

**Stockholm Group for
Development Studies**

LOCKING IN A KEYSTONE OF UN FIELD REFORM

The CCA/UNDAF Experience in Ethiopia and Cambodia

Study commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sweden
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Acronyms Used

ACC	Administrative Committee on Coordination
ADB	Asian or African Development Bank
BWI	Bretton Woods Institutions
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CDF	Country Development Framework
CG	Consultative Group
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
IDA	International Development Association
IDG	International Development Goal
IFI	International Financial Institutions
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOM	International Office for Migration
IPRSP	Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
JICA	Japan International Development Agency
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RC	Resident Coordinator
SWAP	Sector-Wide Approach
UNAIDS	United Nations HIV/AIDS Office
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	UN Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDGO	UN Development Group Office
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDESA	UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs
UNECA	UN Economic Commission for Africa
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNHCHR	United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization
WFP	World Food Programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. As part of the joint Nordic assessment of the UN reform programme at the country level in preparation for the comprehensive triennial policy review 2001, the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs contracted the services of the Stockholm Group for Development Studies to carry out a study of the processes of preparing the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) in Ethiopia and Cambodia. A consultant mission visited Ethiopia from 16 to 24 May and Cambodia from 27 May to 1 June 2001.
2. The CCA and UNDAF are key elements of the reform of the UN operational activities launched by the Secretary-General in 1997. Their aim is to generate a greater integration of the UN agencies working in the field and to enhance the coherence of their programmes in support of the development efforts of the host country.
3. The present report examines the manner in which these instruments of reform and coordination have operated in practice in two rather similar development situations. It looks in particular how the process and product are affected by the basic variables that determine their effectiveness.

Process and product

4. The CCA/UNDAF processes have reached different stages of development in the two countries visited by the Mission. In Cambodia, the CCA was finalized in September 1998 and the UNDAF was issued in May 2000, nearly two years later. In Ethiopia, the CCA had been completed in September 1999 and the UNDAF had only been circulated as a final draft in early 2001. Accordingly, as far as the UNDAF is concerned, the Mission focused on issues related to the process in Ethiopia, whilst in Cambodia it was also in a position to assess the impact of the Framework document.
5. In both countries, the CCA/UNDAF process has been much more time-consuming than foreseen in the Guidelines issued by the UNDG, which recommend that the combined processes should be completed within a year. Aside from drawing attention to the considerable workload that the production of the CCA/UNDAF documents entail, those involved in their preparation however believe there was merit in not rushing the process, at least in the first round of CCAs and UNDAFs, the trade-off being the degree of their acceptance and impact.
6. It should be recognized that, in both countries, the preparation of the CCA/UNDAF coincided with periods of national crisis, in Cambodia with the prolonged political stand-off in 1997-98 followed by a flood disaster in 2000; in Ethiopia with the war in Eritrea and a severe drought in 2000. By all accounts, these events proved to be powerful distractions from normal development

preoccupations, both on the part of the UN agencies and the government. As a result, the pace of UNDAF-related activities suffered.

National participation and ownership

7. Crisis conditions in part explain government attitudes to participation and ownership of the CCA/UNDAF process. In both countries, government participation was minimal if not non-existent. In explaining or justifying low government involvement, UN agencies cited capacity difficulties within central and line ministries. Both governments however felt that if national priorities, as documented in their national five-year plans and other strategy papers, were properly reflected in the UNDAFs, Government ownership was implied and resolved the issue.
8. The Mission recognizes the impact of the special situations, which both countries have experienced in recent years, as well as the lack of capacity among the rank and file within departments. It believes however that a more sustained effort could have been made to secure government participation, if only intermittent.
9. In the interest precisely of building capacity, the Mission recommends that renewed efforts be made to involve national staff in the monitoring and follow-up arrangements planned, so that full or better participation can become a reality in the next generation of CCA/UNDAFs. The Mission also holds that, at the global level of ECOSOC resolutions and UNDG guidelines, allowance should be made for the great variety of situations encountered and that the criteria for participation and ownership be interpreted flexibly.

Donor coordination

10. Both Cambodia and Ethiopia are heavily aid dependent, with aid commitments averaging annually some USD 450 million and USD 500 respectively, excluding relief and humanitarian interventions. About 10 per cent of all aid flows for development is channelled through UN system agencies. On the multilateral side, both the IFIs and the EU are significantly larger donors.
11. As would be expected, the BWI coordination mechanisms play a predominant role, both countries having Consultative Groups (CG). Locally, donor groupings have been formed, with a variety of sectoral sub-committees, which meet on a regular basis. In Ethiopia, a close working relationship exists between the UN system and the BWIs, whose representatives are active members of the UN Country Team (UNCT) and the donor group is co-chaired by the World Bank and the UN Resident Coordinator.
12. In both countries, negotiations with respect to the World Bank-sponsored PRSP and the further progress of the Interim document now on the table dominate the development dialogue amongst donors and with the government. Although UN

agencies have provided consolidated comments on draft texts, there is no evidence that the CCA/UNDAF exercise as such has impacted on the PRSP process.

Impact and value added

13. Lack of impact on donor coordination mechanisms is hardly surprising, given the fact that the CCA and UNDAF, though qualitatively valid documents of their kind¹, have so far been unable to replace the situation analyses and country strategy papers of the larger UN system agencies themselves. Only UNFPA appears ready to dispense with its Country Population Assessment, and smaller agencies that in the past did not produce country strategies say they will henceforth rely on the CCA/UNDAF. Agencies with larger programmes however feel that UNDAFs cannot satisfy their needs for in-depth sectoral analysis.
14. On this score, the Mission recommends that the UNDG make it mandatory for an individual agency to include a clear reference to the UNDAF in country programmes submitted to their respective executive boards for approval. At the country level, UNCTs should be encouraged to collectively appraise individual agency country programmes, as already provided for in the UNDAF follow-up arrangements in Cambodia.
15. It is difficult to gauge the degree to which the CCA/UNDAF process has promoted **team building and inter-agency collaboration**, and any such impact is hardly quantifiable. Many agency representative testify to the fact there is now a greater spirit and sense of unity in the system. Others contend that collaboration has always been present and cite many practical examples to this effect. Cooperation over such matters as HIV/AIDS or mainstreaming gender equality, in the view of some, would have materialised even without the CCA/UNDAF process.
16. There is more common ground with respect to the impact of the process on the Resident Coordinator system. It is felt that the CCA/UNDAF has enhanced the position and authority of the resident coordinator, who had been provided with an additional and important instrument both vis-à-vis the government and in terms of unifying the UN family of agencies.
17. Thus, in both Cambodia and Ethiopia, considerable advances have been made on the matter of **harmonizing programme cycles**, which are progressively being aligned with the national plans. The Mission rates this as the most significant concrete achievement of the CCA/UNDAF process to date. There has however been no corresponding progress on the harmonization of administrative, financial and reporting procedures, an issue of considerable interest to the recipient governments. Essentially, this matter is in the hands of agency headquarters, and

¹ General disappointment was however voiced with respect to the 1998 CCA prepared in Ethiopia.

outside the jurisdiction of field offices. The governing bodies of the individual funds, programmes and agencies must be held responsible for this state of affairs.

International development goals (IDGs)

18. In both countries visited, the UNCTs have - through the CCA/UNDAF process – highlighted global concerns and brought them into the operational sphere by setting up relevant indicator frameworks. In both cases, the emphasis has been on national priorities and on regarding IDGs as supporting national objectives. In general, there has been no difficulty or tension present in the UNDAF serving both national and global goals.
19. In regard to the IDGs, the Mission believes that by giving primary focus to national priorities, the CCA and UNDAF run a high risk of failure as a normative reference document in the broader context of national plans and priorities. In most countries, UN system development assistance is only a small fraction of total aid flows, making it unlikely that the government will commit itself fully to the UNDAF process, as a central feature of its development cooperation with external actors.
20. An alternative would be to give primary emphasis to the IDGs and relate national priorities and targets to the commitments made in the international arena. The CCA/UNDAF could then be regarded as a strategic and programmatic exercise, marshalling the combined resources of the UN system to assist the government in meeting the global targets it has subscribed to.

Special issues

21. Such an approach would lend additional focus and legitimacy to the UNDAF exercise, as a central UN response to the development problems of a member country. Its scope and purpose would be further enhanced by making **conflict prevention and peace building** a cross-cutting issue in the situation analysis and in considering the ensuing strategies. As both Cambodia and Ethiopia are conflict prone, the UNCTs have a good understanding of the need to incorporate conflict prevention as an important concern in their programme planning. The Mission subscribes to the view that conflict prevention and peace building should be an integral ingredient in the next phase of the CCA/UNDAF exercise.
22. On the whole, bilateral aid missions had little to offer by way of assessing the CCA/UNDAF process. Few had a firm recollection of having seen the document, while generally aware of the exercise, which was mainly seen as an internal UN affair. Mostly, it did not occur to these aid offices that the contents of the UNDAF might be relevant to their own programmes. The Mission believes that not enough has been done by the UNCTs in terms of advocacy and to sustain bilateral interest in the process, beyond making initial presentations. UNDAFs have good potential as a **fund-raising tool** at the country level, and bilateral donors should ensure that

- any trust fund or cost-sharing contributions made at the country are fully consistent with UNDAF objectives.
23. There is an over-emphasis on agency **mandates**. Most legislative texts dealing with UN system development activities in the field, while urging coordination, routinely make the caveat that inter-agency cooperation should fully respect the different mandates and sectoral interests of the UN organisations present. The last GA triennial policy resolution even states that "in the context of reform", these mandates should not only be respected but "enhanced".
 24. Such qualifications may appear innocuous but actually reinforce the status quo, inhibiting reform by leading agencies to profile their own contributions to the detriment of the whole. The Mission recommends that an effort be made to modify the language of legislative texts in this regard, making reference to the "competence and functionality" of the different agencies, rather than making emphatic allusions to their mandates.
 25. The Mission also recommends that a system of **incentives** should be put into effect rewarding agencies that make a special effort to integrate their operations with other agencies. Such agencies should be given particular consideration by donor countries when reviewing their aid allocation policies.
 26. In conclusion the Mission finds that realizing the full potential of the CCA/UNDAF is still a distant aim. In the two countries visited, the harmonization of programme cycles has made good progress, and a renewed spirit of collaboration and sense of acting towards a common goal has been created. Among most people interviewed, there is a consensus that the objectives of the CCA/UNDAF process and product are only attainable over time but that its launching has been auspicious.

I. INTRODUCTION

(a) Context

1. Efforts to harmonize the operational activities of the several UN agencies engaged in development work have a long and chequered history. They began in the mid-1970s, with the Jackson Report, when pilot attempts were made to synchronize programme cycles and the preparation of the country programmes of the various agencies present in each country, as a first step towards the distant goal of joint programming. These initiatives made little headway, and common programming by the various UN entities has remained elusive and seemingly unattainable.
2. The reasons why UN agencies have failed to make progress are well known and are rooted in the dynamics of fragmentation that have accompanied the UN system from its beginnings. Member states' governance of the multilateral organizations they have created has been unable to undo these dynamics. Individual agencies remain convinced that sharp profiling of their mandates is the best strategy for securing funding; in general they appear to be rewarded.
3. Recipient governments, for their part, have been a force in the same direction, as individual programming by UN agencies increased the government's choices and strengthened its hand in dealing with outside assistance. At best, development coordination is a difficult proposition. The sustained rhetoric over a long period of time, stressing the need to improve coordination, has produced expectations that in the end could not be satisfied.
4. The pressures for UN reform that arose in the mid-1990s held the promise of creating something of a watershed in multilateral aid administration. The joint Nordic reform proposals that were submitted to the UN task force on reform staked out radical positions, urging extensive consolidations and restructurings that reflected a maximalist approach and were probably unrealistic. Reforms at the country level were seen as the necessary starting point. Emphasis was placed on strengthening the resident coordinator system, and on moving towards the functional integration of funds and programmes, and on unifying agency country offices, physically and administratively. Reforms at UN headquarters should be designed to reinforce the measures taken in the field, to secure consolidated and coherent social and economic development programmes.
5. Although it addressed the need to improve field coordination, the reform programme promulgated by the Secretary-General in 1997 and confirmed by the triennial policy review in 1998 fell far short of the measures recommended by the Nordic group. Nevertheless, the Nordic proposals were retained in part. The drive for common premises and services was to be intensified, the position of the resident coordinator strengthened, and in the field of programming, needs assessments and development assistance frameworks were to be prepared as a joint effort. In terms of common

programming, the language of the reform proposals was however vague, and the individual mandates and sectoral characteristics of each participating agency continued to be stressed.

6. The comprehensive triennial policy review in 2001 is the first opportunity of assessing the initial impact of the UN reforms at the country level. In particular, it is of interest whether the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), rightly seen as primary instruments of coordination and pivotal for the continued progress on other reforms, have lived up to their potentials. In anticipation of the triennial review, several studies and workshops have been carried out to evaluate the CCA and UNDAF, both as a process and a product. In general, the picture they convey is a mixed one.

(b) Some Basic Parameters

7. When introduced as part of the UN field reforms, UNDAFs could already build on a body of experience within the UN development system. Some CCAs had already seen the light of day. They carried forward practices that had developed in crisis and post-conflict situations, where the greater and immediate need for concerted actions for both relief and recovery, among multilateral and bilateral agencies alike, had prompted the elaboration of “strategic frameworks” in many crisis countries. This made for a relatively ready acceptance of new forms of analysis and strategic programming by the various funds and agencies concerned.
8. In addition, the general environment was propitious. There was a sustained demand for follow-up of the calls for action resulting from an increasing number of global conferences, without any obvious instrument to monitor the progress made in individual countries. Multilateral donor agencies were at the same time developing new methods of country analysis, as a basis for their programming, such as the Country Strategy Note (CSN) of the UNDP, the Country Population Analysis of the UNFPA and Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF) of the World Bank.
9. Ready acceptance however does not necessarily mean full commitment to the common scheme of things, or subordination of agency agendas in the interest of moving towards unified action. Structural factors that have impeded joint performance in the past continue to operate. The Mission has accordingly attempted to assess how these factors have played out, insofar the CCA and the UNDAF are concerned, in the two countries visited.
10. It is important to understand how these factors interrelate and impact on approaches adopted at the country level. The Mission singled out the following parameters as having a significant bearing on outcomes:
 - the degree of national leadership that the government brings to bear on the exercise;

- the corporate cultures of participating agencies which continue to place emphasis on sectoral mandates and operational autonomy;
 - the extent to which programme and administrative procedures have been simplified and harmonized;
 - the volume of international aid channelled through the UN system, the reduction in core financing of UN programmes and the expansion of extra-budgetary funding, through trust funds, cost-sharing and parallel financing;
 - the possible tensions between the need to secure national ownership of plans and programmes, and the call for advancing the resolutions of UN thematic conferences and other cross-cutting issues.
11. In the above listing, the issue of national ownership has uncontested pride of place. Only if the national authorities take the lead, procedurally and intellectually, in the process of producing the CCA and the UNDAF, will these instruments command the degree of respect that would induce other funds, programmes and specialized agencies to move towards a single analytical and diagnostic tool, a common planning and strategic exercise, and towards joint programming on any significant scale.
12. What is more, full government leadership and demonstrated use of the CCA/UNDAF as inputs in its own national planning would lend these instruments, if of sufficient quality, enough credibility to play a central role, counter the current proliferation of country analyses and affect the formulation of all other diagnostic documents, including those of international financial institutions and bilateral donor agencies.
13. While there is no lack of rhetorical support, experience shows that the commitment of governments to the CCA/UNDAF process is often blunted in practice and limited to pro forma participation and endorsement of the ready product. Development aid channelled through the multilateral system is usually only a small fraction of the total external development resources a country receives. Despite the repeated calls by the GA for increases in core resources for UN operational activities for development on a continuous and predictable basis, current funding patterns cannot realistically be expected to change.
14. It is easy to see that the government's principal attention will be directed to donors capable of greater generosity than the UN system. The CCA/UNDAF process can then become the victim of official benign neglect, reinforced by the lack of trained staff that many governments experience in this area. This in turn can provide a boost to independent-minded funds and agencies and encourage them to go their own way. Sectoral mandates, institutional autonomy and fragmented approaches would continue to be the order of the day.
15. Basic structural considerations of this kind have a clear bearing on the contents and potential utility of the CAA/UNDAF. Present instructions for the preparation of the CCA direct that it should not only address national priorities and needs but also account for the status of follow-up to UN conferences and for how UN conventions and declarations are implemented.

16. If governments are unable or unwilling to exercise sufficient leadership to take full charge of CCA/UNDAF process, analytical expositions and comprehensive planning strategies relating to national priorities are likely to be seen as extraneous undertakings and have limited impact.
17. As an alternative to this scenario, orienting the process to deal primarily with national efforts and norms relating to global goals and how they relate to national priorities has considerable appeal, as it provides a clear-cut and meaningful United Nations focus to the exercise.
18. Another important structural parameter in judging progress in UN field coordination relates to the time required for making it a reality. Old habits and attitudes, nurtured by ingrained perceptions of vested interest, die hard. The time that has passed since the last triennial policy review is in fact relatively short, considering the attitudinal shifts and scale of change implied by the Secretary-General's reforms. Looking at the history of the various efforts to synchronize programme cycles, let alone embark upon common programming, it is clear that a measure of patience is required on the part of the member states that are now rightfully pressing for operational reform.
19. The Triennial Policy Review and UN system governance through ECOSOC accordingly faces some basic options as to the future orientation of the CAA/UNDAF process and product. In assessing the various parameters and variables at hand, the Mission has attempted to juxtapose present outcomes with the Secretary-General's directives for reform as well as with the vision and structural recommendations made in the Nordic proposals in 1996, and to draw some conclusions along the way.

II. CCA/UNDAF: PURPOSE AND SCOPE

(a) Broad Goals

1. According to the guidelines issued by the UN Development Group (UNDG), the objective of the CCA is "to achieve a deeper knowledge of key development challenges among partners, based on a common analysis and understanding of the development situation of a country and people centered approach". It is further noted that the CCA is undertaken by the UN system with key partners, "in particular with the close involvement of the government". The other partners to be involved are the BWIs, civil society, the private sector and the donor community.
2. The CCA should address both national priorities and needs and the status of the coordinated follow-up to UN conferences and the implementation of UN conventions and declarations. The assessment of the situation should determine which problems exist, as well as identifying opportunities and achievements. The analysis of key areas emerging from the assessment should identify the causes of problems and their interrelationship.
3. The UNDAF is defined as "the planning framework for the development operations of the UN system at country level", with the objective to achieve "greater impact of UN system cooperation on the development and well being of people" through improved focus and results orientation, identification of comparative advantages of the UN system, stronger unity of purpose and team spirit, better integration of the normative and operational aspects of development cooperation, improved division of labour and more efficient use of limited resources. Participation in the UNDAF "requires full Government participation and ownership through the agreement of the recipient Governments concerned to the finalized Framework".
4. The UNDAF should be guided by the findings of the CCA and include national needs and priorities, follow-up of UN conferences and conventions, cross-cutting and regional issues. The UNDAF should state longer term goals for major development impacts, as well as the objectives of the specific contributions from the UN system to the achievement of these development impacts.

(b) Resident Coordinator System

5. The ACC guidelines on the functioning of the RC system (September 1999) state that it encompasses all organisations of the UN system dealing with operational activities for development, whether or not they are represented in the country. The resident coordinator is the designated representative of the Secretary-General and leader of UN country team (UNCT). The BWIs are encouraged to be closely associated with the RC system/country team.

6. The RC system is expected to support recipient government efforts for a coordinated and integrated follow up and implementation of resolutions taken at global conferences, with thematic groups as a key instrument for this task. Among the tasks of the RC system is to prepare the CCA and UNDAF, and to improve cost effective use of common premises and services.

(c) Other coordination mechanisms

7. In January 1999 the World Bank launched a new coordination initiative called the **Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF)**. The CDF is intended as an analytical and strategic framework for development cooperation in a country. It should present structural, social and human aspects of development and is based on the assumption that poverty reduction is only possible if all partners work together within an agreed holistic strategy framework. Cardinal principles of the CDF are that the country is in the driver's seat; all development partners need to participate; the vision is long term (15 - 20 years); and that the structural, social and human elements of development should be balanced with macro financial elements. CDF is currently being piloted in 12 countries, including Ethiopia.
8. In September 1999, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund introduced the **Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)** to provide a link between debt relief and poverty reduction. This process is intended to reflect the principles of the CDF and provide an analysis of poverty and its determinants, to prioritise public actions that have the highest poverty impacts, and to identify and monitor outcome indicators, using participatory processes. PRSPs must be submitted to the executive boards of the World Bank and IMF for their formal endorsement before becoming the framework for their lending operations. By July 2002, it is expected that all World Bank country assistance strategies will be based on the PRSP.
9. **Sector-Wide Approaches (SWAP)**, which have been initiated in the last five years, encompass support for specific sectors at the country level (such as health, education or roads) and represent a significant shift from support to individual projects. SWAPs bring together development partners in a single sector programme and focus discussion and dialogue on national policies and outcome indicators. Ideally, partners agree on goals and objectives, financial and managerial procedures and on the strategy of implementation. Participating donors transfer their contributions to a common pool and organise joint monitoring and evaluations of the entire sector programme. The method is designed to bring about a significant reduction in the costs of providing external support, based on a nationally owned work plan, and associated with unified reporting by the government.

(d) UN assessment of UNDAF

10. In 1998, the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and UN Development Group (UNDG) initiated a first assessment of the UNDAFs implemented in 18 pilot countries in 1998. The same team of experts was invited to undertake another assessment (**2001 External Assessment of the UNDAF**) focused on the effects and impact of the introduction of the UNDAF as means of promoting coherent programming of UN system operational activities and contributing to development in the recipient countries.
11. This assessment is an integral part of the 2001 Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities (TCPR). The assessment is based on contacts with headquarters representatives and visits to six countries. A draft version of the assessment report was discussed in a workshop in March 2001, with representatives of UN organisations at headquarters and in the field, as well as representatives of three governments (one of which was Ethiopia).
12. The report starts with a review of the recommendations made by the team in its first report from 1998. Among the recommendations made that had not been satisfactorily implemented were
 - ensuring ownership by the government;
 - making UNDAF a mandatory background for governing board approval of individual agency country programmes;
 - advancing the harmonization of operational procedures;
 - substituting UNDAF for individual agency planning activities; and
 - placing UNDAF within the overall framework of activities conducted by other actors in the field of development.
13. In qualifying this lack of progress, it is noted that "although it takes time for any reform measure designed to change well established modes of organisations and a traditionally protective culture of management, trends are beginning to manifest themselves, even if more slowly than was originally envisaged". One of the important positive achievements noted is the development of a better team spirit and a stronger sense of collective identity of UNCT. Other achievements noted are in developing partnerships with BWIs and in providing inputs to the PRSP preparatory process.
14. However, the report identifies key obstacles, of which some are the same as in the first assessment referred to above. The report urges that the following constraints be tackled immediately:
 - time-consuming process with high transactional costs;
 - lack of country and government ownership (government and civil society only giving comments on finished products);
 - uneven level of professionalism and technical capacity on the part of UNCT;
 - coexistence of individual organisations' analytical documents along with the CCA;
 - lack of progress on simplifying and harmonising procedures for planning, monitoring, accounting etc.

15. Among the main deficiencies of the CCA and UNDAF as products, the report highlights the fact that many of them are too generalised to serve any serious planning purpose; many lack information on how the focus of UN activities has been chosen within the framework of government priorities and contributions by other donors; and that they are generally of low quality.
16. The recommendations of the report include
 - ensuring government ownership of the process and the product;
 - improving the content of the UNDAF;
 - focusing on cross-cutting issues rather than sectors;
 - providing guidance on the interaction with the CDF and PRSP;
 - ensuring that global goals provide the focus for the CCA diagnostic exercise.
17. Additional to the assessment referred to above, UNDGGO commissioned **a study of CCA and UNDAF documents** from 15 countries participating in the pilot phase, in order to analyse and draw lessons from them (P. Matthews, February 2000). The main findings and recommendations of this study were similar to those reached one year later, and stressed that:
 - the processes were time-consuming and required simplification and streamlining of other tasks;
 - analysis must feature more prominently to indicate key strategic areas for UN system support and to determine its comparative advantage.
18. In particular the study recommends that the CCA and UNDAF focus primarily on global conference issues. Only national priorities relating to global targets should be dealt with. This would give the exercise more focus and coherence and the UN interest in the follow up of global conferences would lend it uncontested legitimacy.

III. CCA/UNDAF IN ETHIOPIA

(a) The Process and Product

(i) Timing, sequencing and results

1. **Common Country Assessment.** Ethiopia was not among the original 18 countries selected as pilots for the production of UNDAFs but received the green light for its preparation, despite the fact that it did not meet an essential criteria spelt out in the Guidelines. The Guidelines specify in fact that UNDAFs should normally be prepared in countries that have both (a) completed a CCA, and (b) harmonized the programme cycles of the participating funds and programmes.
2. Although a CCA had been finalized in September 1999, Ethiopia had not even begun to tackle the task of synchronizing programme cycles. Ethiopia was however allowed to proceed, *inter alia* on the grounds that the large number of agencies involved made it unlikely that the second condition could be met in the foreseeable future, and that in any event the production of the UNDAF would serve to facilitate agreement when negotiating the harmonization of programme cycles.²
3. The work on preparing a CCA was initiated in late 1997 by an inter-agency task force comprising representatives of 9 agencies under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator. It proved to be a time-consuming exercise. In particular, the statistical underpinnings and indicators, including regional variations, were not readily available and had to be assembled from a wide variety of sources. The cooperation of key government institutions was sought from the start. Eventually, the drafting work was assigned to a national consultant, working under the guidance of a technical committee, which was expanded to include staff from two Ministries and the Central Statistical Office as well as an NGO representative.
4. The CCA took almost two years to complete, rather than the four months suggested in the Guidelines. It should be noted that the revised Guidelines for the preparation of CCAs were issued in April 1999, and that much of the preparatory work was conducted without the benefit of the experience made elsewhere.
5. There was considerable dissatisfaction with the CCA as finally presented. It was poorly focused and consisted mainly of a running commentary of the statistical parameters assembled. There was little analysis of the causal relationships among the various structural and other elements that place Ethiopia at the bottom of the poverty league in Sub-Saharan Africa, and offered little basis for the articulation of programme

² The Resident Coordinator expressed the view that prevailing attitudes among the agencies of the UNCT made even preliminary agreement on the harmonization of programme cycles unrealistic at that stage. Rather, the process of producing the UNDAF would dictate the pace of progress on harmonization; it was accordingly justified in this case to put the cart before the horse.

strategies. Apart from putting together a potentially useful body of statistical data, its impact can therefore be rated as minimal if not counterproductive in terms of the quality of UN coordination effort.

6. Part of the problem was attributed to the fact that the services of an outside consultant had been used. A second reason is that the resident coordinator position was virtually unmanned for the best part of a year, producing a gap in the all-important leadership. It was therefore decided to repair the damage in the context of the UNDAF; it was also agreed that for better internalisation of the issues among the staff of UNCT member agencies, the use of external consultants would henceforth be dispensed with.
7. **UN Development Assistance Framework.** An UNDAF Technical Committee was formed in early 2000, this time with access to revised UNDAF guidelines, and with some guidance from the UN Development Group Office (UNDGO) at headquarters and the UN Staff College in Turin. The first task of the UNCT and its technical committee was to reach consensus on an overarching goal for UN development cooperation, and rationalize the choice of themes of critical relevance to this goal.
8. Following extensive internal consultations, during regular meetings, special workshops and retreats, the Heads of the UNCT agencies agreed that the overarching goal was "...to contribute towards reducing absolute poverty". Agreement proved to be more difficult than anticipated, as some agencies did not find ready direct or salient linkages between ongoing interventions and the principal poverty reduction objective. Starting with a score of possible relevant themes, the choice was eventually narrowed down to six thematic areas and four cross-cutting issues, being of particular importance to the central objective, for special treatment in the UNDAF document.
9. Thematic groups for each substantive area were then created with the participation of the agencies interested in a particular theme as being relevant to their programmes and projects. Many agencies accordingly helped to staff up several thematic working groups.
10. Government officials and NGO representatives having an interest in the subject matter discussed by the thematic groups were invited on an ad hoc basis to attend meetings, but such participation does not seem to have been regular or extensive.
11. At the annual Heads of Agency Retreat June 2000, a special effort was made to widen the circle of consultation, with seven senior officials of the federal Government and some 15 officers of regional governments taking part. In addition, a number of representatives of major aid agencies and NGOs attended the retreat. Although the purpose was to present preliminary ideas as to the various principles and issues involved, there was at that stage no draft document providing an opportunity for participants to make specific comments on the UNDAF exercise.
12. The work of the thematic groups was compiled and synthesized over the next six months, in the course of which government officials, donor partners and representatives

of the NGO community were kept posted on the progress of the UNDAF preparation. While bilateral donors and non-UN agencies are familiar with the initiative in a general way, they have not seen any texts, and the Mission understands that much remains to be done before the UNDAF concept has penetrated the minds of medium-ranking national personnel in the Ethiopian ministries immediately concerned.

13. The final draft of the UNDAF document was circulated for comments and/or approval to UN system agencies and Government entities in January 2001. Other stakeholders, civil society organizations and external development partners will be consulted at a workshop to be organized following government approval. The Framework will be issued in its definitive version in September 2001, remain operative for a 3-year period 2002-2004, and serve as reference tool and guide for greater programme coherence and for taking the next steps towards common programming.
14. As against the time frame of three months for the preparation of the UNDAF, suggested in the Guidelines, the UNDAF in Ethiopia will have taken 18 months to complete. Significant delays are attributable to the fact that the year 2000 was one of emergency as a result of drought and war, and devoted to dealing with the humanitarian crisis. A special and time-consuming effort was made to solicit contributions from non-resident UN agencies. Those involved in the exercise insist furthermore that any attempt to rush the process of preparing the UNDAF would have been to the detriment of its acceptance and usefulness. Taking into account the inertia that has slowed down UN system reform in the field and that must be overcome, the Mission does not argue the point.
15. The final document is a valid strategy statement. The Mission does not have a basis for questioning the strategic and programme planning options made, and the jury is still out, as the government and other development partners have not yet pronounced on the outcome. Within the system, however, there is full agreement with its general conclusions and a conviction that a first significant step has been taken by the UNCT to provide a more coherent framework for future action.

(ii) The place of international development goals (IDGs)

16. In terms of the Guidelines, the CCA and UNDAF should be devoted not only to national needs and priorities, but also provide a coordinated follow-up to UN conferences and support for the implementation of conventions and summit declarations. The declaration on the millennium development goals of last year's gathering of heads of state and government in New York has lent additional impetus and focus to this requirement.
17. While the CCA is long on statistics, there is virtually no attempt to relate national indicators to the targets established by international conferences and declarations. In this regard, the CAA for Ethiopia has not complied with the guidelines, and a significant opportunity was missed to provide a more systematic consideration of this perspective for the next stage of the process.

18. To repair matters, a systematic effort was undertaken in early 2000 to review the status of follow-up and implementation of global targets, and a comprehensive document was issued by the Resident Coordinator's office on the subject. The draft UNDAF is thus generally well aligned with prevailing IDGs, starting with the poverty reduction targets expressed with its overarching goal. Several component themes and cross-cutting issues have been inspired by the normative resolutions of these conferences, and have been well integrated with the national priorities of the second five-year plans, with the UNDAF offering intermediate indicators for the attainment of the various targets.
19. National objectives and priorities are generally consistent with those set internationally, although Ethiopia lags far behind many of the indicators agreed to at these conferences. Because of low baseline conditions in terms of these indicators in Ethiopia, the challenge of reaching them may be greater, but in general there has been no conflict or tension between the need to operationalize national priorities and global action plans.

(iii) Government participation and ownership

20. Basic UN legislation and the UNDG guidelines for the preparation of CCAs and UNDAFs are very specific and clear about the matter of ownership of the process and product, in that they require the government's full participation in the process and its agreement to the finalized Framework.
21. In the Mission's view, full government participation in the Ethiopian context would as a minimum require the regular attendance of government officials in the UNCT Technical Committee and in the thematic working groups, though not necessarily that such officials would take on drafting assignments. Judged by this standard, it cannot be said that the UNDG instruction has been complied with.
22. The UNCT will admit this but hold that national participation is implicit where national plans and a variety of government strategy documents are available and form the basis for government strategies as expressed in the UNDAF. Agencies furthermore contend that inasmuch as the UNDAF reflects a UN system response to national development priorities, a document of this kind cannot be as fully government-driven as the guidelines imply, and that government endorsement of the final product in fact resolves the matter.
23. Reservations of this kind result in part from a certain ambivalence vis-à-vis UNDAF on the side of the Government. Much the same position was in fact stated to the Mission by the Vice-Minister for Economic Development and Cooperation who argued that given the existence of a national plan he was confident that this would determine the contents of the UNDAF and that the Governments should not have to produce a second

plan for the purposes of the UN system, whose ability or capacity to respond they could in any event not determine.³

24. Not that the Ethiopian government is disinterested in the UNDAF product; its interest is however for reasons other than being a central strategy and planning document. As testified by the Resident Coordinator, the Government valued UNDAF as a central feature of the RC system, providing a single interlocutor for the UN agencies and holding out the promise of harmonizing implementation procedures, under NEX, the national execution modality. The Government has on several occasions expressed concern as to the many agencies claiming its attention and accordingly welcomes the prospect of rationalization in this area.
25. By his own admission, the Resident Coordinator had not pressed the government for full participation in the Technical Committee or in the thematic groups, in the conviction that such participation would risk delaying the process significantly, and that the main challenge was for the UN system to put its own house in order first. He believed also that many objectives of the UNDAF initiative, being a very complex process, would only be achievable in the second round of the exercise.

(iv) Follow-up and monitoring provisions

26. According to the draft UNDAF, the UNCT will ensure that individual agency programmes develop mechanisms for synchronizing procedures. The process of inter-agency collaboration will be facilitated by the Resident Coordinator and promoted through a) continued monthly meetings of heads of agency; b) harmonization of programme cycles of all agencies; c) joint programme identification missions; d) joint financing; e) participation of members of the UNCT in the formulation and appraisal of each other's programmes.
27. Follow-up of the UNDAF will be ensured through joint monitoring and annual reviews to assess the achievements of the UN assistance in relation to the indicators and targets identified in the UNDAF, where relevant in combination with monitoring arrangements of government sector development programmes. The UNDAF Technical Committee will continue to serve as a mechanism for tracking progress, identifying gaps and recommending remedial measures. Furthermore the theme groups will be maintained to participate in the formulation of collaborative programmes.

(v) Capacity building

³ Similar views were echoed at the UNDAF Assessment Workshop held at Princeton in early March. Officials from two of the three participating governments, including Ethiopia, opined that the issue of ownership should be interpreted flexibly, and take into account the conditions prevailing in the country concerned. This view however runs counter to the assessment made by several persons consulted by the Mission who qualified the Government's insistence on national ownership in other situations as being "extremely possessive".

28. The elaboration of a consolidated UNDAF requires a critical mass of staff with analytical capacity and overview, both within the Resident Coordinator office and the individual agencies. At the same time the UNDAF process has considerable training value for individual staff members participating in the process and the institutional capacity of the UNCT to work as a team. If handled properly, it represents an excellent opportunity also to create or raise capacity within government departments. It is possible that the groundwork laid and the experiences gained in this first UNDAF cycle could lead to both further capacity building in preparation of the next UNDAF, and a shorter and more systemized time of preparation of the actual document.

(vi) The incidence of aid flows

29. Total grant and concessional aid to Ethiopia in 1999 amounted to USD 700 million, of which about 200 million qualifies as humanitarian assistance. Some 60 million of the resources earmarked for development are channelled through the UN system, or about 12 per cent of all aid flows for development. The balance of 440 million comes from bilateral sources, IFIs and the EU.

30. Perceptions as to the volume and origin of external resources are probably significant when assessing the Government's willingness to assume ownership of programme planning processes and strategy documents. In the Resident Coordinator's annual report for the year 2000, the contributions of the World Bank (IDA) and of IMF are listed together with those of the UN system agencies under the multilateral heading. It is unlikely that the government sees it this way or will treat support from these sources in equal fashion.

31. As far as the UNDAF is concerned, the World Bank and IMF have contributed to its elaboration and are signatories to the final document. This does not mean that the Bank regards the UNDAF as a strategy formulation for its own lending, or that the government would refer to it in its dealings with the Bank. Separate diagnostic and strategic frameworks have been prepared for these purposes, as described in the following Section.

32. It is noteworthy that in the case of the EU, which provides about 20 per cent of all development aid, the programme strategy exercise, the Country Support Strategy (CSS), represents a joint effort by the EU and the government, as prescribed by the Cotonou Agreement. While most of the drafting would be in the hands of EU staff, no outside consultants are used, and the involvement of government officials in the exercise was reported to be strong.

33. Humanitarian support and development assistance are not accounted for separately in the Resident Coordinator's report. Since there are strong linkages between the two categories of aid, a good case may be made to merge the two categories. Again, the Government is of a different view and sees them as separate entities, relief and emergency allocations representing contributions outside existing development aid

commitments. It is therefore unlikely that emergency aid to Ethiopia could be incorporated in an instrument such as the UNDAF.

34. It is difficult to escape the conclusion that the Government's interest in taking full ownership of the UNDAF process is also a function of the level of resources made available through the agencies of the UN system. Without the leverage of a significantly larger volume of UN development aid, the Government is likely to hold on to its present position.

(b) Impact and Value Added of the CCA/UNDAF

35. When assessing the impact and value added of the CCA and UNDAF, it should be noted that the preparation of the CCA took place some years ago (1997 to 1999). Its main impact consisted in learning how to organize a viable internal process, rather than the CCA having an impact as a product. As for the preparation of the UNDAF, it built on the experiences of the CCA process, with the intention also to fill in gaps in the analysis left by the CCA. It should also be noted that the UNDAF is still a draft document, and has yet to be accepted by the government and reviewed by donors and representatives of the civil society. It is therefore premature to assess the full impact and value added of the UNDAF. This should be kept in mind while reading the preliminary findings presented below.

(i) Harmonization of programme cycles and procedures

36. The UNDAF has a three-year time horizon (2002 – 2004), setting targets for selected global goals to be reached in six areas of the major challenges defined. The three-year perspective was chosen in order to have a reasonable, not overly prolonged time horizon for the main priorities in a country where the political and economic situation is apt to change, even in the short term.
37. Regarding the adjustment of country programme cycles between the different agencies in Ethiopia, UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA are now ready to join a common 5-year programme cycle starting in 2002. To achieve this, UNICEF has implemented a two-year bridging country programme 1999 - 2001. WFP plans to join the common programme cycle in 2003 when its present cycle ends. Most other agencies have not introduced formal country programme cycles. This harmonization of country programme cycles among the major agencies must, if finally approved by the respective headquarters, be considered an important impact of the UNDAF process
38. As far as harmonization of procedures is concerned, there is so far little progress presented. This is a question of negotiation and decision primarily at the level of headquarters. Notably, several government representatives informed the Mission that, in their view, harmonization of procedures would be one of the most important results of the UNDAF process.

(ii) Value as situation analysis and overall strategy for individual agencies

39. All agencies agree in principle that the CCA and UNDAF should be the analytical and strategic base for their country programmes. However, agencies with relatively substantial programmes and resources such as WFP and UNICEF, consider that they need deeper analysis in their specific areas of interest, and therefore have to produce their own analytical documents. According to some opinions expressed, there is a risk that with so many different interests and aspects to accommodate in the UNDAF, the final result may prove too general in content and reflect only a minimum degree of consensus and joint assessment of priorities.
40. UNFPA on the other hand, stated it will use the UNDAF instead of making its own Country Population Assessment. Specialized agencies with relatively small programmes such as FAO, will use the CCA/UNDAF as their reference documents, as they would normally not prepare their own country analysis or strategy. So far, none of the governing bodies of the different agencies has indicated that the individual country programmes should be based on an approved UNDAF, although the majority of agency representatives think this ought to be the case.

(iii) Fund-raising and advocacy

41. The UNDAF in Ethiopia does not include data on the financial resources needed to implement the strategic challenges identified, due to the difficulty of estimating potentially available resources for the different agencies. A task force will be created within UNCT for resource mobilisation, which will identify potential donors and develop concrete proposals.
42. As the UNDAF has not been finally accepted by the government, it has not yet been used as a tool for fund-raising or advocacy. However, as mentioned below, it is expected that the UNDAF could serve as the UN contribution to the up-coming CG meeting and constitute an entry point for sensitising bilateral donors as to the importance of the UNDAF.

(iv) Inter-agency collaboration and team building

43. In Ethiopia, inter-agency collaboration mainly takes the form of coordinating programmes and activities among agencies involved in the same sector or in cross-cutting themes such as HIV/AIDS, rather than through joint programming. In the case of HIV/AIDS, the theme group and technical working group of UNAIDS have been actively promoting coordination and collaborative initiatives among the different members of the UNCT, in the spirit of the UNDAF guidelines.
44. Most agencies say that the UNDAF process has created a stronger team spirit within the UNCT. However, there are other mechanisms that have already led to increased collaboration for some time. One such mechanism is the sector development programmes (health and education), where coordination mainly between WHO,

UNICEF, WFP, World Bank and bilateral donors has been a feature of aid operations since 1997.

45. The other mechanism of ongoing collaboration and coordination is the response to emergency situations during recent years, where coordination is perceived by various UN agencies to be functioning well. The UN Disaster Management Team, composed by the Heads of Agencies, has weekly meetings for assessment, planning and coordination. During 2000 the UNCT launched three successive consolidated appeals, involving activities of WFP, UNICEF, UNFPA, WHO, UNHCR, IOM and UNDP.
46. There seems to be a shared view among several agencies, including the World Bank, that the most practical form of collaboration is through parallel financing of coordinated activities, rather than funds channelled through a single agency⁴. This is not only due to the individual agency's desire for visibility, but also to the complexity of co-financing and pooling arrangements for most UN agencies, including the application of overhead charges. A mechanism that has been successfully implemented on one occasion is the channelling of funds donated by Holland to UNCT as a Trust Fund and then distributed by the Resident Coordinator to different agencies for financing emergency activities.

(v) The Resident Coordinator system

47. The Resident Coordinator illustrated the functioning of the UN system in Ethiopia, and the degree of collaboration and intended harmonization among the agencies, by placing them in three concentric circles. In the inner circle are the members of UNDG (UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP), which are under formal instructions to pursue coordination and harmonization. In the next circle are agencies such as UNIDO, FAO and ILO, which are strongly committed to closer coordination and reportedly candidate members of the UNDG. The outer circle contains the more technically oriented specialized agencies, most of them non-resident, committed in varying degrees to moving towards improved coordination and collaboration; this circle would also include the World Bank. UNAIDS is, as noted above, promoting collaboration in its area of interest among all agencies at different levels.
48. There is a general opinion among the UNCT that the UNDAF process has strengthened the RC system, but also that, vice versa, the present Resident Coordinator has personally played a key role in bringing the agencies together in the process of preparing the UNDAF. It is also noted that the role of the Resident Coordinator has been strengthened by the need to coordinate emergency activities.
49. The leadership qualities of the incumbent Resident Coordinator were stressed by several agencies. A specific feature of the coordinating role of the Resident

⁴ With reference to the UNDG Guidance Note on Preparing Joint Programmes, this means a preference for Option II in this Note - Financial accountability shared by participating UN agencies.

Coordinator in Ethiopia is the presence, in the Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), of a more senior UN official, which could become a factor in the coordination of the UN system in the country. This possible complication had however been resolved to everybody's satisfaction, with the designation of a senior UNECA director as member of the UNCT. It should also be noted that the World Bank and IMF are active members of the UNCT since 1999, which is not the case in all countries.

50. The time devoted by the Resident Coordinator to the preparation process of UNDAF has been substantial and amounted to about 25 % of his working time during the most intensive period from April to October 2000.⁵ This work has focused mainly on regular and ad hoc meetings and discussion with the heads of agencies and even more so with the different working groups responsible for drafting the UNDAF document.
51. For the coming period, the financial and staff resources of the Resident Coordinator office are judged inadequate to the regular follow-up and promotion needed to achieve the increased collaboration envisaged in the UNDAF. Despairing of any budget increase, the Resident Coordinator intends to approach bilateral donors supporting the UN reform process with requests for staff secondments.
52. In relation to the function of the present RC system, it is clear that the UN system has gradually become more fragmented during the last two decades, as compared with the 1970-ties, when UNDP was the central source of funding for development (technical assistance) and also responsible for the country representation of the non-resident funds and specialized agencies. On the other hand, except for situations where the World Bank was an executing agency for UNDP, links were earlier not very close at the country level between the UN agencies and the BWIs.⁶

(vi) BWIs and other coordination mechanisms

53. There has not been any Consultative Group meeting for Ethiopia since 1996, due mainly to the war with Eritrea. However, a regular consulting and coordination mechanism among the donor agencies present in Ethiopia (Development Assistance Group) has been in place since some years back, in the form of monthly meetings co-chaired by the Resident Coordinator and the World Bank Representative. A formal CG meeting is now being planned for early 2002, to which the finalized UNDAF document could serve as the consolidated input of the UN system.
54. As mentioned above, close relations between the UN system and the BWIs have been in place for some years. For the World Bank, this collaboration is seen as necessary

⁵ In general the time devoted to the Resident Coordinator function and to the function as Resident Representative of UNDP is in the ratio of 50/50.

⁶ In 1980, the UNDP office in Ethiopia integrated the operations of FAO, UNIDO and WFP, under one country representative. UNFPA was about to join. The single most important factor in causing the collapse of the then burgeoning UN system has been the progressive decline in the core funding of UNDP activities.

to coordinate the overall effort and the existence of many parallel financing arrangements. At the sector level, the sector development programmes in health, education and roads have also served as coordinating mechanisms between the UN organisations, the Bank and other donors.

55. Ethiopia was initially among the 12 CDF pilot countries, but due to limited capacity in the government and because of the war with Eritrea, the CDF has not been implemented. On the other hand, the government has prepared an Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (IPRSP), with support from the Bank and IMF and in consultation with the EU and the ADB. Although the UNDAF process started before the IPRSP was prepared, the latter has been used as an input for the UNDAF, reinforcing its main focus of contributing towards poverty reduction in Ethiopia.
56. The interim and full PRSP, as process and document, clearly play a more important role as a basic strategy and coordinating mechanism between the government and the donors, than the UNDAF is able to do. This is mainly due to the influence of the PRSP on debt relief and Bank lending.

(c) The Bilateral Perspective

57. The Mission had the opportunity of interviewing representatives of three Nordic missions and two other important donors, Canada and the Netherlands, but not the largest donor agencies, USAID and JICA; nor did it meet with the only two major donors, Italy and Ireland, that had in fact increased their development assistance during the period of war with Eritrea. The views expressed in this section are therefore not necessarily representative.
58. In addition, bilateral missions, while aware of the ongoing CCA/UNDAF process, have not been directly involved. Only one aid mission visited, the Netherlands, had been among the five bilateral donors present at the UNCT Retreat in June 2000. None of the bilateral aid agencies has in fact seen the final draft version of the UNDAF document, which is currently under review by the Government. Following its approval, the Resident Coordinator plans to convene a consultation workshop with bilateral stakeholders.
59. Representatives of the bilateral missions met were accordingly unable to comment on either the UNDAF process or product. In general, their expectations were seen in terms of the ongoing negotiation with the Government on the IPRSP, as discussed in the previous section. Some speculated whether the UN system, through the UNDAF, could lend additional weight to the widespread scepticism among bilateral actors with respect to the Government's key strategy for economic growth, labelled "Agriculture Development Led Industrialization" (ADLI), or question government policies designed to improve basic food security, perceived as being more or less non-existent.

60. After some twenty years of repeated drought emergencies, entailing massive provisions of food aid, bilateral donors are understandably anxious to see meaningful strategies that stand a chance of lifting Ethiopia out of its “institutionalised emergency”. No population policies or effective strategies of combating environmental degradation, no commitments to land reform or effective grain marketing and distribution mechanisms, designed to achieve this transition are - in the bilateral view - visible on the horizon, and the implied question seemed to be whether the UN system could be a factor in moving a different agenda forward.
61. Such expectations place the UN system in an invidious position, as the UNDAF process would by definition be unable to mount a challenge to long-held official policies, which the Government is defending with considerable vigour. The Mission believes that if a major external actor like the World Bank does not have the leverage to induce a change of approach, the onus for doing so cannot be placed on the UN system.

IV. CCA/UNDAF IN CAMBODIA

(a) The Process and Product

(i) Timing, sequencing and results

1. Neither the CCA nor the UNDAF provides information on how the process was initiated or organized, on mechanisms used to agree on draft texts and on what steps were taken to prepare for and reach the substantive decisions made by the UNCT, such as the choice of areas of concentration, and of their sub-components, that together would add up to the UNDAF strategy.
2. With respect to the CCA, it must be recognized that 1998 was an election year coinciding with a prolonged political crisis, which disrupted the normal course of its preparation. The Mission found that there was little institutional memory regarding the process and no record of lessons learned. Only one of the ten UN agency representatives that signed off on the CCA in October 1998 was still in Cambodia to underwrite his agency's commitment to the UNDAF some 18 months later, in May 2000.
3. Beyond providing the basis for the configuration of the UNDAF, and for the CCA indicator framework, there seemed to be little further use that could be made of the CCA as an analytical and diagnostic document. Government work on its own five-year Second Socio-Economic Development Plan was still a year away.
4. The turnover of senior UN staff within the space of two years, which included a change of incumbent in the Resident Coordinator position, highlights the lack of continuity inherent in the system. With each change of agency head, there is a new learning curve that must follow its course; cumulatively, this was seen as a significant problem, mentioned by several of the persons interviewed. The Resident Coordinator indicated that the UNDAF process was well under way when she arrived in Cambodia and that she found little reason to change the approaches adopted.
5. Work on the UNDAF document began in the second quarter of 1999, once preoccupations with the unsettled political situation in 1998 had lapsed. Half a dozen working groups, formal and informal middle-level groups, covering the main categories and sub-components making up the framework, were set up to discuss and review draft texts. An outside facilitator, a consultant with training and experience in the UNDAF process, helped to consolidate drafts from the various thematic groups; these were then pasted on to UNCT working groups, which edited the material presented. Final language editing was carried out by the WHO Representative, deemed to possess the best Kings English abilities within the UNCT.
6. As a diagnostic exercise, the Mission rates the CAA as a valid analysis of the development situation in Cambodia. If as discussed in a following section, its

usefulness has been limited to serve as a guide for the preparation of the UNDAF and for the establishment of an indicator framework, the reasons for this is not in the quality of the product but should be sought elsewhere.

7. While building on the conclusions of the CCA, the UNDAF was in turn prepared at a time when the participating agencies were in the business of finalizing their country programmes, timed to coincide with the inception of the Second Socio-Economic Development Plan in 2001. Rather than a strength, this timing turned out to be a weakness; country programmes were being elaborated, before the strategies that were intended to orient the same country programmes had been finally agreed.
8. It must be concluded that, because of the delays in its preparation, the UNDAF was badly mistimed. In consequence, the final UNDAF document has the character of a presentation of programmes already decided upon rather than providing a strategic direction for the choices to be made when work started on the country programmes.

(ii) The issue of government ownership

9. In terms of associating the Government with the preparation of the UNDAF, the Resident Coordinator and the members of the UNCT admit that no attempt was made to involve government departments and officials in the process. In all probability this also applies to the CCA.
10. Government representatives were not invited to any working group discussions and were not involved in the selection of areas of programme concentration or in the choice of sub-components and cross-cutting themes. Reportedly, line ministries were briefed on the progress of work by the respective agency heads, who explained (sic) to the government the choices made.
11. The final UNDAF draft was circulated to government departments (with an executive summary in Khmer) some three weeks ahead of a consultation meeting attended by a score of vice-ministers and departmental under-secretaries at which a presentation of UNDAF was made in a question and answer session. A second presentation was made to a meeting of bilateral donors and organizations of civil society the following day. Members of the bilateral donor community who were present on the occasion confirm that the UNDAF document was perceived as the UN system response to national priorities and were not aware of any claim that the UNDAF would also be a government-owned strategy formulation.
12. It is hard to see that these arrangements meet the criteria for full government participation in the formulation of the UNDAF and for ownership of the end product, that are prescribed in the Guidelines. Again, it should be recognized that, in early 1999 following the resolution of the political crisis, the Cambodian administration was not sufficiently organized to participate in an exercise such as the preparation of an UNDAF. Were the process to have begun today, it would have been another matter. Members of the UNCT also say that they regarded the lack of capacity within

the central and line ministries and the dearth of English-speaking officials able to make a contribution at technical meetings, as an insurmountable obstacle.

13. Considerations of this kind should not be dismissed lightly. Many of the persons interviewed by the Mission drew attention to the plethora of seminars, strategy papers and draft country programmes that the few qualified staff in the administration have to deal with on a routine basis.
14. Senior government officials accept that they have a problem in this regard, but indicate that they would still have welcomed an invitation to participate, if only because of the training value of such participation. The Mission believes that an effort should have been made by the UNCT to invite government participation. Departments might have been unable to take advantage of the offer in many cases, but the opportunity should have been provided, given the capacity-building inherent in the exercise.
15. It is difficult to gauge whether Government interest in participating in an effort such as the UNDAF is also a function of the volume of funds made available through the UN system. Since the early 1990s the UN agencies have built up a relatively strong position in the country as trusted partners, but as one government official put it, aid contributions through the UN are declining and “money speaks”. UN system agencies have in recent years provided on average some 10 per cent of total aid flows; to this should be added bilateral contributions channeled through UN agencies for specific programmes. Even discounting humanitarian assistance, the UN may therefore rate higher as a purveyor of external support in Cambodia than in most other countries.

(iii) The place of international development goals (IDGs)

16. International development goals are well integrated in both the CCA and the UNDAF. National priorities, the areas of concentration for UN assistance and sub-components where applicable, are juxtaposed with targets agreed upon at global conferences.
17. Using indicator framework models recommended by headquarters, and based on the analysis performed in the CCA, the programme outcomes resulting from the implementation of the UNDAF have furthermore been supplemented by a detailed indicator framework with disaggregated data relevant to the various programme segments and cross-cutting themes included in the UNDAF.

(iv) Follow-up and monitoring provisions

18. Since the UNDAF is not only a product but a process, a variety of monitoring mechanisms are provided for in the document, starting with the UNCT meetings every six weeks, which would feature the UNDAF as a regular agenda item. In addition, a Monitoring Working Group consisting of deputies or equivalent is to follow up on all matters related to the implementation of UNDAF strategies on behalf

of the UNCT. Joint thematic or sector reviews may further be undertaken by individual organisations and look at the progress achieved against the stated objectives in a particular sector.

19. An annual work plan, to be included in the Resident Coordinator's Annual Report, annual reviews addressing issues arising with respect to the management of the process, results and outcomes, as well as a mid-term evaluation scheduled for the second half of 2003, are additional elements of the planned follow-up arrangements. An important coordination tool is the CCA Indicator Framework, which will be continuously updated and used as benchmarks in assessing progress towards international development goals.
20. Although the UNDAF is now a year old, few of these review mechanisms had come into play. The Annual Work Plan contained in the Resident Coordinator's Report is less of a work plan than an itemization of UNDAF objectives. The Monitoring Working Group has yet to be established, due in part to the rotation of key staff. There was at this stage, therefore, no internal critical assessment of how the UNDAF process/product had performed to date.

(b) Impact and ValueAdded of the CCA/UNDAF

21. The CCA was finalized in October 1998 and has been used as a background by different agencies while presenting their own country situation analysis and programmes, but has not replaced similar analytical papers prepared by the individual agencies. Instead, the main impact of the CCA is that it has served as a basis for the preparation of the UNDAF and for the configuration of the Indicator Framework.
22. The UNDAF was completed in May 2000, and has therefore been in place during a year. The findings presented below attempt to capture the relative impact of the UNDAF as a process and a final product. Lack of continuity appears to have been a problem. The fact that several Agency representatives have been rotated since the UNDAF was issued has probably been a factor in what appears as a lack of follow-up in the process.

(i) Harmonization of programme cycles and procedures

23. The UNDAF in Cambodia has a five-year time horizon (2001 - 2005). Three members of UNDG (UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA) have already started programme cycles coinciding with this period. WFP is presently implementing a relief and recovery programme ending in 2003, and plans a two-year bridging programme in 2004 - 2005, to synchronize with the other three agencies as from 2006. For its part, WHO has prepared its own Country Cooperation Strategy for Cambodia covering two budget periods up to 2004.

24. A significant achievement of the UNDAF process in Cambodia has accordingly been the harmonization of programme cycles. So far no particular actions have been taken on the part of the UN system in Cambodia to harmonize programme and administrative procedures between the different agencies, although some representatives recognize that the different reporting procedures among the agencies must be a serious problem for the government.

(ii) Value as situation analysis and overall strategy for individual agencies

25. None of the agencies has used the CCA or the UNDAF as a substitute for its own analysis and overall strategy, although all agencies have made partial use of the CCA as background material for their strategies. Several agencies argue that they need to be more specific in analyzing the themes related to their mandate. It should also be noted that some agencies were presenting their country programmes to their governing bodies in early 2000, before the UNDAF was finalized. An example of this is the Country Cooperation Strategy of WHO, which was written based on objectives and strategies included in the UNDAF. No specific reference is however made to the UNDAF in the WHO strategy document.
26. In preparing its own Country Population Assessment, UNFPA introduced an innovative type of collaboration with other agencies by inviting staff from WHO and UNICEF to take part in the elaboration of the UNFPA document. In this way, the other two sister agencies gained better knowledge and understanding of UNFPA programmes.

(iii) Fund-raising and advocacy

27. The UNDAF for Cambodia includes a framework for resources estimated for implementation of the strategy during the five-year period. The core resources estimated to be allocated by each agency amount to USD 97 million and the extra-budgetary funds expected to be mobilized during the period are USD 167 million. On the whole, agency representatives did not see the UNDAF as a vital part of their fund-raising efforts, in the belief that donors are swayed by other reasons than UN strategic thinking.

(iv) Inter-agency collaboration and team building

28. Several agency representatives say that the UNDAF process has had a positive effect on team building within the UN system. The agencies now know more about each other and the respective activities they support. While there are many different examples of ongoing collaboration between two or more agencies, it is not clear to what extent they are a result of the UNDAF process as such. An opinion expressed was that issues such as HIV/AIDS and gender equality would probably have been a matter for collaboration even without the UNDAF; on the other hand, it was recognized that human rights would not have received the same attention, if not made a cross-cutting theme in the UNDAF.

29. A good example of close collaboration and joint programming is the “Safe Motherhood” programme involving UNFPA, WHO and UNICEF, where UNFPA is financing staff working within the two other agencies under an agreement with the Ministry of Health jointly signed by the three agencies. Activities undertaken under this agreement are directly linked to the priority component of reproductive health defined in the UNDAF.
30. The UN theme group on HIV/AIDS is also mentioned by several agencies as an example of close collaboration. The Ministry of Health representative interviewed by the Mission, said that collaboration among UN agencies in area of HIV/AIDS had improved with the introduction of the theme group, which included the support for the preparation of a Master Plan on HIV/AIDS for the Ministry of Health. However, the chair-person of the theme group said that progress on actions with a common focus has been made only in a few cases. In her view, the agencies were overly focused on their own main activities and perspectives, instead of working towards a holistic view of how to tackle the problem.
31. With regard to joint programming, the Annual Report of the UN Resident Coordinator for 2000 mentions that the UNCT has "held considerable discussion" on the best ways to approach this issue. According to the Report, agencies are divided as to whether joint action is best pursued on a regional basis or sectorally. Furthermore, there had been suggestions that "all agencies should make contributions to one particular programme", such as the Health Sector Reform or the CAREERE programme.
32. The CAREERE programme supports a national programme to strengthen local governance (SEILA), and provides an archetype of inter-agency collaboration. A number of donors provide contributions, such as the World Bank, IFAD, GTZ, AusAid, DFID and Sida. Under the coordination of UNDP, several UN agencies (UNOPS, WFP, UNICEF, UNFPA, WHO, FAO, UNCDF, UNHCR, ILO) are involved in the CAREERE programme in different ways. Sida and DFID are the main bilateral contributors to the UNDP Trust Fund for the programme. Due to the fact this multi-sector programme has been implemented for several years with the involvement of so many UN agencies, it should offer a rich experience of method and procedure, particularly in the area of potential harmonization. This treasure house of lessons learned does not appear to have been drawn upon.

(v) The Resident Coordinator system

33. Several agency representatives expressed the view that the Resident Coordinator system has been strengthened by the UNDAF process. It is also noted by several actors, both within and outside the UN system, that the Resident Coordinator has played an active role with regard to overall donor coordination in relation to the BWIs and bilateral donors. It was noted that UN agencies chair half of the existing

sectoral donor groups working groups⁷ established in support of and in preparation for the annual Consultative Group (CG) meetings.

34. At the same time some UN agency representatives commented critically on the dual role of the UN Resident Coordinator and Resident Representative of UNDP, in the sense that UNDP is in a position to promote the concept of closer UN collaboration whilst advancing its own interests and programmes.

(vi) BWIs and other coordination mechanisms

35. The BWIs are not members of the UNCT in Cambodia and have not taken an active part in the preparation of the CCA or UNDAF. To some extent this is attributable to the fact the World Bank has a relatively small liaison office in the country, with the Country Director placed in Washington. This is also the case with ADB. For the World Bank staff in Cambodia, the sectoral working groups (see para 33) are the main mechanism for coordination among donors.
36. During 2000, an Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (IPRSP) was prepared by the Ministry of Finance, with support from the World Bank. The UNCT prepared joint comments on the draft IPRSP, which were reflected in the final version of the paper. It is planned to present a full PRSP at the end of 2001. Parallel to the PRSP process, the government is preparing a Second Socio-Economic Development Plan (2001 - 2005). The preparation of this plan is led by the Ministry of Planning, with support from the ADB.
37. There have been tensions in these two parallel processes, between the Ministry of Economy and Finance, seconded by the World Bank, and the Ministry of Planning, seconded by the ADB. Recently there have been efforts to coordinate the two processes and eventually merge them into one final product (a full PRSP and Development Plan). According to the World Bank and IMF, the main conditions to be fulfilled by the final Socio-Economic Development Plan (relative to the existing draft), in order to be used as PRSP, relate to policy priorities, public expenditure interventions, and the establishment of monitoring systems for outcomes and a participatory consultation process. According to some actors interviewed, the UN Resident Coordinator had been active in promoting coordination between these two processes.
38. With regard to sector wide approaches, such processes have been initiated in both the health and the education sector. As some donor agencies find it difficult to contemplate pooling their resources in a common budget, these processes are being referred to as sector wide management (SWIM). WHO has played a leading role

⁷ The groups are Public Administration Reform (UNDP), Social Sectors (UNICEF) and Natural Resources (FAO). The World Bank is chairing groups on Governance and on Demobilisation. Furthermore, there are also sub-groups chaired by UN agencies, such as Education (UNESCO).

among donors in this process in the health sector and UNICEF in the education sector, although both the World Bank and the ADB are involved in these sectors.

(c) The Bilateral Perspective

39. Most staff of bilateral aid offices interviewed by the Mission were relatively recent arrivals in Cambodia, and could not offer much by way of opinions as to the quality of the CCA/UNDAF documents or the impact of the processes leading up to their adoption. Few had read the documents. Even when aware of their existence, they had felt no compelling reason to review them, even as inputs in their bilateral programming.
40. Essentially, the UNDAF was regarded as an internal UN family affair without much bearing on the overall aid coordination picture, which is currently dominated by consultations related to the Interim PRSP and its possible integration in the Second Socio-Economic Development Plan. Many representatives of bilateral donors saw the incipient sector-wide approaches in education and health as more effective vehicles for collaborative ventures than the UNDAF process, a view that was echoed by some members of the UNCT.
41. While positive references were made to the contribution of the Resident Coordinator and UN agency representatives in aid coordination meetings with the government and with donors, there is still a clear tendency among bilateral missions to see UN agencies as individual actors rather than as members of an integrated UN system.
42. Donors having jointly funded programmes with UN agencies, such as Sida or DFID, appeared less preoccupied with overarching UN strategic decisions, however laboriously arrived at, and expressed doubt that the UNDAF could be a substitute for the in-depth sectoral analyses performed by the individual UN agencies. They also voiced concern with respect to the staff capacities in the Resident Coordinator's office, and with the procedural aspects and approaches adopted by UNDP for the implementation of joint programmes funded through trust funds.

V. CONFLICT PREVENTION AS PART OF CCA/UNDAF

1. During 2000, there have been repeated calls for a new UN system-wide approach to peace missions, with the outbreak of violent conflict between and within member states and in post-conflict situations. Development cooperation has been identified as an important instrument among others, political and diplomatic, to facilitate the transition from conflict to normalcy. It is also seen as an important factor, able to prevent conflict before violence erupts in conflict-prone situations, and even in development situations usually described as normal.
2. The issue of conflict prevention and peace building has been put squarely on the table by the Secretary-General in his Millennium Report, in which he urges member states not only to improve United Nations peacekeeping operations but also to establish a more effective system for long-term conflict prevention, prevention being clearly a less costly form of intervention than dealing with the consequences of war.⁸
3. The report of the Brahimi Panel on United Nations Peace Operations endorsed these views, underscoring the need for UN development entities to make long-term prevention a key focus of their work and to view humanitarian and development activities through a “conflict prevention lens”. The Panel further recommended that available analytical and programme tools at the country level, such as the CCA and the UNDAF be adapted to this end.
4. The conflict prevention aspects of development cooperation have been reinforced by the 2000 summit declaration and by the Secretary-General’s undertaking to implement the recommendations of the Brahimi Panel. The way conflict prevention can be operationalized in the field activities of the UN system is therefore likely to be a matter for discussion during the Comprehensive Triennial Policy Review.
5. Application of the “conflict prevention lens” to development cooperation is not a simple matter. Considerable work in this area has however already been carried out by OECD/DAC and its Task Force on Conflict, Peace and Development Cooperation.⁹ Within the UN Secretariat, the Executive Committee on Peace and Security has created an inter-agency, interdepartmental body that meets monthly to decide on areas of risk, schedule country review meetings and identify preventive measures. Within UNDP, its Emergency Response Division has initiated a study which picks up from the DAC Supplement, designed to arrive at some more distinctly operational guidelines.

⁸ “...every step taken toward reducing poverty and achieving broad-based economic growth, is a step towards conflict prevention. All who are engaged in conflict prevention and development, therefore – the United Nations, the BWIs, governments and civil society organizations – must address these challenges in a more integrated fashion”. Millennium Report of the Secretary-General, 2000 (p.45).

⁹ See “Supplement to Guidelines on Conflict, Peace and Development Cooperation. OECD/DAC, 1998. The Supplement was adopted by a DAC High-Level Meeting in April 2001.

6. Treating conflict prevention and peace building within the framework of CCA/UNDAF will not be easy. For a start, agreement needs to be reached on the concrete meanings of “conflict prevention” and “peace building”. External actors enter a sensitive area in their relations with the administration of a sovereign state. Furthermore, the final arbiter with respect to any diagnostic exercise performed in the public domain by outside development partners is, or should be, the government. As a result, there will be a natural deference on the part of outside actors to the government’s perceptions of cause and effect.
7. This will tend to inhibit the expression of any views that might impugn government policies long before national conflict management begins to spin out of control and well before there is a slide towards open violence. As is often the case, the government may in fact be part of the problem.
8. Two different scenarios come to mind. In the first, the government clearly sees the dangers of discernible trends, political, economic or social, is determined to provide remedies, and is an open and responsive partner of external actors. As a result, external cooperation is likely to be generously funded.
9. In the second, which is probably the more usual case, the government is reluctant to heed the consequences of its policies or ignores the early warning signals. At worst, such a government will continue headlong on the path of disaster. At best, it will be defensive and rationalize its support for internationally accepted development goals, such as poverty alleviation or the observance of human rights, on general grounds and rejecting any conflict analysis.
10. Within the context of the CCA and UNDAF, inherently natural tensions can therefore well arise between a government, which is the product of complex domestic political forces, and dispassionate, even sympathetic, external cooperation partners. Attempting to mainstream the culture of conflict prevention in development cooperation will require considerable deftness when issuing general instructions to the country offices and on the part of the Resident Coordinator when putting them into practice.
11. Being conflict prone, both Ethiopia and Cambodia are prototype examples of situations where the conflict prevention dimension of development cooperation should be ever present in the elaboration of diagnostic and strategic instruments. It should be noted in this context that the UNCTs in both countries fully appreciate the difficulties involved but also the need for looking at conflict prevention as a cross-cutting issue in the next round of the CCA/UNDAF process.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. In summing up its review of pertinent documents and its record of interviews, the Mission has concluded that while the full potential impact of the CCA/UNDAF process is still far off, a fresh spirit of collaboration and sense of acting under the banner of the United Nations as a single entity are being generated. As one member at a UNCT meeting in Cambodia put it: The fact that we are now meeting regularly to discuss formally our respective roles in helping the government meet its objectives is a very significant step in relation to what was the case in the past.
2. The Mission's interviews with representatives of the government, UN agencies, bilateral donors and NGOs confirm that the objectives of the CCA/UNDAF process and product are only achievable in the long term; there is however consensus that UN agencies in the field have struck out on the right path. As indicated in the title of this report, a keystone of UN field reform is being put in place to hold the various structures together.
3. The Mission can only offer a qualitative judgement as to the cost-effectiveness of the process. Obviously, for the UN system, the cost in terms of aggregate workload has been very significant; the results to date are hardly such that the dividend can be said to match or justify the costs. At the same time, there is evidence that the first round of CCA/UNDAFs have had a breaking-in function and served to lubricate the machinery. There is good reason to believe that the next generation of CCA/UNDAFs will need to deploy less manpower and that benefits will in the end match costs.
4. The Mission furthermore was struck by the fact that the CCA/UNDAF process appears to have been more readily accepted by agencies at the country level than by their headquarters. This may be ascribed to the fact that only 31 countries have so far prepared UNDAFs. Some agencies referred, with frustration, to the business-as-usual approach at headquarters, and to the inability to obtain clear instructions on such matters as programme cycles and common procedures. This conveys an impression that the UNDG may be facing resistance at central levels.

(a) The issue of Government Participation and Ownership

5. In both countries visited by the Mission, it was clear that neither the letter nor the spirit of the Guidelines had been followed to secure full government participation and ownership in the UNDAF process and product. This has probably detracted from the potential use that could have been made of the CCA and UNDAF documents, both in the way they could have influenced the government's own planning and the programming processes of the individual agencies.
6. At the same time, the Mission must accept that there have been valid impediments or obstacles to national participation and ownership. In Cambodia, the preparation of the

CCA and part of the UNDAF coincided with the drawn-out political crisis in 1997-98; this, coupled with a severe lack of capacity within line and central ministries, rendered national participation a doubtful proposition.

7. In Ethiopia, war with Eritrea and last year's droughts were powerful distractions from orderly development. In the view of the UNCT, the involvement of the government in the process would have risked delaying the process indefinitely and there was a widespread feeling that the large UN family of agencies, particularly well represented in Addis Ababa, first needed to demonstrate that they were capable of offering a unified response to established national priorities.
8. In addition, the two governments have not pressed their desire for ownership, leading the UNCT in both countries to believe that the issue was not urgent. When specifically questioned on this matter, Government officials in Ethiopia indicated that so long as the UNDAF respected the priorities of the national five-year plan, the criteria for national ownership had in fact been met.
9. In respect to government ownership, it is also clear from the record that other countries have experienced similar problems in preparing their CCAs and UNDAFs. A case therefore appears to exist to modify the wording in the triennial policy review, with a view to providing greater flexibility on this point.¹⁰

Recommendation:

10. In both Ethiopia and Cambodia, a genuine effort should be made to associate the government officials concerned, in central and line ministries, with the planned monitoring arrangements. This will not only serve to build capacity generally but also to prepare government staff for active participation in the next generation of the CCA/UNDAF process.
11. Consideration should be given to modifying the language of the relevant ECOSOC and GA resolutions, as well as the UNDG Guidelines. The present call for full participation in the formulation of the CCA/UNDAF is clearly not realistic in many situations. As a minimum, governments should however be satisfied that it has indirect ownership, in the sense that national choices and priorities are respected.

(b) Impact and Value Added of the CCA/UNDAF

(i) Harmonization of programme cycles and procedures

¹⁰ In the real world, "ownership" of course has innumerable permutations, which are well illustrated by the car/driver metaphor. The car may be a gift, rented, bought on credit or purchased outright. The owner may himself be in the driver's seat, or take the back seat and direct a driver of his choice. The car rental or hire purchase firm may provide a driver, whose main concern will be safe driving and avoiding accidents. Similarly, in the world of development cooperation!

12. With regard to harmonization of programme cycles, the Mission concludes that this has already taken place in both countries between the main UNDG partners - UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF, with WFP falling in line in the middle of the five-year period. This is probably the most significant achievement of the CCA/UNDAF process so far. There are also examples of other agencies adjusting to the common programme cycle.
13. As far as harmonization of procedures is concerned, there is little initiative or progress presented in either country. However, it should be kept in mind that this is a question that primarily requires negotiation and decision at the level of headquarters. At the country level, lack of harmonization of procedures is perceived as a serious problem by government.

Recommendation:

14. The UNDG should consider the promotion of local pilot initiatives for harmonizing programme and administrative procedures, the experiences of which could be the basis for discussions in the ACC on full-scale harmonization. The experience made by the CAREERE project in Cambodia should for instance be utilized to the full.

(ii) Use of CCA/UNDAF as analysis and overall strategy for individual agencies

15. The CCA and UNDAF have so far not been successful in replacing individual agency analysis and overall strategies in the two countries, mainly because they are considered to be too general to serve this purpose. None of the governing bodies of these agencies has stipulated that the UNDAF should be presented as a condition for the approval of the agency's country programme; nor do governing bodies ask for a clear reference on how the agency programme relates to the UNDAF, where they exist or are about to be finalized.
16. An important part of the guidelines, which is not adhered to in the two UNDAFs studied, is to show how the objectives of UN contributions complement what other donors are doing, and on which comparative advantages the UNDAF strategy and its objectives are based. This is also part of the critique in the UN Assessment of UNDAF mentioned in Chapter II.

Recommendation:

17. The UNDG should urge the governing bodies of its members to direct that agency country programmes clearly articulate the relationship and linkages of these programmes to existing UNDAFs, and to include the Executive Summary of the UNDAF as a preamble to the country programme, as a condition for their approval.

(iii) Inter-agency collaboration and team building

18. There is clear evidence of the impact of the CCA and UNDAF processes on team building and closer contacts between the UN organizations in both countries. There are many examples of collaboration between two or more agencies in each country. An area of collaboration specifically mentioned in both countries is HIV/AIDS. This seems to be due to the establishment of UNAIDS as a coordinating body for its seven co-sponsor agencies and the UN theme group on HIV/AIDS in- countries, which has been formed to enhance a joint focus and closer collaboration within the UN system in this particular area.
19. In general, it is however not evident that all ongoing collaboration between the agencies results from the UNDAF process. According to many persons consulted, the introduction of the sector wide approach, the coordination of emergency responses and participation in donor working groups at sector level have been more effective in fostering collaboration between UN agencies. This conclusion is supported by the fact that the content of the UNDAF is basically not known to other donors and most government representatives; in contrast, the activities of UN agencies in donor working groups, sector programmes and emergency responses are well known but mostly unrelated to the preparation of the UNDAF.
20. There are many examples of coordination of project work supported by different agencies and also of cost sharing between agencies within a specific programme managed by a single agency. But there are no good examples of direct joint programming of activities as part of the planning and establishment of a specific programme. Joint programming seems to be a step requiring a greater effort than hitherto to overcome normal agency-centered behavior.

Recommendation:

21. UNDG should seek to standardize, through a revision of its Guidelines, the mechanism of joint UNCT appraisals of individual agency country programmes before submission to their respective headquarters for approval.

(c) Effects of UNDAF on the Resident Coordinator System

22. The Resident Coordinator system has been strengthened by the UNDAF process in both countries, as evidenced by opinions of the UN agency representatives interviewed. It is also clear that the Resident Coordinators have played an important role in promoting and managing these processes. A general impression is that the UNDAF process has introduced an important motivating element and a clear common goal to normal contact mechanisms in the UNCT (heads of agency meetings, retreats, joint workshops, etc).
23. In both countries the Resident Coordinators have been able to articulate shared UN views and moved towards a situation where the UN system "speaks with one voice". The difficulty of striking a balance between the two roles of UN Resident

Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative, mainly in relation to internal relations within the UN system, but should not be a material impediment to overall coordination.

(d) UNDAF in relation to BWIs and other coordination mechanisms

24. The relation between the UN system and the BWIs differ in the two countries, with a closer relationship in Ethiopia where the BWIs are members of the UNCT. The difference is part due to the stronger local presence of the World Bank in Ethiopia, with an office of 10-15 professional staff, whereas the Bank's office in Cambodia is much smaller and mostly serves in a liaison function.
25. The PRSP process has started in both countries with the presentation of an Interim PRSP, and with the formulation of a full PRSP pending government establishment of proper mechanisms for preparation and consultation. In the case of Ethiopia, the Interim PRSP seems to have influenced the formulation of the main focus of the UNDAF (poverty reduction). In Cambodia the UNDAF was prepared before the Interim PRSP, without any clear evidence of having influenced the latter process.
26. In general, it may be concluded that the UNDAF process has been strongly influenced by other donor coordination mechanisms, such as sector programmes, donor working groups and PRSP processes. There is, however, little evidence of the UNDAF as such having had any particular influence on these other mechanisms. This is clear from the lack of knowledge of the contents of the UNDAF among actors outside the UN system. The Mission further noted that the UN system has not sufficiently promoted knowledge of the UNDAF among other donors or the governments in either country.

Recommendation:

27. The UNCTs should be directed to disseminate more actively the contents of the UNDAF as the joint UN strategy and response to the situation in each country, so as to promote a better understanding of what the UN system is doing, and how it complements the support of other donors, based on the comparative advantages of UN organizations.

(e) International Development Goals

28. Both GA Resolution 53/192 and ECOSOC Decision 199/55 on the implementation and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits attempt to establish benchmarks and devise systems of monitoring progress towards the attainment of the development goals adopted in the final declarations of these conferences. Underlying these resolutions is the concern that no mechanisms have been set up at the national

level to assess the efforts made by individual governments to implement the commitments they have made.

29. In both Ethiopia and Cambodia, the UNCTs have - through the CCA/UNDAF exercise - tried to highlight global concerns and bring them into the operational sphere by proposing visible national targets and indicators, as directed in the Guidelines. In both cases, the approach has been to place emphasis on national priorities and to view international development goals as a form of support or as lending legitimacy to national objectives. This is the option that has been standardized through the Guidelines.
30. An alternative option would be to reverse this order of things by giving primary emphasis to international goals and relate national priorities and targets to the international commitments made. The CCA/UNDAF process could then be regarded as a strategic and programmatic exercise marshalling the combined resources of the UN system, in a coordinated manner, to help the government meet intermediate and final international targets it has subscribed to.¹¹
31. In theory, this would seem to be an attractive proposition and giving a clear focus and legitimacy to a diagnostic and strategic exercise that stands a high risk of failure as a normative reference document in the broader context of national plans and priorities, as the Mission believes is the case in both Cambodia and Ethiopia.
32. In most countries, the volume of assistance channeled through the UN system is a small fraction of total aid resources,¹² making it unlikely that the government will devote sufficient energy and staff resources to participating in the formulation of an UNDAF devoted to its entire development plan. Realistically, the government cannot be expected to promote the status and use of UNDAF where rival coordination mechanisms bring together the larger donors present.

Recommendation:

33. Whether a country favours one approach over the other, there will be inevitable trade-offs depending on the specifics of the country concerned. Having assessed the variables at play, the Mission expresses a preference in favour of the UNDAF placing its primary focus on international development goals. Alternatively, a diverse regime, under which a country may elect to follow the first option (para 30 above) or

¹¹ The UN-sponsored "2001 External Assessment of the UNDAF" recommends inter alia that the UNDAF must be given "a sense of direction consistent with the UN's niche as determined by the Millennium goals...(and) become the standard authoritative common reference document...for government planners and policy makers so that whether resources are domestic or external, all stakeholders and actors are engaged in meeting the challenges identified..." p.36) Adebayo Adedeji et al., March 2001.

¹² Both Cambodia and Ethiopia are at the higher end of the scale in this regard, with approximately 10 per cent of aid volumes excluding relief assistance.

the second option (para 31 above) in the next generation of CCA/UNDAFs, should be considered.

(f) Conflict Prevention and Peace Building

34. The experience made in providing development support to countries in post-conflict situations indicates that, within societies, a fundamental interrelationship exists between development and violent conflict. Opinions range from the view that all development has a peace-building impact, to the more restricted notion that conflict prevention is best served by targeted action in specific areas, such as governance and human rights.
35. Some definitional work has been initiated in this area but much remains to be done. While controversy and conflict are a natural collateral of social and political change, governments and civil society clearly need to strengthen institutions and mechanisms allowing them to manage conflict so that it does not escalate into violence. Some of the pitfalls that may arise in applying the “conflict prevention lens” in the selection and design of development cooperation programmes are highlighted in Section V.
36. Both countries visited by the Mission have a legacy of violence and are exposed to economic, social and political tensions that make them prone to violent conflict. Among the persons interviewed, there was ready acceptance of the principle that the matter of conflict prevention and peace building was an inherently important cross-cutting issue in their respective CCA/UNDAF. A similar conclusion was reached by a workshop on UN reform in Kandy, Sri Lanka, in early November 2000, with three countries participating.

Recommendation:

37. Attention is increasingly given to the linkages between development, conflict prevention and peace building, to the point that a “culture of conflict prevention” has been called for in the context of all development cooperation. Inasmuch as peacemaking and peace building in all its forms are eminently a UN function, the Mission strongly endorses the view that conflict prevention should be an integral element of the next phase of the CCA/UNDAF process.

(g) Other Recommendations

(i) The over-emphasis on mandates

38. Most legislative and other basic texts dealing with the coordination of UN system development activities in the field, while urging collaboration, routinely make the proviso that inter-agency cooperation should also fully respect the different mandates and sectoral interests of the diverse UN organizations present. The GA resolution covering the last Triennial Policy Review is no exception¹³; its paragraph 6 even states that “in the context of reform” (sic), these mandates should not only be respected but “enhanced”.
39. On the face of it, such qualifications appear innocuous. They only take on significance in the emphasis given to them in the practical world of programming and project implementation. They enshrine the right of agencies to draw lines and demarcate territory; they confirm their right to adhere to administrative procedures of their own making for the entire programme cycle, and lead them to profile their own contributions.
40. The word “mandate” has acquired an emotive aura, uncontested and immutable, in the inter-agency discourse, justifying the agency’s claim to individuality. Legislative and other basic texts appear to insert this wording, not as a result of any perceived threat to agency sectoral territory, generally or specifically, but rather as a concession to corporate sentiment. UN development activities in the field overlap in many areas, but instances of invasion of adjoining turf and “mission creep” are few and far between. Instead, UN activities would probably benefit and be more mutually reinforcing if there were less concern about how their respective undertakings are distinguished one from the other.

Recommendation:

41. The Mission recommends that an effort be made to modify the language of legislative texts in this regard. Where necessary, it should be possible to refer to the specific “competence and functionality” of the different agencies rather than making persistent allusions to mandates and complementarities. In the extension, the present language serves to reinforce the defense of status quo and inhibit reform within the system.

(ii) Incentives for common programming

42. In Section B of Resolution 53/192, on the funding for United Nations operational activities in the field, member states are strongly urged to increase their voluntary contributions to the core resources of the UN system, on a “predictable, continuous and assured basis”.

¹³ “28. Urges the United Nations Development Group to work in a fully transparent and accountable manner towards a more coherent United Nations performance in the development field, while respecting the specific mandates and identity of its members”(A/RES/53/192).

43. The present report has highlighted the fact that a movement towards greater integration of UN field operations under UNDP leadership was part of the multilateral aid picture in the 1970s, and cites Ethiopia as an example. It is clear also that this evolution was cut short by the progressively diminishing contributions to the core resources of UN funding agencies.
44. As a consequence, UN funds, programmes and specialized agencies were increasingly tempted to strike out on their own, profiling their own operations and roles, in competition for funding with their sister agencies. In general, they have been rewarded, at least to the point of managing survival. Trust funds and various forms of cost-sharing arrangements have become a preferred channel for financing UN operational activities, and agency country offices have proliferated.

Recommendation:

45. The Mission recommends that language be inserted in the relevant section of the next Triennial Policy Review resolution, providing incentives and rewards for agencies that make a special effort to integrate their operations with those of other agencies. Thus, the text should convey the principle that agencies that prove their determination to devise and implement joint programmes and projects, will be given particular consideration by donor countries when reviewing their aid allocation policies. As a minimum, donors should ensure that any cost-sharing funds provided at the country level are fully consistent with UNDAF objectives and should ask for a formal and substantiated declaration to this effect.

ANNEX 1 - Terms of Reference

Joint Nordic assessment as part of the preparations for the triennial policy review, 2001.

1. Background

The General Assembly has been calling, in successive triennial policy reviews, for measures designed to promote greater coherence in UN operational activities for development. The UN reforms launched by the Secretary-General in 1997 address the same objective by pursuing, at the country level, a greater coherence in planning, programming and implementing United Nations assistance to support national capacity building and assist countries to realise their national development goals.

The Secretary-General, as part of his reform agenda for the United Nations, has established the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) to lead the process of reform in UN development operations. UNDG is comprised of UN programmes, funds and agencies engaged in development activities; it helps facilitate joint policy-making, decision-making and programme co-ordination among all UN entities involved in development activities. At the same time, UNDG also seeks to expand effective partnerships with the Bretton Woods institutions and other organisations involved in development activities. The UNDG Office serves as secretariat to UNDG and its Executive Committee and at the same time supports UNDP as funder and manager of the Resident Coordinator system.

UNDG was charged by the Secretary-General with the elaboration of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). In principle, all UN activities in a programme country will be presented as part of this framework under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator. The UNDAF is intended to bring greater coherence to the United Nations programmes of assistance at the country level with common objectives and time frames in close consultations with governments¹⁴. Thus, UNDAF constitutes the planning framework for the development operations of the UN system as such at the country level. It consists of common objectives and strategies of co-operation, a programme resources framework and proposals for follow-up, monitoring and evaluation.

Following an UNDAF pilot exercise and assessment hereof, including extensive consultations with the UN system, the UNDAF guidelines have been revised and guidelines for the Common Country Assessment (CCA) developed¹⁵. CCA is the first step for the preparation of the UNDAF. The CCA is a country-based process for reviewing and analysing the national development situation and identifying key issues as a basis for advocacy, policy dialogue and preparation of the UNDAF. It is undertaken by the UN system with key partners, in particular with the close involvement of the

¹⁴ UNDAF Guidelines, April 1999

¹⁵ CCA Guidelines, April 1999

country's government. Thus, the CCA is intended to provide a common understanding of development needs, problems and priorities of the country concerned, and to further partnerships within the UN system and with key development actors.

UN country teams, under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator, may modify the UNDAF and the CCA guidelines to local conditions.

When the World Bank first introduced the Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF) in 1998, it was concluded by UNDG that the CDF offered an opportunity to strengthen the UN partnership with the WB at the country level while supporting country priorities. The then UNDP Administrator accordingly instructed all UN Resident Coordinators, encouraging them to participate fully in government-led CDF processes. Likewise, the WB should continue to be encouraged to contribute to and participate in the CCA/UNDAF process.¹⁶

2. Objectives

As inputs to the triennial policy review (TPR) in 2001 the UN Secretariat undertakes a number of evaluations to provide background on progress made at the country level. Resolutions 50/120, para 56 and 53/192, para 53 mandated the United Nations Secretariat to perform impact evaluations focussing on UN system support to capacity building and poverty eradication at the country level. UNDG has initiated evaluations of the CCA and UNDAF processes as part of their preparations for the TPR discussions in 2001.

In January 2001, the Nordic countries resolved to initiate a limited review of the CCA/UNDAF processes. The Nordic review should be seen as a complement to the UNDG impact evaluations. While the evaluations undertaken by the Secretariat and UNDG will provide input to the Secretary-General's report, the objective for the Nordic studies is to enable them to participate constructively in the TPR and to submit proposals for measures to strengthen the work with CCA and UNDAF at country level to the UNDG and its members.

The objectives of this exercise are as follows:

- Assess the impact of CCA/UNDAF processes on the collaboration among the UN organisations at country level and the co-ordination on their respective country programmes
- Assess the effectiveness of the Resident Coordinator system, as managed by UNDP, in the CCA/UNDAF processes.
- Assess whether, and if so, to what extent the CCA/UNDAF processes contribute to other co-ordination mechanisms at the country level, including the World Bank's Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) and Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF).

¹⁶ Letter from James Gustave Speth to all UN Resident Coordinators of 17 March 1999

3. Outputs

For each group of countries chosen by a Nordic country, a report will be elaborated by an expert team. The reports will cover the pertinent aspects of the CCA/UNDAF processes and UN co-ordination at country level as described below. Specifically, the reports will analyse how the process has evolved among all relevant actors, and identify shortcomings. They will state which factors have contributed, positively and negatively, to the outcomes of the processes. They will also include possible general recommendations that will enable the Nordic countries involved in the assessment to put forward concrete proposals for improving and strengthening the work with CCA and UNDAF as their contribution to the triennial policy review 2001.

4. Scope of work

Each team will review and analyse relevant documentation made available by the respective Foreign Ministries, and interview key officials at the respective capitals before undertaking country missions.

The teams will take a broad approach to the CCA/UNDAF processes and base their assessments on relevant GA resolutions, CCA/UNDAF guidelines and other relevant documents in consultation with the respective Foreign Ministry and concerned embassies. The teams will engage in dialogue with all Nordic embassies in the country concerned as well as with the national government, UNDG members and other UN organisations. Discussions should also be held with the World Bank's local representative.

The assessment will consider the following questions:

1. What impact have the CCA/UNDAF processes had on collaboration within the UN country team and with regard to the formulation of the members' respective country programmes?

- Have the CCA/UNDAF processes contributed to strengthen UN operational activities in the country (ease the burden on national government, harmonisation of programmes and programme cycles, timely response, partnerships, use of national priorities, national execution, etc.)?
- Have agencies revised their programmes to reflect the outcome of UNDAF? Can a better division of labour and clearer focus of individual programmes be demonstrated?
- To what extent have the CCA/UNDAF processes led to joint programming, in for example cross cutting issues such as gender, HIV/AIDS and human rights? Are any joint programmes actually being implemented?
- Do the country programmes of the respective UNDG members reinforce one another (clear linkages between the programmes, common programming goals, objectives and indicators, common risk analysis, etc.)?
- Have the working relations among the UN organisations been improved (leadership, type of meetings, development of a common UN position on development, guidelines, nature of commitment to partnerships, etc.)?
- To what extent have the CCA/UNDAF processes encouraged UNDG members to develop or strengthen partnerships with development actors outside the UN system?

2. Has UNDP's co-ordinating role, within the framework of the Resident Coordinator system, been strengthened as a consequence of the CCA/UNDAF processes?

The Resident Coordinator system encompasses all organisations of the UN system dealing with operational activities for development, regardless of their formal presence in the country¹⁷. The RC system aims to bring together the different UN agencies to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of operational activities at the country level. Resident Coordinators, who are funded and managed by UNDP, lead the UN country teams and are the designated representatives of the Secretary-General. While appointment as Resident Coordinator is open to employees of the whole UN system, approximately 80 pct. of all Resident Coordinators come from UNDP.

UNDP has introduced a special training programme including an independent competency assessment for potential Resident Coordinators. At present, no Resident Coordinator can be appointed without having been found qualified through this assessment.

- How has the Resident Coordinator undertaken to manage co-ordination of UN development activities, especially with regard to the CCA/UNDAF processes? How do other UN country team management members assess his/her contribution?
- Which instruments have been available to the Resident Coordinator for managing the CCA/UNDAF processes? What resources (secretariat, technical assistance, funds etc) have been at his/her disposal?
- What is the Resident Coordinator's role within overall co-ordination of development activities, including other actors such as bilateral donors and the Bretton Woods institutions? Has the Resident Coordinator contributed to or in other ways influenced the CDF/PRSP process?
- Has the Resident Coordinator's role been strengthened through the CCA/UNDAF process, and how is this demonstrated?

3. How do the CCA/UNDAF processes relate to other co-ordination mechanisms at the country level, including CDF/PRSP?

- To what extent, if any, has the CCA process been used as an input to the PRSP process? How has this been done in practice?
- To what extent have UNDG members been involved in the PRSP process, including the formulation and implementation of poverty reduction strategies?
- Have UNDG members supported broader participation and national ownership for PRSP?
- Has the CCA/PRSP processes led to closer co-operation between organisations involved? If so, which are the concrete results (i.e., joint planning/formulation/ implementation of activities)?

The sub-questions listed above should serve as guidelines. They may not all be relevant in a given country, and other questions as well may be explored and considered, as necessary.

5. Timing and reporting

Each expert team will establish a joint report, which will contain the team's major findings. Each report will outline the factors, which have contributed, positively and

¹⁷ ACC Guidelines on the functioning of the Resident Coordinator system, 23 September 1999

negatively, to the outcomes of the CCA/UNDAF processes in the countries given. They will, if possible, include recommendations that enable the Nordic countries to put forward concrete proposals for improving the process as their contribution to the triennial policy review 2001, including recommendations of strategic actions to be taken (see annex 2 for an outline of the report). The draft reports will be submitted to the Foreign Ministries concerned in hard and electronic copies no later than 31 May 2001. Final reports shall be submitted no later than two weeks after the receipt of comments from the Foreign Ministry concerned.

The overall duration of the assessment in each country should not exceed 10 working days, including preparations.

6. Documentation

Documentation concerning CCA, UNDAF and the Resident Coordinator system, including those mentioned above, are available at UNDG Office's website, www.dgo.org. The website would also provide additional information with regard to the UN reform at the country level.

ANNEX 2 - Persons met

Sweden

Björn Andersson, Secretary, Department for Global Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ethiopia

Government of Ethiopia:

Mekonnen Manyazewal, Vice-Minister, Ministry of Economic Development and Cooperation
 Atsede Kidanu, Acting Director, International Organizations Dept, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
 Waktola Negeri, Former Director, IOD, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

United Nations Country Team and other UN staff:

Samuel Nyambi, Resident Coordinator
 Antonius Broek, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP
 Gladson Kayira, Senior Economist and Chair UNDAF Technical Committee, UNDP
 Tefera Wonde, WHO Representative a.i., World Health Organization
 Hailu Yeneneh, WHO, Chair of HIVAIDS Focal Points
 Ibrahim Jabr, UNICEF Representative
 Elleni Mekonnen, Office of the Executive Secretary, UN/ECA
 George Mburathi, FAO Representative
 Mesfin Kinfu, National Programme Officer, FAO
 Duah Owusu-Sarfo, Deputy Representative, UNFPA
 David Tommy, UNIDO Representative
 Benedict Fultang, WFP Representative a.i.
 Al Kehler, Development Coordinator, WFP
 Emilia Timpo, Country Programme Adviser, UNAIDS
 Gregory Alex, Technical Coordinator, Emergency Unit/Ethiopia
 Mark Ridder, Deputy Coordinator, Emergency Unit/Ethiopia
 Session with UNFDAC Technical Committee and Thematic Working Groups

Other Multilateral Organizations:

Surjit Singh, World Bank Representative a.i., IBRD
 Karl Harbo, Delegate, European Commission

Bilateral Missions:

Heli Sirve, Charge d'Affaires a.i., Embassy of Finland
 Inge Herman Rydland, Counsellor, Development Cooperation, Norwegian Embassy
 Johan Holmberg, Ambassador, Swedish Embassy
 Arne Carlsgård, Counsellor, Development Cooperation, Swedish Embassy
 Hans Wessels, First Secretary, Rural Development & Food Security, Dutch Embassy
 Robert Beadle, Charge d'Affaires, Canadian Embassy
 Jan Valdellin, Finance Advisor, Essential Health Services, USAID
 Laketch Mikael, Advisor USAID (former Executive Officer, UN Resident Coordinator's Office)

Civil Society:

Kebede Asrat, Executive Director, CRDA;
 Wendy Crane, Country Director, ACTION AID;
 Nesanet Mengistu, General Manager, PROGYNIST

Cambodia

Government of Cambodia:

Vongsey Vissoth, Deputy Secretary-General, Ministry of Economy and Finance
 Tol Lah, Minister, Ministry of Education
 Var Huoth, President, Economic and Social Observation, Prime Minister's Office
 Suy Sokha, Secretary-General, OBSSES, Prime Minister's Office
 Mean Chhi Vun, Deputy Director-General, Ministry of Health

United Nations Country Team and other UN staff:

Dominique McAdams, Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative
 Bill Pigott, Representative, WHO
 Praween Agrawal, Deputy Country Director, WFP
 Louis-Georges Arsenault, Representative, UNICEF
 Jean-Claude Levasseur, Representative, FAO
 Yoshiko Zenda, Representative, UNFPA
 John Farvolden, Officer-in-Charge, UNHCR
 Etienne Clement, Representative, UNESCO
 Surya Dhungel, Officer-in-Charge, CO/HCHR
 David Salter, Chief Technical Adviser, Labour-based Rural Infrastructure, ILO
 Peter Robertson, Technical Adviser, CAREERE/SEILA, UNOPS

Other Multilateral Agencies:

Helen Brereton, Programme Officer, World Bank
 Sapanha Sa, Economist, IMF
 Joern Kristensen, Chief Executive, Mekong River Commission
 Lucy Royal-Dawson, Faculty of Pedagogy, EDUCAM

Bilateral Missions:

Daniel Asplund, Counsellor, and Anders Frankenberg, DCS , Swedish Embassy
 Lisa Chiles, Director, Cambodia and Mainland Southeast Asia, and Ngudup Paljor, USAID
 Daniel Arghiros, Governance Adviser, and Ben Davis, DFID, British Embassy
 Blair Exell, First Secretary, Development Cooperation, Australian Embassy
 Yasunari Ueda, First Secretary, Japanese Embassy
 Christian Rumpelcker, Deputy Head of Mission, German Embassy

Civil Society:

Russell Peterson, Representative, NGO Forum
 Carol Strickler, Executive Director, Cooperation Committee for Cambodia

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