



# Administrative Committee on Coordination

27 October 1999

English only

## Report of the Consultative Committee on Programme and

### Operational Questions on its fifteenth session

(New York, 21-24 September 1999)

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## I. Introduction

1. The Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ) held its fifteenth session at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 21 to 24 September 1999. The agenda for the session is contained in annex I and the list of participants in annex II.

## II. Matters for consideration by the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC)

### A. ACC guidance note on the United Nations system and International Year of Volunteers, 2001

2. CCPOQ approved on behalf of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) the above-mentioned guidance note (see annex III).

### B. ACC guidelines on the functioning of the resident coordinator system

3. The Committee adopted, on behalf of ACC, guidelines on the functioning of the resident coordinator system for inclusion in the CCPOQ Operational Activities Reference Manual.

### C. Renewal of the tenure of the CCPOQ Secretary

4. The Committee is pleased to recommend to ACC the renewal of the tenure of the CCPOQ Secretary, Mr. Eckhard Hein (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)), for a two-year period from 1 February 2000 to 31 January 2002.

### D. Proposed agenda, date and venue for the next session of the Committee

5. CCPOQ recommends to ACC that its sixteenth regular session be held in Geneva in the week of 28 February 2000 with the following provisional agenda:

1. Policy and programme matters:

- (a) Collaboration with the business sector;
- (b) Governance;
- (c) Knowledge management and information technology;
- (d) Household food security;
- (e) Coordinated follow-up to global conferences and summits;
- (f) Poverty eradication;
- (g) Reports of ACC Subcommittees.

2. Operational activities for development:

- (a) Capacity-building;
- (b) Role and functioning of the resident coordinators system, including programming processes;
- (c) Operational activities training.

3. CCPOQ administrative issues:

- (a) Role and functioning of ACC and its subsidiary machinery;
- (b) Report of the CCPOQ Secretary;
- (c) Future programme of work.

4. Other matters.

## III. Work of CCPOQ

### A. Action taken and decisions adopted

#### ACC Subcommittees

6. CCPOQ endorsed, as appropriate, the recommended extension of the term of the office bearer and approved the dates, venue and provisional agendas for the following Subcommittees:

#### *Subcommittee on Nutrition*

Chairman: Mr. Richard Jolly (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)): one-year extension to 31 December 2000

Mr. N. Ngongi (World Food Programme (WFP)): two-year period from 1 January 2001 to 31 December 2002

Twenty-seventh session: 10-15 April 2000, Washington.

#### *Subcommittee on Drug Control*

Eighth session: 28-29 September 2000, Vienna

## B. Summary of discussions

### 1. Briefing by the UNDP Administrator

7. The UNDP Administrator, in his address to the Committee, highlighted the different measures taken to strengthen the resident coordinator system (RCS) with expected benefits for increased confidence and system-wide ownership and support for the RCS. He drew the distinction between CCPOQ's policy oversight role over the RCS and the role of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) as a management tool of the United Nations Secretariat, and noted the potential for mutually reinforcing the work of UNDG/CCPOQ on RCS issues, given the overlapping membership of the two bodies.

8. With regard to substantive directions, UNDP was focusing on poverty eradication and on capacity-building for governance. On the latter issue, the intention was to capitalize on the United Nations system's privileged position with Governments in dealing with sensitive issues and the non-conditional nature of its development funding, in order to selectively focus interventions on policy advice and institutional-building.

9. Replying to various questions, he said that UNDP would continue to provide field representation for agencies without a country presence. Evolving partnerships with civil society organizations and the business community, emanating in part from resource pressures, had broadened the frontiers for coordination for UNDP as well as the RCS with repercussions for networking and innovating new skills. The trend towards new partnerships was challenging the United Nations system to evolve collaborative programmes, to align administrative and management approaches, and to strengthen its advocacy role. Forming partnerships, moreover, required an understanding of comparative strengths and innovative ways of combining them effectively; the areas and the demands for partnerships were thus likely to differ across regions.

10. The subsequent discussion noted, *inter alia*, UNDP's potential role as a conduit for the United Nations system on development-related activities linked to governance issues. Whereas UNDP's coordinating role for United Nations system development cooperation had thus far focused mainly on processes, the evolving interest in programmatic issues — such as poverty eradication, governance, knowledge management, collaborating with civil society and the business sector — had implications for UNDP as a facilitator in the exchange of information on such issues at the country level.

11. The Committee took note of the excellent collaborative relationship that had evolved between UNDG and CCPOQ — through the inter-sessional mechanism provided by its

Working Group on the RCS — in moving United Nations reforms forward and in fostering collective ownership of the RCS. It agreed that the CCPOQ Chairman should transmit a letter to the Chair of UNDG focusing on the positive achievements of CCPOQ/UNDG collaboration, the scope for improvements and the implications for changes in coordination with a strengthened United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)/common country assessment (CCA) process.

### 2. Policy and programme coordination issues

#### (a) Collaboration with the business sector

12. The Committee deliberated on the issue of collaboration with the business sector on the basis of the summary of conclusions of ACC on the subject (ACC/1999/4) and briefings provided on four issues: funding, the policy-setting emanating from the Secretary-General's Davos initiative, the issue of implementation and the learning initiative being launched by the United Nations Staff College in collaboration with the Prince of Wales Business Leaders Forum (PWBLF).

13. The representative of the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP) briefed the Committee on the activities and mandate of UNFIP, established in 1998 to oversee the use of the resources from the United Nations Foundation (UNF) established by Mr. R. E. (Ted) Turner. Funding was allocated to high-impact activities with catalytic potential for mobilizing additional resources in co-financing arrangements with the private sector and United Nations organization partners. Project activities had thus far concentrated on three sectors: children's health, women and population, and environment, with a fourth basket of cross-sectoral institution-strengthening activities. UNFIP, moreover, acted as mediator in the identification of private sector partners for United Nations organizations in joint activities.

14. In his briefing, the representative from the Secretary-General's office noted the implications of interdependence and the pressures placed by dwindling resources on evolving partnerships between the United Nations system and business. A booklet had recently been published to document the United Nations system's contribution to global commerce in connection with its normative and regulatory work so as to heighten awareness in the business community of the system's potential advocacy contribution. A series of encounters with the business sector had been scheduled over the past two years.

15. More recently, the United Nations had challenged the business community to embrace universally prescribed values in three areas: core labour principles, human rights and

environment. Selection of these issues was based on such considerations as pressures placed on large corporations emanating from social expectations, their highly contentious nature and the strength of the United Nations system's advocacy role. Collaboration was under way with the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) on issues falling within their respective mandates with the aim of developing tools for practical application by corporations, including the provision of incentives for good performance. A new web site on global corporate citizenship was planned for inauguration in early November 1999. More aggressive promotion of the United Nations system's advocacy role on these three issues was envisaged at the third Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization in Seattle (30 November-3 December 1999) as a trade-off for safeguards against roll-back in trade liberalization, an issue of concern for many large corporations.

16. Proposals for future work included: reinvigorating the process of using the web site to exchange information on experiences with business relationships; developing broad guidance on the issue of partnerships with the business sector (in this connection, the Deputy Secretary-General was leading a group to identify potential areas for collaborative work); empowering United Nations staff with the capacity to deal effectively with business; the need for in-depth reflection on the policy relevance of, and the parameters for using, official development assistance (ODA) as leverage for catalysing private funding; drawing lessons from successful approaches in cooperation including the identification of potential trade-offs by way of intangible assets to be provided by the United Nations system, for example, indirect marketing effects; and a joint study by United Nations system partners on what the United Nations had to offer to business.

17. The representative of the United Nations Staff College briefed the Committee on the main components of the executive action programme (EAP) entitled "Building core competencies and support for partnerships between the United Nations, business and other actors", developed in collaboration with PWBLF (see ACC/1999/CRP.13/Add.1). The aim of this programme was to foster a culture among United Nations staff in dealing with business. In-country piloting of the EAP was planned for the next few months and at Headquarters before the end of 1999.

18. The Committee was briefed on the dealings of the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) with business in respect of securing goods and services and in managing private sector resources, in connection with project execution. UNOPS experience indicated that the business sector was quite

receptive to collaborating with the United Nations system on account of its legitimate advocacy role for global issues but that such collaboration should be guided by United Nations goals and values.

19. Setting the parameters for a more focused discussion, the Chairman suggested that the debate of the Committee should preclude the provision of vendor services and grants by the business sector. The suggested area of focus was on partnerships involving the provision of a measure of unrequited services by the private sector. Committee members in the debate highlighted the potential for conflict in United Nations partnerships with non-governmental organizations in the event of the perceived co-option of the United Nations by commercial interests. It was countered, however, that the interest of the business sector in the United Nations resided precisely in its core value system: what was required from the United Nations were adaptations in processes including more innovative and entrepreneurial ways of working; these were issues that the United Nations Staff College was attempting to address in its EAP training programme. Other issues raised were: the perceived need for a common language in order for the United Nations to communicate effectively with business; the need for a collective strategy in dealing with business; the need for legal advice regarding, for example, the conditions under which the United Nations would permit the use of its logo by business or accept grants from business; the issue of dealing with industry lobbies; and contractual practices.

20. Responding to ACC recommendations on follow-up action by its subsidiary machinery (see ACC/1999/4), participants felt that since partnerships with business were an evolving area for many organizations, it was probably premature at this stage to consider the elaboration of United Nations system-wide guidelines. As and when guidelines were considered, care should be taken to assure their validation through actual case practices, including the solicitation of the views of business partners. Any future guidelines should, in addition to providing advice to headquarters staff, seek to address the issue of collaboration with the business sector at field, village and community level.

21. At this early stage, the Committee agreed that probably the most urgent priority was to promote an honest exchange among organizations on problem areas and to be mutually informed of the different internal guidelines and criteria developed by organizations in respect of dealing with business in order to examine their consistency and compatibility. Given the potential sensitivity of some issues, the agreed mechanism for doing this was through the CCPOQ secretariat, and not the web site. Taking into account related activities carried out within the United Nations system, and the ACC machinery, the Committee agreed on initial steps in identifying relevant

elements for a possible guidance note for the resident coordinator system on the subject, with UNDP acting as task manager in collaboration with the United Nations Staff College.

22. For the purpose of public relations and outreach, the Committee agreed that, to provide a showcase of activities, its members should consider establishing, within their web sites, a window for posting information on their collaborative activities with business, with hot links to the United Nations business web site. CCPOQ also underlined the need to fully involve in its work on this issue, other relevant bodies of the system, including where appropriate, the meeting of legal advisers of the United Nations.

**(b) Governance**

23. Introducing the report ACC/1999/POQ/CRP.23, the representative of UNDP highlighted the shift in the United Nations system's capacity-building activities from an exclusive focus on public sector institutions to governance activities in a broader sense, encompassing a wide range of judiciary, parliamentary, local and civil society institutions. Governance concepts were now increasingly value-based, embracing a wide range of concerns from efficient government, including transparency, accountability to aspects touching on human rights, equity, social cohesion, corruption and so forth.

24. Participants in the debate acknowledged the importance of the governance approach in underpinning sustainable development and the need for conscious mainstreaming of governance issues in the United Nations system's development cooperation. Not only was the United Nations increasingly involved in more politically charged governance activities — such as supporting democratic elections and building judiciaries — but many such initiatives were becoming more demand-driven. For example, as part of anti-corruption measures, Governments were increasingly demanding from the United Nations such services as the development of better customs and debt management systems.

25. Comments offered on the document included the need for a more balanced discussion on the issue of economic, social and cultural rights in addition to civil and political rights. Implementation issues warranted some analysis, bearing in mind such concerns as the need to establish clearly defined goals and objectives, some reference to the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) effort in identifying basic indicators for governance, and recognition of the importance of strong political will and commitment in the attainment of objectives. The document would also benefit from a distinction between the sectoral aspects of governance and its cross-sectoral dimensions, encompassing, for example, such issues as elections, financial management, transparency and

accountability and the implications of decentralization to local levels.

26. The Committee conveyed its appreciation to UNDP for its document. As a follow-up measure, it agreed that UNDP in collaboration with the World Bank would take the lead in evolving a matrix on selective cross-sectoral governance issues, with an attached taxonomy and description of instrumentalities for implementation, as a tool to support the policy dialogue for the resident coordinator system at the country level. A first draft would be available for wide consultation with the CCPOQ membership in mid-November, with finalization of the draft envisaged in December in time for consideration by the Working Group on the Resident Coordinator System at its meeting in January 2000.

**(c) Knowledge management and information technology**

27. Presenting the concept paper (ACC/1999/POQ/CRP.14), the representative of the World Bank underscored a number of salient issues: the critical role of knowledge in buttressing sustainable development; the distinction between information — consisting of random data — and knowledge, based on tested, pragmatic truths; and the common goal shared by all development partners in providing a well-managed and effective knowledge base. From the World Bank's perspective, knowledge included both a rational scientific component and an intuitive dimension. The Bank was currently developing an in-house networking arrangement to link pockets of excellence on a sectoralized basis.

28. Providing the theoretical underpinnings of knowledge involved a three-stage process. The first stage was the identification and building of the technical foundation; as a case in point, the Bank was collaborating with the Information Systems Coordination Committee (ISCC) in establishing a system-wide thesaurus, common language, and data-collection and retrieval system. A second stage involved the use of the technical level and platforms to access, share and manage random data in order to build knowledge. A third stage was the process of understanding and managing the role of equity with regard to knowledge access and distribution and the related need to educate agencies' clientele in the use of knowledge so as to maximize development impact.

29. As a follow-up measure, it was proposed to conduct a survey, with the assistance of the World Bank and supported by a consultant, to solicit information on agency initiatives on knowledge management, focusing on issues such as conceptual definitions, resource commitment, networking arrangements in specialized areas of interest, allocation of resources to achieve goals, and identification of collaborative efforts (for example, ISCC, Global Knowledge Management

Forum, Global Knowledge Partnership and NetAid) in specific areas and to obtain views on how best to effectively transfer knowledge to the development community.

30. Committee members were briefed on various ongoing initiatives in knowledge management, specifically the work of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in linking project staff at the regional level and the creation of village centres in Latin America, Asia and Africa to facilitate access to technical information on agricultural development; UNDG's "DevLink" project intended to bring together practical information and good practices — organized around thematic issues and linked across regions — to support the work of the resident coordinators system; collaboration between the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank (on, for example, tobacco issues), between WHO and FAO on agricultural issues, and established links between WHO and scientific experts with access to cutting-edge knowledge, for example, on emerging diseases.

31. The Committee commended the World Bank on its concept paper, underscoring the importance and relevance of the issue and the timeliness of the debate. A number of potential areas were identified for follow-up work by the United Nations system. A first area involved the collation/organization of data structured in a user-friendly way. In this connection, the Committee took note of the important contribution of the ACC Subcommittee on Statistical Activities in rationalizing/streamlining statistical data. It encouraged the Subcommittee to further pursue these efforts with the ultimate goal of working towards a unified database. Second, to facilitate information access, the Committee agreed to request ISCC to initiate the creation of a search engine for tapping into databases existing within the United Nations system on specialized topics. Third, along the lines of the DevLink initiative, an attempt could be made to collate within a single existing web site, information and practical lessons emerging from research and project activities system-wide.

32. The Committee endorsed the World Bank's proposal to carry out a survey as described in paragraph 29 above. The survey would, in addition, solicit suggestions on (a) how to enhance the United Nations system's understanding of the concept of knowledge management and (b) the potential use of the Internet by the United Nations system in order to become an active player in promoting knowledge management, in a two-way process of disseminating knowledge to the public, and encouraging a reverse information flow into the system on critical development issues.

#### **(d) Household food security**

33. Introducing the subject, the representative of IFAD emphasized that the concept paper ACC/1999/POQ/CRP.15 was based exclusively on an IFAD perspective on the issue of household food security (HFS). She drew attention to the guidance material for programme and project design in the field of household food security, with particular emphasis on gender issues. A more elaborate document would be produced in collaboration with FAO, WFP and other interested organizations; a potential output foreseen from this exercise was the issue of a guidance note to the resident coordinator system to direct the design of projects and programmes.

34. Committee members in the debate commented appreciatively on the paper, particularly the way it was able to effectively distil from such a complex issue, simple and usable guidelines to underpin operational activities. Food security had implications extending beyond agriculture and the rural and farm sector. Other considerations included: income-generating activities linked to the development of the small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) sector and the related provision of rural services including microcredits; the role of science and technology; the impact of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS); the need for attitudinal changes; purchasing power effects related to commodity diversification; and consumption patterns and marketing arrangements affecting the urban poor. More discussion was needed on alternative sustainable strategies for food cropping, the role of natural disaster prevention, and the need to involve vulnerable segments in the design of programmes and projects at local and community level.

35. The Committee agreed that IFAD, FAO and WFP would take the lead in finalizing the paper, taking into account the comments expressed, and drawing on the expertise of Subcommittee on Nutrition members and the ACC network on food security and rural development. The final draft would be submitted for CCPOQ review at its spring 2000 session.

#### **(e) Coordinated follow-up to global conferences and summits**

36. The Committee considered the implications for its work emanating from Economic and Social Council resolutions 1999/5 and 1999/55. The debate noted, *inter alia*, the need to include in coordinated follow-up, the sessions of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) the critical role and momentum provided by the CCA as a tool for conference follow-up — particularly as over a hundred CCAs were in various stages of preparation/completion — and the consequent need for agencies to participate actively in the learning groups on the CCAs/UNDAF to ensure that their concerns were adequately reflected; and the important vehicle of the annual report of resident coordinators in respect of

soliciting feedback on integrated follow-up on a thematic basis across a range of conferences.

**(f) Poverty eradication**

37. The Committee considered the proposal contained in document ACC/1999/POQ/CRP.17 to refine the ACC poverty matrix so as to reflect the areas of focus identified in Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/5 on poverty eradication and capacity-building, as the basis for genuine inter-agency collaboration.

38. Participants were generally of the view that it was not worthwhile to continue the arduous process of a further refinement of the matrix and that the time had come for practical action. Some concern was expressed over the launching of too many unsynchronized parallel initiatives with the potential for diluting impact. Given these considerations, the Committee agreed that it would be more productive to capitalize on the UNDP-led poverty initiative undertaken in the context of UNDG at the request of the Senior Management Group (SMG). The Committee was briefed on the broad outline of the document which was structured into three parts. The introductory section contained a description of the multifaceted dimension of poverty eradication. A second section focused on three sets of actions: political mobilization at the global level; an umbrella of programme elements which UNDG members could realistically expect to contribute taking into account resource capacities; and the implementation of the relevant provisions of Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/5. Some of the interventions of the broader programme were sectoral in nature (for example, girls education, health for all) while others were of a cross-sectoral nature, for example, policy analysis, poverty mapping and assessment with much scope for inter-agency collaboration. A final section dealt with implementation arrangements at the national level.

39. The Committee agreed that the revised UNDG draft of the poverty document, envisaged for completion by mid-October, would be used for consultation with CCPOQ members, along with inputs from the World Bank's forthcoming World Development Report on Poverty Eradication and IFAD's Poverty Report 2000. An initial discussion of the draft would take place at the meeting of the CCPOQ Working Group scheduled for January 2000; the aim was to work towards a final document for consideration by the Committee at its spring 2000 session. This process should lead to a common system-wide position, to be reflected in a statement for ACC approval in April 2000; the intention was to feed the statement into the review of the World Summit for Social Development scheduled for June 2000.

40. Recognizing the importance of the issue, and various related initiatives under way including those emanating from the World Bank and IFAD, as mentioned in paragraph 39, and the forthcoming UNCTAD sessions, the Committee agreed that poverty eradication should feature as an item for periodic consultation. The Committee decided to consider at its spring 2000 session, the mechanism for strengthening collaboration on this issue, possibly along lines similar to that of the ACC network for food security and rural development.

**(g) Reports of ACC Subcommittees**

*(i) ACC Subcommittee on Nutrition*

41. In presenting the report of the Subcommittee on Nutrition on its twenty-sixth session (ACC/1999/9), its Chairman underscored the Subcommittee's dynamic and innovative work methods, its tripartite structure involving donors and civil society partners, and its impressive record of achievements. Included among the last-mentioned were, *inter alia*, the elaboration of the global plan for iodine deficiency (1984) and the wide outreach and highly regarded World Nutrition Situation Report.

42. On the budgetary situation of the Subcommittee on Nutrition, he expressed regret over CCAQ's recent decision to reduce the Subcommittee's budget by \$50,000 for the biennium 2000-2001 and emphasized the need to shift from voluntary to assessed contributions. In this regard, he was strongly supported by the representative of the World Bank. The Committee was advised about WHO's decision concerning the provision of rent-free premises for the Subcommittee secretariat which may call for considering alternative options, including the possibility of relocation to another host agency, keeping in mind the principle of rotation.

43. With regard to the nomination of the next Subcommittee Chair, the Committee was informed that present prospects indicated the strong likelihood that the candidate from WFP would have the full support of the Subcommittee members. The current Subcommittee Chair agreed to work closely with the Chair of the search committee to obtain the views of those Subcommittee members whose response was still pending. The final decision would be conveyed to CCPOQ members by 1 October 1999.

44. The Committee noted that decisions on the nomination of the Subcommittee Chairman resided with the Subcommittee and should be formally submitted to CCPOQ. As an issue of principle, it was pointed out that agencies should not condition their support of a candidate on the latter's willingness to subscribe to a particular agency's view on an issue, keeping



in mind the Subcommittee's accountability, as a member of the ACC machinery, to the system at large.

45. Several participants commended the Subcommittee on Nutrition on its tripartite, innovative methods of work, which were consistent with the direction of United Nations reforms and the need to maintain credibility and outreach for a wide public. While the Subcommittee had played a very effective role in networking with scientific experts, it was felt that it had also an important role to play as an inter-agency coordinating body. Drawing attention to several references to HIV/AIDS in the substantive discussions of the Subcommittee report, the representative of the Joint United Nations Programme on Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS) (UNAIDS) expressed the willingness of her programme to participate in and contribute substantively to future Subcommittee sessions. The Subcommittee Chairman was warmly receptive to this proposal.

46. The Committee agreed to the appointment and successor arrangements in respect of the Subcommittee Chair as described in paragraph 6 above.

47. The Committee took note of the report ACC/POQ/CRP.18 and endorsed the dates and the venue of the Subcommittee's twenty-seventh session.

*(ii) ACC Subcommittee on Drug Control*

48. Introducing the report of the Subcommittee on its seventh session (ACC/1999/17), the representative of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) informed the Committee about recent actions taken by the Economic and Social Council. As a result of the recommendation of a high-level expert group on strengthening the United Nations machinery for international drug control, the Council had recommended that ACC should ensure that the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control (SWAP) (E/1990/39 and Corr.1 and 2 and Add.1) developed into a strategic planning tool, and that drug issues be considered in the formulation of UNDAFs (Council resolution 1999/30).

49. The representative of UNDCP mentioned that the main tasks of the Subcommittee at its seventh session had therefore been to review the implementation of the interim action plan (IAP) for coordinated inter-agency support for national implementation of the outcome of the twentieth special session of the General Assembly, which it had adopted at its sixth session, and to formulate the strategic planning tool. The overriding concern of the Subcommittee was to move inter-agency collaboration ahead at the operational level. Of vital

importance in this respect was the inclusion of drug issues in the UNDAF process.

50. The Subcommittee was extending by one year the applicability of the IAP which had been expanded to include nine additional countries. The Subcommittee had moreover formulated an outline of a framework for cooperation, which would be further developed by means of electronic communications for submission to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in March 2000.

51. The Committee took note of report ACC/POQ/CRP.18/Add.1 and endorsed the dates and venue of the Subcommittee's eighth session.

### **3. Operational activities for development**

#### **(a) Issues arising from the substantive session of 1999 of the Economic and Social Council**

52. In his briefing on the outcome of the 1999 operational activities segment of the Economic and Social Council, the representative of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat said that an important highlight with major impact on donors was the exchange by the Council with the two country teams, Mali and Indonesia. Particularly noteworthy was the unprecedented adoption of two substantive resolutions by the Council in 1999 on operational activities for development (1999/5 and 1999/6) and the important link established between CCPOQ and the Council on the issue of capacity-building. The results of the CCPOQ/Department of Economic and Social Affairs co-sponsored seminar in early July had had a direct impact on the Council resolution on poverty eradication and capacity-building, with focus, *inter alia*, on employment creation and the empowerment and advancement of women.

53. Unlike the operational activities segment, the humanitarian affairs segment had resulted in the adoption by the Council of agreed conclusions (1999/1). 1999<sup>1</sup> marked the second year of the segment and the Council's agreed conclusions called for the review of organizational arrangements. A particularly noteworthy development in the general segment was the adoption of a resolution on the long-term strategy and programme of support for Haiti Council resolution 1999/11, linking the political aspects of the Security Council's work to the economic and social dimensions of the mandate of the Economic and Social Council. Also of interest to the Committee was Economic and Social Council decision 1999/271, in which the Council invited the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session to convene discussions on the activities of the United Nations Staff College and on the

modalities for conducting the evaluation of its future, foreseen at the end of year 2000.

54. Preparations for the substantive session of 2000 of the Economic and Social Council focused on the thematic issues of resources and funding and simplification and harmonization of programming, operational and administrative procedures. With regard to the latter, the representative of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs emphasized the need to demonstrate progress on this issue by mid-2000 and UNDG's intention to take priority action in line with the provisions of Council resolution 1999/6. On both issues, consultations would be held.

55. Participants in the debate, noted the impact of the Committee's work on the Economic and Social Council's agenda. Two of the Committee's outputs on capacity-building and its guidance note on national execution had found reflection in the Council's resolutions. In respect of resources and funding, it was noted that these issues were likely to emerge in a critical form in the discussions on poverty eradication, the likely theme of the Millennium Assembly as well as of the mid-term review of the outcome of major conferences. Growing scepticism over the viability of voluntary-based financing of development was increasingly in evidence. Indeed, the funds were moving in the direction of multi-year funding frameworks.

**(b) Role and functioning of the resident coordinator system, including programming processes**

56. Presenting the two reports ACC/1999/POQ/CRP.20 and Add.1, the Chairman of the Working Group on the Resident Coordinator System said that the inter-sessional mechanism created to link the broader system with the UNDG-led reforms, had proved most effective; much credit had to be attributed in this regard to the exemplary cooperation with the Development Group Office (DGO). The range of issues covered by the Working Group at its last two sessions had encompassed the full spectrum of the UNDG agenda and that of its Executive Committee, including the initiatives on girls' education, poverty eradication, DevLink and the range of measures for strengthening the resident coordinator system.

57. On the issue of interaction with the Economic and Social Council, a noteworthy development had been the timely input provided by the Working Group in respect of feeding into the 1999 Council debate on capacity-building. With regard to preparations for the substantive session of 2000 of the Council, he noted the interest for joint action on the issues of simplification and harmonization and on resources and financing. In its resolution 1999/5, the Council, *inter alia*, took note of the management plan for the implementation of General

Assembly resolution 53/192 on the triennial policy review on operational activities for development of the United Nations system; in this regard, he reminded Committee members of their joint commitment to a series of actions with implications for reporting in 2001.

58. On issues related to the resident coordinator system, various measures had been instituted to strengthen personnel management through competency-based selection and recruitment procedures and resident coordinator training. The Working Group was expected to review at its January meeting the results of the evaluation of the competency assessment, planned after the forthcoming October exercise. Attention was drawn to outstanding issues and actions required as contained in document ACC/1999/POQ/CRP.20/Add.1/Rev.1, namely, capacity-building (para. 30); revision of the guidelines for the annual report of resident coordinators (para. 37); proposed modifications to the country team (para. 39) and resident coordinator appraisal process (para. 40); the Working Group's recommendation for the adoption by CCPOQ of the guidelines on the resident coordinator system; the issue of special measures to address gender concerns and candidates for resident coordinator/humanitarian coordinator positions (para. 48); process for finalizing the draft guidelines on human rights (para. 60); and evaluation and impact assessment (para. 61).

59. With regard to learning from the comprehensive development framework (CDF) pilot experiences, the Committee endorsed the conclusions reached by the Working Group on the issue and agreed that the report of the learning group should be channelled to CCPOQ for its consideration.

60. The Committee considered the draft ACC guidelines on the functioning of the resident coordinator system. In the interests of consistency and greater clarity, it agreed to incorporate two minor editorial amendments in paragraph 31, namely, replacement of the phrase "whenever this is deemed to be necessary" by "in order to"; and replacement of the phrase "close contact should be maintained" by "the resident coordinator is encouraged to maintain close contact". Clarification was provided in the course of the discussions to the effect that country team members were constituted only by representatives of United Nations organizations accredited to the government and excluded non-accredited personnel. The Committee adopted, on behalf of ACC, the draft guidelines and expressed its appreciation to the task manager, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs for its efforts. It further endorsed the arrangement for the follow-up to the capacity-building seminar.

61. The Committee commended the Chairman of the Working Group for his leadership. It took note of reports

ACC/1999/POQ/CRP.20 and Add.1, subject to the amendments made in Add.1/Rev.1.

**(c) Operational activities training**

62. The CCPOQ Secretary recalled that CCPOQ at its fourteenth session had decided to use the UNDG Working Group on Training (WGT) — subject to the agreement of UNDG — as a task manager to carry out the former functions of its Advisory Panel on Operational Activities Training, on the understanding that for this purpose, the membership of the task force would be expanded to include system-wide participation of learning specialists, including staff with expertise on operational issues (ACC/1997/7, para.9). Pursuant to this decision, the Secretary had secured the agreement of both WGT and its parent body, the Sub-group on Training and Personnel Policies. A letter from the Chair of CCPOQ had been transmitted to the Chair of UNDG; the Committee was informed in the course of the meeting that UNDG had endorsed the proposal and a written confirmation would be transmitted shortly. CCPOQ requested its members to nominate their learning and programme specialists to the task manager group.

63. The Committee endorsed the arrangements recommended by the Working Group on the convening of the task manager group on resident coordinator system learning issues, as described in paragraph 57 of its report ACC/1999/POQ/CRP.20/Add.1. A full one-day session of the learning group would be convened prior to CCPOQ's spring session.

**4. CCPOQ administrative issues**

**(a) Role and functioning of ACC and its subsidiary machinery**

64. The Committee considered the report of the joint Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development (IACSD)/CCPOQ Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality (IACWGE) (ACC/1999/POQ/CRP.21). Introducing the item, the Chairman recalled that the task manager approach had been initially adopted by IACSD for the purposes of United Nations Conference on Environment and Development follow-up to support the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development. For programmatic issues where there was an obvious lead agency, the task manager approach was performed by an individual organization; in other cases, the function was sometimes performed by an inter-agency group, for example, the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources. An issue before the Committee was whether it would be useful to endorse the use of the designated task managers for IACSD servicing of the needs of the broader system on conference

follow-up beyond the requirements of the Commission. A second issue concerned the adequacy of ad hoc arrangements for follow-up to thematic cross-cutting issues where there was no obvious lead agency.

65. In considering the proposals, the debate noted some advantages of the task manager approach with its element of capacity- and infrastructure-building. With regard to the cross-sectoral thematic issues, the flexibility afforded by ad hoc arrangements for follow-up on cross-sectoral issues, such as the ACC task forces, was appreciated. These arrangements had worked reasonably well in allowing the engagement of the entire system without imposing undue burdens on a limited number of technical agencies. Important lessons had been learned from the impetus for joint action on the HIV/AIDS issue resulting from the creation of the co-sponsored programme. This raised the question of the merits of considering comparable inter-agency arrangements for other thematic issues so that the momentum generated by the ACC task forces on conference follow-up would not be dissipated. One option was to consider the creation of a working group on programmatic issues along the lines established for operational activities which had proved very effective in speeding up action on many issues. It was noted in this connection that the ACC network for food security and rural development was an illustration of such a substantive structure.

66. The Committee took note of report ACC/1999/CRP/POQ/CRP.21 and endorsed the recommendations of the terms of reference for task managers (paras. 8-9); the list of task manager groups contained in annex 1; the proposed arrangements for interaction of task managers with the United Nations system and other inter-agency bodies (paras. 10-12 and 15). It agreed that it would need to further reflect on arrangements for giving more impetus to the programmatic aspects of its mandate and, in this regard, agencies were invited to present their proposals at the March 2000 session.

**(b) Renewal of the tenure of the CCPOQ Secretary**

67. The Committee decided to recommend to ACC the renewal of the tenure of the CCPOQ Secretary, Mr. Eckhard Hein (FAO) for a second two-year term extending from 1 February 2000 to 31 January 2002.

68. CCPOQ commended the Secretary for his work and expressed its genuine appreciation for the excellent performance and the efficient and effective contribution of the whole CCPOQ secretariat to the functioning of the Committee.

**(c) Report of the Secretary**

69. The Secretary reported on various secretariat activities in the period following the March 1999 CCPOQ session including, *inter alia*, the organization of the seminar on capacity-building; the joint IACSD/CCPOQ/IACWGE meeting on the application of the task manager approach; joint secretariat consultations with the United Nations Staff College in Turin; his participation in a resident coordinator competency assessment exercise (Pittsburgh, June 1999); a workshop for resident coordinators at the United Nations Staff College; and a special learning event for the introduction of the CCA/UNDAF guidelines. Particular reference was made to the increasing resort to videoconferencing. The Committee was further briefed on the current status of the CCPOQ web site.

<sup>1</sup> See A/54/3, chap. VI, para. 5.

**(d) Future programme of work**

70. CCPOQ agreed to the programme of work as described in paragraph 5 of the report.

**5. Other matters****International Year of Volunteers (2001) and  
Volunteer Contributions**

71. Introducing the draft ACC guidance note on the United Nations system and the International Year of Volunteers, 2001, the representative of the United Nations Volunteers programme (UNV) underlined that the Year, to be launched on 5 December 2000, was a very special opportunity for the entire United Nations system to reach out to the vast constituency represented by volunteers. The draft guidance note was important in ensuring that volunteer contributions in every sector were reflected in the planning process.

72. Several participants briefed the Committee on the steps taken within their respective organizations to prepare for the year, mentioning initiatives such as the designation of volunteers as the central theme of the organization's anniversary celebration in 2001. Suggestions were made to include in the guidance note, *inter alia*, explicit encouragement to agencies to include, in planned events in 2000 and 2001, references, where relevant, to volunteer contributions and a reference to the volunteer contribution of youths and older persons. The Committee agreed that guidance notes of a generic nature should avoid references to specific organizations.

73. The Committee approved the guidance note subject to the amendments made in the course of the meeting.

*Notes*

## Annex I

### Agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Policy and programme matters:
  - (a) Collaboration with the business sector;
  - (b) Governance;
  - (c) Knowledge management and information technology;
  - (d) Household food security;
  - (e) Coordinated follow-up to global conferences and summits;
  - (f) Poverty eradication;
  - (g) Reports of ACC Subcommittees on Nutrition and Drug Control.
3. Operational activities for development:
  - (a) Issues arising from the substantive session of 1999 of the Economic and Social Council;
  - (b) Role and functioning of the resident coordinator system, including programming processes;
  - (c) Operational activities training.
4. CCPOQ administrative issues:
  - (a) Role and functioning of ACC and its subsidiary machinery;
  - (b) Renewal of the tenure of the CCPOQ Secretary;
  - (c) Report of the Secretary;
  - (d) Future programme of work.
5. Other matters:

International Year of Volunteers (2001) and volunteer contributions.

## Annex II

### List of participants

#### United Nations, its entities and programmes

##### United Nations

Executive Office of the Secretary-General	Mr. G. Kell
United Nations Fund for International Partnerships	Mr. A. Dossal
Department of Economic and Social Affairs	Mr. A. Haemmerli Mr. M. Brenster Ms. Y. Ertürk Ms. M. Nogara
Office for Inter-Agency Affairs	Mr. G. Gabriel Mr. A. Lacanlale
United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)	Ms. A. P. Celik
United Nations Office for Project Services	Ms. L. Canuto
United Nations Staff College	Mr. L. Wilde
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	Mr. M. Plehn-Mejia Ms. S. Brandwayn
United Nations Environment Programme	Mr. A. Amin
United Nations Development Programme	Mr. M. Malloch Brown Mr. N. Lauzon Mr. N. Chandavarkar Mr. L. Franzoni Mr. A. Marcu Mr. P. Matlon Ms. L. Maguire Mr. T. Palmlund Mr. A. Doka
United Nations Development Group Office (DGO)	Mr. A. Doss Ms. N. Krupaisarn Ms. G. Skaaren-Fystro
United Nations Volunteers programme	Mr. R. Leigh
United Nations Population Fund	Ms. M. Vasisht Mr. L. Edouard Mr. J. D. Winther

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United Nations Children's Fund	Mr. A. Vaher Ms. N. Galer Mr. K. Belbase
World Food Programme	Ms. P. Kennedy Mr. I. Riza
United Nations International Drug Control Programme	Mr. V. McClean
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	Mr. P. Mateu
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East	Mr. W. Lee
United Nations University	Mr. J. Fomerand
Joint United Nations Programme on Human Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS) (UNAIDS)	Ms. R. Chahil-Graf
<b>Specialized agencies and International Atomic Energy Agency</b>	
International Labour Organization	Mr. A. Simbeye
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	Mr. B. Ali
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	Mr. B. Duvieusart
World Health Organization	Mr. L. Tillfors
World Bank	Ms. C. Fleming
International Monetary Fund	Mr. R. Munzberg Ms. A. Rubin
World Meteorological Organization	Dr. D. D. C. Don Nanjira
International Fund for Agricultural Development	Ms. V. Weill-Halle
United Nations Industrial Development Organization	Mr. C. Sersale di Cerisano Ms. D. Perron
International Atomic Energy Agency	Ms. T. Brown

## Annex III

### ACC guidance note on the United Nations system and International Year of Volunteers, 2001

#### Why International Year of Volunteers, 2001?

Volunteer service has been a part of virtually every civilization and society. Defined in the broadest terms as the contribution that individuals make as non-profit, non-wage and non-career action for the well-being of their neighbours, community or society at large, it takes many forms, from traditional customs of mutual self-help to community coping responses in times of crisis, and spearheading effort for relief, conflict resolution and the eradication of poverty. The scope of the Year would extend beyond local and national volunteers to include bilateral and multilateral volunteer programmes extending beyond national frontiers.

Volunteers have come to play qualitatively and quantitatively a significant part in the welfare and progress of industrialized and developing countries and within national and United Nations programmes of humanitarian assistance, technical cooperation and promotion of human rights, democratization and peace. Volunteering is also the basis of much of the activity of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), professional associations, trade unions, civic organizations, faith groups and, increasingly, the private sector. It is also an effective mechanism for the active involvement in society of youth and older people.

The need for increased volunteer effort is greater today than ever, given the adverse impact of global problems such as environmental degradation, drug abuse and human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) on the more vulnerable sectors of society; given the concern of the international community about focusing on addressing such problems, with special attention to developing countries in general and poverty eradication in particular; and given the contemporary trend for civil society — in partnership with Governments and the private sector — to assume ever-greater responsibilities in the development process. This need was reflected in the emphasis accorded by recent global conferences such as the International Conference on Population and Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women and the World Summit for Social Development, among others, to the importance of new players, individuals and organizations of civil society, in respect of the taking of initiative at international, national and local levels. The Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development<sup>a</sup> and

Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development,<sup>b</sup> for example, called for reinforcement of the means and capacities for people to participate in social and economic programmes. However, while the contribution of volunteers is vast, much of their work often goes unrecognized precisely because it does not involve the payment of market wages and because it is often spontaneous, informal and unstructured. In recognition of the above, the General Assembly, at its fifty-second session on 20 November 1997, in resolution 52/17, co-sponsored by 123 countries, decided to designate 2001 the International Year of Volunteers.

#### Objectives of the International Year of Volunteers, 2001

The premise underlying the designation of an International Year of Volunteers by the General Assembly is that it provides a valuable framework and establishes a favourable environment for the growth and yet more strategic use of volunteer contributions.

A first objective of the International Year of Volunteers, 2001, is increased *recognition* of the efforts of individuals and groups engaged in volunteering. Second is increased *facilitation* of volunteer work by building on factors that encourage, and addressing issues that inhibit, volunteer service. Third is enhanced *networking* whereby volunteer achievements can be disseminated and shared. The final objective is the *promotion* of volunteering with a view to more requests for the deployment of volunteers and to offers of volunteer service from even more individuals.

#### What the United Nations system can do

It should be recognized at the outset that volunteer contributions have been and continue to be a vital feature, if not an essential prerequisite, of the work of much of the United Nations system in such fields as literacy, immunization, environmental protection, population, nutrition, food aid and so forth. Whether through advocacy work, fund-raising or operational activities on the ground, the International Year of Volunteers, 2001, is a unique opportunity to further strengthen partnerships between volunteer groups and the United Nations system and to have the United Nations system be more user-



people-, and volunteer-friendly. Such partnerships go to the root of “We the people” as the bedrock of the Organization.

In preparation for the International Year of Volunteers, 2001, at the upstream level, United Nations system organizations should review the involvement of volunteers in their activities as well as the user-friendliness of their priorities and procedures towards the use of this resource. This should lead to enhanced understanding of the measures required to build up the capacity of volunteer groups to help tackle areas offocus of the concerned organization. United Nations system organizations should also consider what special activities they might wish to undertake in 2001, with appropriate preparations in 1999 and 2000, to mark the Year in ways designed to enhance the involvement of volunteers in their work. They might include, for example, undertaking research leading to publications addressing roles of volunteers in specialized fields; devoting sections of flagship publications to volunteer contributions; featuring examples on Internet sites of best practice of volunteers in the sectors; making available to UNV as International Year of Volunteers, 2001, focal point, written information, photographs, videos, and so forth about volunteer contributions, national and international, to sectoral programmes; considering whether the actual or potential contribution of volunteer work might merit discussion at United Nations system governing bodies in 2001; associating the subject of volunteering with relevant United Nations system conferences and other events leading up to and during 2001; and encouraging country-level representatives to participate actively in United Nations and national preparations for and activities during the International Year of Volunteers, 2001. Some United Nations system agencies have devised a scheme to encourage and enable its staff members, spouses and retired staff members to undertake activities voluntarily in support of the organization’s work: this might be reviewed for its applicability elsewhere.

Downstream, the resident coordinator system in all member countries should explore ways of associating the United Nations collectively and through the sectoral perspectives of individual agencies, in the work of the national committees, steering groups or whatever other structures may be put in place for preparing for and implementing the Year at country level. This would be specifically geared to determining how United Nations organizations and volunteer groups could enhance their partnership to mutual benefit. It might include the establishment of volunteer schemes to address such issues as environmental degradation, HIV/AIDS and protection and promotion of cultural heritage; the provision of technical and managerial advice to volunteer groups; and encouragement generally towards a supportive environment for volunteering.

#### Notes

<sup>a</sup> *Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6-12 March 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution, annex I.

<sup>b</sup> *Ibid.*, annex II.

**Annex IV****ACC guidelines on the functioning of the resident coordinator system****Contents**

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## I. Background and operational concepts

1. These guidelines intend to provide the organizations of the United Nations system, and members of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), with an agreed set of principles guiding the functioning of the resident coordinator system (RCS). These principles are derived from relevant policy directives of the General Assembly, previous ACC agreements and experience gained in the functioning of the RCS over the past 20 years.<sup>a</sup>

2. Ever since the General Assembly established the concept of a “single official” for the coordination of operational activities for development within the United Nations system over 20 years ago,<sup>b</sup> ACC has periodically agreed on appropriate arrangements for the effective functioning and strengthening of the RCS. Most recently, an ACC statement was issued in February 1995.<sup>c</sup> The present guidelines build on these previous ACC decisions while reflecting the current context as well as experience gained in the implementation of previous policy guidance on the RCS. The purpose is to update guidance provided for the effective functioning of the RCS by taking into account policy directives contained in Assembly resolutions 47/199, 50/120 and 53/192 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of United Nations system operational activities for development (TCPR), the reform process initiated by the Secretary-General<sup>d</sup> and the decisions taken by the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ) on behalf of ACC as well as the work conducted on the subject by the United Nations Development Group (UNDG).

3. The Secretary-General’s reform process initiated in 1997 stressed the need to achieve a greater unity of purpose and coherence in country-level operations of the United Nations system, highlighting the need to strengthen the RCS.<sup>e</sup> By establishing the UNDG and its Executive Committee, the Secretary-General aimed at strengthening the RCS by promoting a more united United Nations presence at the country level. UNDG provides a forum for concerted support to the resident coordinators and field representatives of United Nations funds and programmes, ensuring a more integrated and consistent approach in their work.<sup>f</sup>

4. ACC and its subsidiary machinery (CCPOQ) are responsible for supporting the functioning of the RCS, in line with resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.<sup>g</sup> Over the years, the Committee has approved a number of inter-organizational arrangements for the operational support of the RCS, which require the full commitment and participation, in a collegial and

consensual manner, of all United Nations system organizations involved in operational activities for development.

### A. Operational activities for development of the United Nations system

5. The operational activities for development of the United Nations system<sup>h</sup> encompass its development cooperation activities carried out at the country and regional levels and linkages to other activities as provided in the General Assembly resolutions on TCPR, most recently Assembly resolution 53/192.

### B. Resident coordinator system (RCS)

6. The resident coordinator system (RCS) encompasses all organizations of the United Nations system dealing with operational activities for development, regardless of their formal presence in the country. The resident coordinator is the designated representative of the Secretary-General and leader of the United Nations country team. The Bretton Woods institutions and other international organizations, as appropriate, are encouraged to be closely associated with the RCS/country teams. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the manager and funder of the RCS.<sup>i</sup>

### C. Resident coordinator

7. The resident coordinator is designated by the Secretary-General after consultation with ACC members and upon recommendation by the Administrator of UNDP.<sup>j</sup> His/her specific responsibilities and duties are detailed in the resident coordinator job description attached to these guidelines. The resident coordinator is responsible to the Secretary-General for discharging his/her functions. The resident coordinator reports to the Secretary-General through the Administrator.

8. The RC is normally the UNDP resident representative, in accordance with the established legislation of the General Assembly.<sup>k</sup>

9. The resident coordinator, on behalf of the United Nations system and in consultation with country representatives of organizations of the United Nations system, assumes overall responsibility for, and coordination of, the operational activities for development of the United Nations system carried out at the country level. This is done in conformity with the objectives and priorities of the Government

and mandates and objectives of the United Nations system organizations.

10. Resident coordinators are accredited by letter of the Secretary-General to the head of Government. This arrangement does not affect the relations between government and individual United Nations system organizations or the direct lines of authority and communication between representatives of these organizations and their executive heads.

#### **D. United Nations system country team**

11. The United Nations system country team is composed of representatives of the United Nations funds and programmes, specialized agencies and other United Nations entities accredited to a given country. It could also include representatives of the Bretton Woods institutions.<sup>1</sup>

#### **E. Bretton Woods institutions**

12. While the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are not formally part of the RCS, they should be invited to participate in inter-agency groups at the country level, such as the thematic groups, and be associated with relevant activities including the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and common country assessment (CCA). This is aimed to increase complementarity and better division of labour, as well as enhance coherence in their sectoral activities, building on existing arrangements and in full accordance with the priorities of the recipient Governments.

## **II. Guiding principles for the resident coordinator system**

### **A. Coordination**

13. The principle guiding coordination for operational activities emanates from the General Assembly. It establishes that recipient Governments have the primary responsibility for coordinating, on the basis of national strategies and priorities, all types of external assistance, including that provided by multilateral organizations.

14. The RCS seeks to better coordinate the operational activities for development of the United Nations system and their integration with national plans and priorities. The aim of

this coordination function is to ensure that the United Nations system operational activities contribute effectively to national development, providing a flexible response to the host country's need,<sup>m</sup> aiming at maximizing the overall impact of United Nations system support. These activities are carried out for the benefit of the recipient country, at its request and in accordance with its own policies and priorities for development.<sup>n</sup> Moreover, resident coordinators, in full consultation with the national Governments and recognizing their primary responsibility for the implementation and evaluation of conference follow-up, assist the national Governments in carrying out this responsibility by facilitating a coherent and coordinated United Nations system follow-up to major international conferences at the field level.<sup>o</sup>

15. The RCS is expected to support the Government's responsibility for coordination by building national capacity as required.<sup>p</sup> The RCS through the resident coordinator may be asked to provide support in carrying out some of these responsibilities and to maintain formal or informal contact with the donor community. This also involves participation in consultative group meetings and round-table processes.

16. The RCS aims to achieve efficiency and effectiveness of the operational activities at the country level and a coordinated multidisciplinary response to national needs and priorities. Previously issued ACC guidelines<sup>q</sup> as well as the current ones provide the basis for the required country-level cooperation, taking into account the respective mandates of United Nations system organizations.

### **B. Dual responsibility of the RCS members**

17. All members of the RCS have a dual responsibility, both as representatives of their respective organization and as members of the RCS. Therefore, they are expected to provide their full support to the effective functioning of the RCS. The RCS members endeavour to speak with one voice, especially through the resident coordinator, on key policy issues, *inter alia*, in aid coordination forums, while fully recognizing the existence of distinct mandates.

18. Since the UNDP resident representative is normally designated resident coordinator, UNDP will ensure that priority is given to the resident coordinator function. Day-to-day management of the UNDP programme may be entrusted to a senior deputy resident representative, where so warranted. UNDP concerns in the RCS will be presented by this person, or another so designated. The UNDP resident representative will nonetheless remain fully accountable to the Administrator for the UNDP programme in that country.

### C. Relations with civil society

19. With the increasing engagement of the RCS with civil society, CCPOQ has issued a guidance note to the RCS which is to be fully taken into account in ensuring regular consultation with the civil society and appropriate non-governmental organizations in the effort to enhance the United Nations system's impact in assisting member States in achieving economic and social progress.<sup>f</sup>

### D. Follow-up to global conferences

20. The RCS is expected to play an important role in supporting government efforts for a coordinated and integrated follow-up and implementation of global conferences, including through the CCA and UNDAF. Thematic groups are a key instrument for the coordinated United Nations system support to this task.<sup>g</sup>

## III. Functioning of the resident coordinator system

21. The resident coordinator is responsible for providing team leadership in the coordination of operational activities for development at the country level, and for developing a multidisciplinary dimension in the United Nations system assistance to the country in accordance with these guidelines. The effective functioning of the RCS requires maximum decentralization and delegation of authority at the country level,<sup>h</sup> as determined by the respective United Nations system organizations, in order to effectively respond to the country's needs in a coherent and efficient manner. Substantive cooperation on shared goals and objectives, derived from the national plans and priorities, is the principal objective of the RCS.

22. Coordination within the RCS is supported at various levels and through various mechanisms. The field-level committee, established by the General Assembly,<sup>u</sup> is the mechanism for reviewing substantive activities of the United Nations system at the country level and leads to adopting agreed decisions at the country level. Thematic groups serve as important instruments of coordination, including supporting the coordinated and integrated follow-up to global conferences. The annual work plan of the RCS and its annual assessment, the CCA and UNDAF<sup>v</sup> are key mechanisms to ensure substantive coordination.

### A. Effective mechanisms

23. A review of good practices in the functioning of the RCS reveals that it is particularly important to have fully participatory and well-managed consultation mechanisms to deal with substantive and administrative issues and ultimately contribute to a greater impact of the United Nations system cooperation on the development and well-being of people. Among the areas requiring particularly effective mechanisms are:

(a) Regular contact with the Government, in order to ensure early and effective information-sharing, policy dialogue and advocacy;

(b) Inter-agency consultations through field-level committees and thematic groups to be adapted to country circumstances;

(c) Review of proposed programmes and major projects; review of agency sector and cross-cutting strategies and evaluations to support and guide policy dialogue and to ensure a consistent response to national plans and strategies;<sup>w</sup>

(d) Information-sharing by designated focal points within the RCS and promotion of common information tools, such as newsletters, journals, databases, information systems and national reports;

(e) Carrying out of the CCA and UNDAF, including their formulation implementation and monitoring, which requires a continuing dialogue within the system, as well as between the United Nations system and the Government;<sup>x</sup>

(f) Coordinated and integrated follow-up to major United Nations conferences through thematic groups and relevant joint activities;

(g) Improved and cost-effective use of common premises and services;

(h) Preparation of the annual report of the resident coordinator, including the work plan for the RCS as a tool to enhance the effectiveness of the country coordination and serve as a basis for the annual assessment of the country team in achieving successful coordination;<sup>y</sup>

(i) Consultations with national non-governmental organizations and other elements of the civil society.

### B. Field-level committee

24. An effective RCS requires a well-established process of consultation on substantive and administrative issues and for the exchange of information, *inter alia*, with the Government

and other development partners. The General Assembly directives call for the establishment of a field-level committee adapted to local requirements with advisory and programme/project review responsibilities. It should consult with the host Government and reflect the scale of the activities of the United Nations system and the number of United Nations system organizations represented in the country that so justifies this. The membership of the field-level committee normally comprises all resident United Nations system representatives, who should be the heads of the respective offices, under the leadership of the resident coordinator. The committee's membership should be flexible so as to allow all United Nations system organizations to participate fully.<sup>2</sup> Interaction between the field-level committee and national focal points should be encouraged in order to enhance the relations with the Government.

25. The field-level committee, as provided by General Assembly resolutions 47/199 and 50/120 and reflected in the ACC statement on the role and functioning of the RCS (ACC/1995/1 and Corr.1, annex I), "should review substantive activities — including draft country programmes, sectoral programmes and projects — prior to their approval by individual organizations, and should exchange experience acquired, on the understanding that the result of the work of the review committee should be submitted to national Governments for final approval through the national focal points".<sup>aa</sup>

26. In the case of unforeseen/unavoidable absence, an organization is expected to delegate the senior most and most fully briefed representative to a meeting. Field-level committee meetings are usually chaired by the resident coordinator.

27. Coordination meetings should be marked by transparency, agreed agenda and clear records of the action to be taken. The RCS should operate in a collegial and consensual team spirit respectful, and on the basis, of the established specific mandates, programming processes and reporting lines of all participating organizations. In so doing, emphasis should be placed on complementarities in the roles of the United Nations system organizations and the need of a division of labour. Agreed work plans and joint activities in support of national development should constitute the basis for cooperation within the RCS.

28. In accordance with the UNDAF guidelines (sect. 4: "Preparation of the UNDAF: suggested mechanisms"), it is suggested that UNDAF steering committees or task forces report to the field-level committee.

### C. Thematic groups

29. Thematic groups are United Nations system consultation mechanisms at the country-level on specific themes relevant for the development of the host country. Most thematic groups focus on cross-cutting themes emerging from the international conferences. They are often in the form of working groups and their composition and content varies according to the country-specific circumstances. The lead agency principle is normally applied. Key to their effective functioning is an increasing involvement of all relevant development partners present in the country, including the Government, Bretton Woods institutions, regional banks, civil society and the private sector.

30. The thematic groups are the core mechanisms for undertaking the CCA, assessment and analysis, as reflected in the CCA terms of reference. Thematic groups can also play a key role in the preparation of UNDAF. In view of their potential responsibilities, the functions, membership and terms of reference of these groups — for UNDAF formulation and beyond — need to be given careful consideration by the United Nations system country team.

### D. Arrangements with agencies without field-level presence

31. The resident coordinator and the RCS should make a special effort to ensure the involvement of organizations without field-level presence in order to provide effective United Nations system support to national development. Arrangements should be made by the resident coordinator for dealing with organizations of the system without field-level presence, *inter alia*, through the establishment of focal points in the resident coordinator's office for dealing with such organizations<sup>bb</sup> and consultation mechanisms as appropriate. Similarly, the RCs are encouraged to maintain contact with headquarters of organizations without field-level presence in areas requiring substantive and programmatic guidance, such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Organizations without field-level presence should endeavour to keep the resident coordinators fully informed of their activities in respective countries.

### E. Humanitarian coordinator and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General

32. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 46/182, "the resident coordinator should normally coordinate the humanitarian assistance of the United Nations system at the country level. He/She should facilitate the preparedness of the

United Nations system and assist in a speedy transition from relief to development. He/She should promote the use of all locally or regionally available relief capacities. The resident coordinator should chair an emergency operations group of field representatives and experts from the system".<sup>cc</sup> In accordance with agreed Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) consultation arrangements,<sup>dd</sup> the Emergency Relief Coordinator may appoint a humanitarian coordinator who is accountable to the Emergency Relief Coordinator, at the onset of a complex emergency.<sup>ee</sup>

33. In instances where a Special Representative of the Secretary-General has been appointed, he/she will have overall authority with regard to United Nations operations in the designated country, taking into account the mandated responsibilities and financial accountability of individual United Nations entities.<sup>ff</sup> The Special Representative of the Secretary-General should consult and coordinate regularly with the resident coordinator and/or humanitarian coordinator as well as the country team, drawing on their expertise, articulating strategy, and exchanging information, particularly as they related to peace-building initiatives.<sup>gg</sup>

## F. Hiatus arrangements

34. The resident coordinator designates, after consultation with the partners in the system, a senior representative of the United Nations system who is already accredited to the host Government to act as resident coordinator in his/her absence from the country, to ensure continuity in the functioning of the system. If the absence of the resident coordinator is expected to be an extended one, the outgoing resident coordinator should consult with the UNDP Administrator before designating an acting RC.

35. In exceptional cases, particularly in emergency situations, it may be necessary to appoint, after consultations at the level of Headquarters, an acting resident coordinator who is not currently a member of the United Nations country team.<sup>hh</sup>

## G. Work plan and reporting arrangements

36. The resident coordinator, in close collaboration with the United Nations country team, is expected to formulate an annual work plan of the RCS activities for the incoming year. The work plan provides a framework for concerted activities of the United Nations system at the country level, including objectives and expected results, and it is an integral part of the annual report of the resident coordinator.<sup>ii</sup> The work plan is

also used as a basis for the allocation of UNDP's support to the resident coordinator funds (SRC funds) in accordance with the guidelines for the programme support to the resident coordinator.<sup>jj</sup> The work plan of the RCS is the basis for the year-end self-appraisal of the country team. The results of this assessment are reflected in the following year's annual report. The work plan is the basic element for the future performance appraisal of the resident coordinator that is carried out in accordance with the duties and responsibilities contained in the resident coordinator job description. Procedures for the resident coordinator performance appraisal will be conveyed at a later stage.

37. Resident coordinators, together with United Nations country teams, are expected to prepare and present annual reports on the work of the resident coordinator system including the utilization of the SRC funds, along with annual work plans for the following year. The work plan is the basis for the allocation of SRC funds and is one basic element for the performance appraisal of both the resident coordinator and the country team.

## H. Selection of the resident coordinator

38. The nomination and selection of the resident coordinators is based on a new system-wide selection process introduced in May 1998, designed to broaden the pool of candidates considered for the position in order to ensure that the most suitable candidates are selected for the posts on a system-wide basis. A competency-based assessment and the recommendations of an inter-agency advisory panel (IAAP) are integral parts of this new selection process.

39. The competency assessment has been designed especially to help determine suitability of potential candidates as resident coordinators (see attached competencies) and is one of several criteria for selection of candidates. Other key criteria for selection are development knowledge, background, field experience, *inter alia*, on humanitarian situations, and relevant languages.<sup>kk</sup>

### Notes

<sup>a</sup> See ACC background note included in the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ) Operational Activities Reference Manual.

<sup>b</sup> See General Assembly resolution 32/197, para. 34.

<sup>c</sup> See the ACC statement on the role and functioning of the resident coordinator system of February 1995 contained in the CCPOQ Operational Activities Reference Manual.

- <sup>d</sup> See report of the Secretary-General on renewing the United Nations: a programme for reform (A/51/950 and addenda), 14 July 1997.
- <sup>e</sup> See A/51/950, para. 49.
- <sup>f</sup> *Ibid.*, para. 153.
- <sup>g</sup> See ACC/1995/1 and Corr.1.
- <sup>h</sup> For the purpose of these guidelines, the United Nations system organizations are all United Nations funds and programmes, specialized agencies or other entities dealing with country-level operational activities for development.
- <sup>i</sup> See A/51/950, para. 152.
- <sup>j</sup> When the resident coordinator vacancies occur, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator invites the United Nations system organizations to present candidates of the competency assessment. Agencies review the outcome of the competency assessments and determine whether to proceed with the submission of the candidacy to the inter-agency advisory panel (IAAP). For further details, please refer to the Selection Procedures of Resident Coordinators.
- <sup>k</sup> See General Assembly resolution 48/209, para. 4.
- <sup>l</sup> See General Assembly resolution 53/192, sixth preambular paragraph.
- <sup>m</sup> See General Assembly resolution 44/211, fifth preambular paragraph.
- <sup>n</sup> See General Assembly resolution 42/196, preambular paragraph 4, and subsequent resolutions on the TCPR.
- <sup>o</sup> See General Assembly resolutions 53/192, para. 34, and 50/120, para. 39, and Economic and Social Council resolution 1998/44, paras. 12-15.
- <sup>p</sup> See ACC guideline on National Execution contained in the CCPOQ Operational Activities Reference Manual.
- <sup>q</sup> See ACC guideline on Programme Approach contained in the CCPOQ Operational Activities Reference Manual.
- <sup>r</sup> See ACC guidance note on the partnership approach contained in the CCPOQ Operational Activities Reference Manual.
- <sup>s</sup> See Economic and Social Council resolution 98/44, para. 14, and the ACC guidance note on the integrated follow-up by the United Nations system to the major United Nations conferences, of September 1998.
- <sup>t</sup> See General Assembly resolution 44/211, twentieth preambular paragraph.
- <sup>u</sup> See General Assembly resolutions 47/199, para. 40, and 50/120, para. 41.
- <sup>v</sup> The CCA and UNDAF guidelines are included in the CCPOQ Operational Activities Reference Manual.
- <sup>w</sup> See General Assembly resolutions 47/199, 50/120 and 53/192.
- <sup>x</sup> See CCA and UNDAF guidelines included in the CCPOQ Operational Activities Reference Manual and ACC guidance note on the implementation of the CCA and UNDAF processes.
- <sup>y</sup> Separate annual guidelines are issued for the preparation of these reports by the Administrator after consultation with CCPOQ.
- <sup>z</sup> The committee may include representatives who are not physically resident in the country but are directly related to the supervision or management of operations in that country. The decentralization of many organizations with regional and subregional offices will facilitate their participation in the committee. The increasing diffusion of electronic communications through United Nations system organizations makes possible the involvement also of representatives located in the headquarters of the institutions, if so desired by specific organizations.
- <sup>aa</sup> See General Assembly resolution 50/120, para. 41.
- <sup>bb</sup> See ACC statement on the role and functioning of the RCS (ACC/1995/1 and Corr.1, annex I, para. 17).
- <sup>cc</sup> See General Assembly resolution 46/182, annex, para. 39.
- <sup>dd</sup> See IASC recommendations and terms of reference of the humanitarian coordinator.
- <sup>ee</sup> See report of the Secretary-General (A/53/139-E/1998/67), para. 24, endorsed in Economic and Social Council agreed conclusions 1998/1, and General Assembly resolution 53/88 of 7 December 1998.
- <sup>ff</sup> See para. 3 of the Standard Directives for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, 3 August 1998.
- <sup>gg</sup> See para. 7 of the Standard Directives for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, 3 August 1998.
- <sup>hh</sup> See letter of James Gustave Speth of December 1998 to all resident coordinators on the "Acting resident coordinator arrangements".
- <sup>ii</sup> See the outline for the annual report of the resident coordinator.
- <sup>jj</sup> See UNDP Programming Manual of April 1998, chap. 9.
- <sup>kk</sup> See note j for reference, including the Selection Procedures of Resident Coordinators.