said that they should contribute to the annual report by the RC to the SG on PSEA and Include in their own annual reports all PSEA initiatives undertaken. Some selected indicators to report on include;

Some PSEA Indicators for RFC report	Some PSEA Indicators for agency annual reports
1. % of staff trained in PSEA	1. Staff trained in PSEA
2. Case studies on how PSEA has been integrated into programmes	2. PSEA integrated into program design
3. PSEA Network achievements and challenges	3. Number of partners supported in PSEA.
4. Culminative number of SEA cases reported and outcomes.	4. BCFM in place and being utilized
	5. Community and internal advocacy on PSEA and reporting mechanisms.
	6. Number of SEA cases reported and outcomes.

- The presenter indicated that a retreat held recently with members of the PSEA network recommend the following;
 - Continuous strong leadership and national ownership will be critical in the implementation of the PSEA Network strategy.
 - It is important to recognize that many of these stakeholders face capacity limitations when it comes to PSEA and will need support.
 - Coordination and collaboration is critical. The PSEA Network cannot be seen as a “UN” group.
 - Government of Zambia must be engaged in the work and ambitions of the PSEA Network.
 - The UN and larger I/NGOs should support national efforts on GBV, given the linkages to SEA.

DAY 2 : Purpose: The sessions focused on ‘Where do we go from here following the Mid Term Review (MTR) of the UNSDPF; working together on the UNSDPF; looking back on lessons learned; looking forward and next steps in ensuring a shared understanding of Zambia's approach in localizing SDGs (through national processes). These sessions were necessitated by the realization that the current strategy UNSDPF was limited in design and was cut-off at the level of outcomes. This was observed to constrain the alignment of agency contributions to ground level interventions that addressed achievable results without the imposition of “Mandates” as a vehicle

to assign roles to agencies. It was noted that the way to go would be to further explore the results chain and distil outputs and milestones at the sub-output levels based on the theory of change. The Zambia UNSDPF was not developed based on a clear theory of change and as such could not warrant the assignment of roles and functions, responsibilities and resources to the programmes in the Zambia UNSDPF. The session, recommended that the lack of the development of the theory of change and the careful elucidation of the change process (how things work in Zambia), be rectified. Therefore the theory of change has to be completed as soon as possible to open up object assignment of programme roles and responsibilities.

Session 4: Mid Term Review- Structure/alignment to the 7NDP and Partnership Framework (Dr. Reginald Chima)

This session focused on reviewing recommendations from the MTR and the way forward in implementing the recommendations. The following were the recommendations reviewed;

- In order to correct the weakness in the programming process for the common programmes or joint programmes the team agreed to review and revised the Zambia UNSDPF to have a theory of change and a well-developed implementation framework which would facilitate the assignment of responsibilities based on the change process rather than individual agency mandates alone.
- There is need for the UNCT to provide leadership to implementation of recommendations from the MTR
- The results groups need realignment to ensure that agencies with appropriate thought leadership chair results groups.
- The team agreed to have the five results groups that align to the cluster advisory groups of 7th National Development Plan and the other groups will be thematic groups.
- The groups will have one chair and other members who will be asked to chair the groups if the substantive chairpersons are not available.
- The groups will be configured as follows as outlined in the table below;

Group	Focus	Chair	Members
RG 1	Economic Diversification and Job	UNECA	IFAD, WFP, UNDP, IOM, ILO, UNICEF, UNCDF, FAO
RG 2	Reducing Poverty and Vulnerability	UNICEF	WFP, ILO, UNFPA, IFAD, FAO, IOM, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNHCR, WHO
RG 3	Reducing Developmental Inequalities	ILO	UNFPA, UNHABITAT, WFP, UNODC, UNAIDS, UNDP, IOM, UNESCO, FAO, UNICEF, UNHCR
RG 4	Enhancing human Development	WHO	WFP, UNAIDS, IOM, IFAD, FAO, UNESCO, UNODC, UNICEF, ILO, UNFPA, UNHCR

RG 5	Governance and Human Rights	UNDP	UNAIDS, ILO, UNODC, IOM, UNICEF, UNFPA
Thematic Group	Leave No-one Behind (LNOB)	IOM	UNESCO, FAO, UNHCR, UNODC, UNHABITAT, IFAD, UNAIDS, WFP, UNDP
Thematic Group	Humanitarian Development Nexus	UNHCR	UNDP, WFP, IFAD, UNHABITAT, UNFPA, IOM, UNESCO, FAO, UNICEF, ILO, WHO
Thematic Group	Data	UNFPA	UNICEF, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, WHO, ILO, FAO, UNHCR, IOM
Thematic Group	HIV/AIDS	UNAIDS	UNFPA, WHO, UNICEF
Thematic Group	UNSUN	WFP, UNICEF	TBD
Thematic Group	Gender	UNFPA	TBD

Session 5: Management and Accountability Framework (Dr. Reginald Chima)

Session involved a discussion of the Management and Accountability Framework (MAF) with emphasis on the role of the RC in fostering Delivering and One principles. The MAF alludes to the landmark resolution agreed by all 193 countries on 31 May 2018 (A/RES/72/279) which provides the mandates required for the Secretary-General and the UN system to take forward their collective responsibilities to make the United Nations (UN) fit for purpose to support the 2030 Agenda. As such, the MAF is a foundational piece in the reinvigoration of the RC system. The following key areas of the framework were highlighted.

- The UNCT is the main interagency mechanism in country for inter-agency coordination and decision-making. It is led by the Resident Coordinator and composed of the representatives of the United Nations entities carrying out operational activities for development in the respective country.
- The relationship between UNCT members, including the Resident Coordinator, is based on the principles of leadership for an integrated response to SDG-related needs and priorities, and mutual accountability for results.
- UNCT members have two interrelated sets of accountabilities: firstly, to their respective entities on individual mandates; and, secondly, to their respective RC for results as defined in the UN Cooperation Framework and other inter-agency agreements of the UNCT.
- The five categories of the country level relationships and accountability agreements were discussed namely; Leadership of UN development activities, Strategic Planning and Programming, Communications and advocacy, Common Services, and Funding/Resource Mobilization.
- The team went into the details of the category on leadership of the UN development activities highlighting that the RC reports to the Secretary-General, with day-to-day management by DCO and that the role of the RC is recognized in the job descriptions of

UNCT members. It was also highlighted that the RC formally contributes to the appraisal process of UNCT members as part of the regular assessment conducted by the respective agencies, and that UNCT members inform the performance appraisal of the RCs to be managed by UN DCO with inputs by the Regional UNSDG Team.

The facilitator concluded this session with emphasis on the importance of adhering to mutual accountability as outlined in the MAF.

The Way Forward and Future Actions

The following were agreed next steps following the end of the retreat;

1. The UNCT to develop theory of change for outcomes and outputs of the UNSDPF – 1 month)
2. Revise results framework to include output level milestones -2 months
3. Assign Agencies to milestones – 2 months
4. Develop integrated results and resources framework/integrated workplans – 3 months
5. Develop a resource mobilization strategy – 4 months
6. Develop quarterly and annual reporting formats – 1 month
7. Carry out a UN-wide Skills assessment – 2 months
8. Monitor program through RGs – ongoing
9. Appoint formally – Result group chairs and chairs of thematic groups
10. The result groups should establish TWGs after skills assessment