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**UNDG Human Rights Mainstreaming Trust Fund  
MPTF OFFICE FINAL PROGRAMME NARRATIVE REPORT  
REPORTING PERIOD: FROM 10.2013 TO 04.2015**

<p align="center"><b>Programme Title &amp; Project Number</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programme Title: <b>Strengthening UNCT Leadership: Strengthened support to Resident Coordinators and UNCT agency leadership on human rights (C2 Support to RCs)</b></li> <li>Programme Number (if applicable) <b>00087744</b></li> <li>MPTF Office Project Reference Number: <b>00087744</b></li> </ul>	<p align="center"><b>Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results</b></p> <p>(if applicable) Country/Region <b>Global</b></p>
<p align="center"><b>Participating Organization(s)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organizations that have received direct funding from the MPTF Office under this programme</li> </ul> <p><b>UNSSC</b></p>	<p align="center"><i>Priority area/ strategic results</i></p> <p><b>C2 Support to Resident Coordinators</b></p>
<p align="center"><b>Programme/Project Cost (US\$)</b></p> <p>Total approved budget as per project document: <b>US\$ 200,000</b></p> <p>MPTF /JP Contribution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>by Agency (if applicable)</li> </ul> <p>Agency Contribution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>by Agency (if applicable)</li> </ul> <p>Government Contribution (if applicable)</p> <p>Other Contributions (donors) (if applicable)</p> <p><b>TOTAL:</b> <b>US\$ 200,000</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Implementing Partners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead implementing agencies: <b>OHCHR, UNDP, UNSSC</b></li> <li>Other participating organizations: <b>DOC, ILO</b></li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval.</b></p> <p>Evaluation Completed</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Date: <i>dd.mm.yyyy</i></p> <p>Evaluation Report - Attached</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Date: <i>dd.mm.yyyy</i></p>	<p align="center"><b>Programme Duration</b></p> <p>Overall Duration (months) <b>12 months</b></p> <p>Start Date (dd.mm.yyyy) <b>01/10/2013</b></p> <p>Original End Date (dd.mm.yyyy) <b>01/10/2014</b> <b>01/04/2015</b></p> <p>Actual End date (dd.mm.yyyy)</p> <p>Have agency(ies) operationally closed the Programme in its(their) system? <b>Yes No</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Expected Financial Closure date: <b>30 June 2015</b></p>
	<p align="center"><b>Report Submitted By</b></p> <p><b>OHCHR:</b> Peggy Hicks, Director, Thematic Engagement, Special Procedures and Right to Development Division (<a href="mailto:phicks@ohchr.org">phicks@ohchr.org</a>)</p> <p><b>UNDP:</b> Patrick Keuleers, Director/Chief of Profession, Governance and Peacebuilding, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support (<a href="mailto:Patrick.keuleers@undp.org">Patrick.keuleers@undp.org</a>)</p> <p><b>UNSSC:</b> Jafar Javan, Director (<a href="mailto:j.javan@unssc.org">j.javan@unssc.org</a>)</p>

## **FINAL PROGRAMME REPORT**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Promoting and protecting human rights, especially those who suffer from discrimination, deprivation and violence, is critical for the sustainability of UN's work at country level in the areas of development, peace-building and humanitarian actions. Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams are at the forefront of UN actions, leading the UN's engagement with national stakeholders. They are well-positioned and have responsibility to support the UN's human rights purpose as outlined in the Charter.

Supporting the Resident Coordinators and UN country leadership in this efforts is a major priority of the UNDG Human Rights Working Group. This project, implemented under the framework of UNDG-HRWG led by OHCHR, UNDP and UNSSC, achieved its main output to produce a comprehensive, up-to-date and practical [UNDG Guidance Note on Human Rights for Resident Coordinators and UN Country Team](#) through extensive elaboration and consultation processes. The Guidance Note was endorsed by the UNDG in June 2015 and disseminated widely to RCs/UNCTs.

The Guidance Note aims to provide Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams with the tools and resources they need to fulfill their responsibilities. It aims to give practical guidance on supporting human rights at country level, including by setting out how the UN can operate when faced by complex challenges in different country contexts. It also focuses on the support available from the regional and global levels to enable the UN country leadership to take this work forward.

The project also contributed to further strengthening of the human rights content of the current policy framework by ensuring the full integration of human rights, including the Secretary-General's Human Rights Up Front initiative, into the revision of the RC Job Description and the UNDG Guidance for UNCT Working Arrangements, which were approved by the UNDG in February 2014. While inevitably delaying the drafting process, the new RC Job Description and UNCT guidance have laid vital foundations and provided a clearer normative and operational framework for the new Guidance Note on Human Rights and for the UN development system as a whole.

The draft guidance note has served as the basis for the development of a draft learning strategy. After the preparatory work undertaken including mapping and assessments of relevant initiatives, UNSSC developed a draft learning strategy in September 2014, outlining its possible elements and proposal for further development and implementation. After the closure of the current project, this component will be carried over to a new implementation phase under the UNDG-HRWG 2015-2016 work plan as part of the wider leadership development strategy and rolling-out of the Guidance Note on Human Rights for RCs and UNCTs.

### **Key features of the Guidance Note on Human Rights for RCs and UNCTs:**

- Underscores the critical leadership role that RCs play in promoting and implementing human rights on the ground
- Provides an overview of the core human rights responsibilities of the RC (drawing from the revised Job Description and other policy guidance), as well as the UNCT and broader UN system responsibilities, within the context of both development and humanitarian action
- Emphasizes why meeting these human rights responsibilities is crucial for maintaining the UN's legitimacy
- Provides 'how to' guidance, including 'Where to start: a checklist for incoming RCs for the first 100 days'
- Draws lessons from the field with examples of good practices and experiences in engaging on human rights issues and addressing challenges
- Includes an Annex with guidance on a catalogue of specific human rights issues to ensure a common UN voice

## **I. Purpose**

The project was established in June 2013 and became operational in October 2013 to support the UNDG-HRM/HRWG's priority to provide coherent policy support and guidance to Resident Coordinators and UNCT agency leadership on human rights, as originally requested by the Secretary-General in his Policy Decision on human rights and development in 2008.

The project was designed to contribute to the overall UNDG strategic priorities of 2013-2016, which emphasizes the importance of strengthening the leadership role of Resident Coordinators and UNCT leaders and supporting the inclusive and equitable achievement of MDGs and international human rights treaty obligations. The project also aimed to respond to the Member States' policy guidance as contained in the 2012 QCPR resolution of the General Assembly, which acknowledged close interlinkages between peace and security, development and human rights, and explicitly encouraged the UN system's efforts to strengthen normative and operational linkages.

The original project envisaged two main outputs, namely:

- (a) comprehensive, up-to-date and practical policy guidance note addressing the needs of Resident and Humanitarian Coordinators and UN country team leadership on human rights; and
- (b) an institutionalized and coherent framework and approach to RCs/HCs/UNCT leadership learning in the format of a strategy/package on human rights, including new experiential and interactive learning opportunities.

## II. Assessment of Programme Results

### *Revision of RC System Guidance Note on Human Rights*

During its initial implementation period in 2013, the project embarked on compiling an **inventory of policies, tools and guidance** relevant to the human rights functions and responsibilities of RCs and UNCTs was undertaken by OHCHR. Specific attention was made to identify those instruments which have come into effect since the first human rights guidance note for the RC system was endorsed by the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), the predecessor body to the current UN Chief Executive Board (CEB), in 2000. Among the key policy developments identified are the Secretary-General's Policy Decision on Human Rights and Development from 2008 (which also requested OHCHR and the UNDG to update policy guidance for the RC system), the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy (HRDDP) as endorsed by the Secretary-General's Policy Committee in July 2011, and the QCPR operative paragraph 58 on the strengthening of normative and operational linkages within the UN system of December 2012. There were also other institutional developments of significance to the RC guidance note including the establishment of the Human Rights Council in 2006 and its new mechanism of the Universal Periodic Review, which has provided an important entry point for RCs and UNCTs to engage with and support national partners on human rights agenda.

During 2013, several **important policy development processes** were ongoing in parallel under the UN system that would have significant implications for the content of the new RC guidance, notably the **revision of the [RC Job Description](#)** ("RCJD") and the **[UNDG Guidance on UNCT Conduct and Working Arrangement](#)** under the UNDG Working Group on RC System Issues (WG-RCSI, co-chaired by UNAIDS and OHCHR). Another important strategic development was the Secretary-General's "**Human Rights Up Front**" initiative launched in November 2013, following the perceived failures of the UN to prevent large-scale human rights violations during the conflicts in Sri Lanka and elsewhere. Through the Human Rights Up Front, the Secretary-General renewed the UN's commitment to human rights and called on the UN system to do everything in its power to prevent or respond to serious and large-scale violation of human rights. These ongoing processes necessitated the extension of project timeline in order to ensure that the new Guidance will be fully in line with the latest policy framework.

At the same time, the UNDG-HRM seized the opportunities to engage actively with these policy processes with a view to securing strong human rights outcomes in these policy documents, which would enable the UNDG-HRM to deliver on its objectives. Through joint advocacy efforts, the final RCJD and the Guidance on UNCT Conduct and Working Arrangement adopted by UNDG in February 2014 reflected significantly strengthened policy framework on human rights, building upon the human rights provisions from the QCPR resolution, the HRDDP and "Human Rights Up Front". Noteworthy in this regard is a sub-section on functions relevant to the RCs responsibilities for human rights advocacy, as well as a cross-cutting responsibility to "... uphold and promote the UN's responsibilities with regard to preventing and responding to serious violations of human rights and humanitarian law, including the responsibilities of UN entities and staff in this regard." These and all other human rights elements were subsequently integrated into [the Standard Operating Procedures for Delivering as One](#) issued by the UNDG, particularly its "[One Leader](#)" pillar.

Fully reflecting these newly strengthened policy framework, an initial draft guidance was elaborated in April 2014 by OHCHR. This was subsequently discussed at the UNDG-HRM senior level policy retreat in May 2014 which provided further guidance in terms of substantive content and strategic considerations including on the engagement with RCs on the guidance note and leadership strategy. Reflecting the feedback from the UNDG-HRM members, OHCHR and DOCO co-led the process of further elaborating the draft guidance note with support and contributions from UNDP, which produced a second draft in December 2014 reflecting a more functional approach and enhanced practicality with cases and examples from actual RC/UNCT experience in promoting human rights on the ground.

The draft guidance note went through an extensive consultation process launched in January 2015 with a group of RCs as well as with wider membership of the UNDG Human Rights Working Group (UNDG-HRWG) which succeeded the UNDG-HRM from 1 January 2015 as a result of UNDG restructuring. While the project document originally envisaged organizing a face-to-face consultation with RCs, the project implementing partners opted to establish a reference group and consult electronically with 24 RCs selected primarily from those countries which are referenced in the draft guidance note.

Feedback from RCs was overwhelmingly positive, confirming the approach was on the right track and many expressing appreciation for filling the void for practical guidance in such a critical area for the UN system. Through the consultation process, the project received valuable comments such as: 1) the need to be more practical and focused on real-life challenges; 2) the need to ensure appropriate tone, to ensure the GN is assisting with decision-making; 3) the need for more information on the different operational contexts that UNCTs work in; 4) the need to provide further supplementary examples, although not necessarily in the document but as links, and; 5) the need to include information on how HQ will support RCs and UNCTs in their responsibilities.

Integrating these and other comments from the UNDG-HRWG members, the final draft was reviewed by the senior-level meeting of the UNDG-HRWG in March 2016 and finally endorsed by the UNDG in June 2016. After editing, the finalized Guidance Note was transmitted to all Resident Coordinators and Chairs of UNDG Regional Teams in September 2016 with a joint message from the UNDG Chair and the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

### ***RC learning strategy on human rights***

During the initial phase (2013-2014) of the project implementation, in parallel with the process of developing an updated human rights Guidance Note for the RC system, several preparatory activities were undertaken including:

- (a) Conceptualization of a proposed 'UN dialogue series on human rights and development' as part of the larger learning strategy as envisaged in the project document;
- (b) Engagement in redesigning of the RC induction programme under the UNDG to better integrate human rights throughout the programme design; and
- (c) Mapping of relevant initiatives and learning activities targeted at RCs and UNCT leaders, including OCHA's Humanitarian Leadership Strengthening Project and OHCHR-led development of an e-learning module under the Human Rights Up Front Action Plan. In doing so, UNSSC has also documented various challenges and gaps in the area of human rights, while

studying the best modalities to be proposed in the draft Learning Strategy, targeting RCs and UNCT Leadership.

On the basis of these assessments, UNSSC has prepared an initial draft proposal for the development of a learning strategy on human rights for RCs and UNCT leadership and submitted to OHCHR and UNDP as well as to undg-hrwg in September 2014. The proposal outlined possible elements of such a strategy, including: an advanced e-learning course and an e-learning platform on human rights for RCs/UNCTs; regional leadership dialogues among RCs; and mentoring and coaching for RCs and UNCT leaders.

As this programme reached its operational completion in early 2015, the work have been carried over to a new phase in 2015-2016 to further consolidate the learning elements into a broader and more comprehensive Leadership strategy as per the approved 2015-2016 work plan of the undg.

**ii) Indicator Based Performance Assessment:**

	<b><u>Achieved</u> Indicator Targets</b>	<b>Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)</b>	<b>Source of Verification</b>
<p><b>Output 2.1.1:</b> Guidance Note on Human Rights for Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams updated</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> Guidance Note finalized and approved by UNDG-HRM in June 2014</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> N/A <b>Planned Target:</b> N/A</p>	<p>Final draft guidance endorsed by the UNDG-HRWG in March 2015, reflecting the latest policy developments and feedback from RCs and HRWG members.</p>	<p>The timeline for the drafting of updated guidance note had to be adjusted due to the sequencing imperatives associated with the RCJD revision processes.</p> <p>An extensive electronic peer review process with 24 RCs to validate the draft Guidance was organized in January 2015, replacing the face-to-face consultation originally envisaged due to compressed timeline.</p>	
<p><b>Output 2.2.1:</b> Learning Strategy on Human Rights for Resident Coordinators and UN country leadership developed and piloted</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> Learning strategy finalized for further rollouts by 2014</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> N/A <b>Planned Target:</b> N/A</p>	<p>Draft Learning Strategy submitted by UNSSC in September 2014 to UNDG-HRWG.</p>	<p>Given the sequencing imperatives as outlined above, the preparation of a draft learning strategy was delayed together with the elaboration of draft Guidance Note until the latter was in an advanced stage.</p> <p>As the full elaboration of the learning strategy would require reassessment of project partners' capacity, timeline and budgetary requirements, it was decided to close the current programme and continue the work under a new phase in accordance with the approved 2015-2016 work plan of the UNDG-HRWG.</p>	

### iii) Evaluation, Best Practices and Lessons Learned

The project made substantive achievements in terms of contributing to ground-breaking policy developments and producing practical guidance for RCs. As part of the process in achieving the expected outputs, the project also contributed to further strengthening the overall policy framework for the Resident Coordinator System, namely through ensuring stronger and more integrated reflection of human rights in the revised RC Job Description, UNDG Guidance on UNCT Conduct and Working Arrangements, and redesigning of RC Induction Programme.

At the same time, the project faced several delays, which are related to external policy developments as well as internal capacity of partner agencies. Building more flexibility in the original project design as well as implementation modality would have helped the project (and consequently the UNDG HRWG) to capitalize on emerging opportunities in a more agile and strategic way.

### III. Other Assessments or Evaluations

As part of developing new Guidance Note and a draft leadership development strategy, the project undertook **inventory of policies, tools and guidance** relevant to the human rights functions and responsibilities of RCs and UNCTs as well as **mapping of relevant leadership initiatives** in the UN system.

### IV. Programmatic Revisions

After the six-month, no-cost extension of the project was made at the end of December 2014 to allow the completion of the Guidance Note, the implementing agencies have decided to close the project as main deliverables were completed. As per the original project design, a major portion of project funds was intended for organizing face-to-face consultations on the draft guidance note. Since the UNDG-HRWG opted to have electronic consultations on the draft RC guidance instead as explained above, it was decided to close the project so that unspent funds can be returned to the MDTF and reprogrammed for the next phase of full development of leadership development strategy and the implementation of substantive activities once the strategy has been endorsed by the UNDG-HRWG.