

DRT-F Consultative Group Meeting 2016

17 June 2016, NEW YORK

List of Meeting Participants

Organization	Participants
UNFPA	Laura Londen (Chair)
Ireland	Michael Sanfey
Norway	Berit Fladby
Albania	RC Brian Williams
Montenegro	RC Fiona McCluney (by video)
UNDP	Chitose Noguchi
UNICEF	Chris Stokes
UNFPA	Mira Ihalainen
OHCHR	Rio Hada (by phone)
FAO	Jongjin Kim (by phone)
MPTFO	Henriette Keijzers
MPTFO	Mari Matsumoto
DOCO	Dena Assaf
DOCO	Diana Torres
DOCO	Richard Bailey
DOCO	Gerald Daly

Agenda item 1: Opening Remarks

Laura Londen (UNFPA) opened the meeting by clarifying that she was pleased to step in for Amir as Chair, who is currently engaged with his EB in Rome and sends his apologies.

Laura emphasized that the meeting comes at an important time in terms of UN reform with the QCPR process ongoing. A point where there seems to be agreement both amongst member states and within the UN system that pooled funding can be an important instrument for driving policy results and UN coherence.

The DRT-F has been piloting integrated policy support through pooled funding in 12 countries with 44 different initiatives. Progress with the DRT-F was greatly facilitated through the 11/12th May workshop in Addis Ababa.

The Chair noted that the aim of this annual meeting was to share progress and results to date in addition to agreeing necessary course corrections.

Dena Assaf (DOCO), welcomed the agencies and donors that have taken an active part in the work of this fund. 20 UN agencies have received funds from the DRT-F. Dena thanked the members of the Technical Steering Committee, Rio Hada (OHCHR), Mira Ihalainen, (UNFPA) and Raky Kane, (ILO).

Agenda item 2: DRT-F: supporting joined up policy initiatives

Gerald Daly (DOCO) provided an overview of progress made in 2014-2015.

The DRT-F has supported 44 policy initiatives in 12 countries that met the eligibility criteria in terms of: DAO approach, matching funds, and integrated policy initiatives. The DRT-F has mobilized and allocated a total of \$ 31. 57 million.

The DRT-F has covered a diverse range of policy areas across 14 of the 17 SDGs. This broad range of areas has also demonstrated that a wide range of skills are required in the UN system to provide quality support to the countries. Therefore, DOCO realized the importance of providing skills training to country teams in different aspects, including brokering and partnership skills. A learning/mentoring platform has been put in place to support the remaining period of implementation of DRT-F initiatives (ie. Sept 2017).

In terms of the results framework, the targets and results agreed in the global framework have been met, (eg. countries have produced more than 90 reviews and assessments in different policy related areas, and, 100% of DRT-F recipients have reported that the funds helped them to strengthen their focus on integrated policy support), however, it was proposed that to get a more meaningful and in-depth understanding of progress and results at country level, it will be necessary to develop a more detailed country level policy results framework with key performance indicators (KPI).

Some of the initiatives and key results highlighted at country level include:

- Bhutan

The review of government legislation and policies from a gender perspective has resulted in the recognition of the need to initiate/prepare a Gender Equality Policy. As a result, the development of the Gender Equality Policy is reflected in the 2016 Annual Work Plan of the National Commission for Women and Children.

- Cape Verde

A national action plan has been developed on sexual abuse as well as value chain analysis to support the elaboration of the Fisheries Cluster action plan.

- Malawi

Demographic Dividend-engagement at highest level, including the budgetary process.

- Vietnam

The revision process of the Law on Legal Aid, the Penal Code and Criminal Procedure Code achieved better alignment to international standards.

In terms of financial delivery, Gerry presented the status by country and per year. Most countries are on track with regards to the 2014 initiatives. Regarding the 2015 cycle, countries have reported progress in the majority of cases. For those countries that are showing slow financial delivery, DOCO is following-up closely with each of them to ensure that their implementation is completed by the end of the year.

A video on the work we are doing in Albania on Gender Based Violence was presented:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6io6dDvOWAQ&feature=youtu.be>

Gerry emphasized four lessons learned and actions going forward coming out of the Addis workshop and the progress report:

1. A more detailed results framework is required for monitoring results (Policy milestones and KPIs);

2. Country Offices need greater clarity of guidance around integrated policy work. UNCTs are in the lead but they need closer support from DOCO/HQ;
3. There should be greater flexibility in allocating resources to ensure maximum impact and efficiency, for example disburse in tranches based on results;
4. The DRT-F has enhanced the effectiveness of the UN through facilitating integrated policy support and enabling global knowledge sharing.

Fuller details on the above projects are contained in the Delivering Results Together Fund report for 2015 which was circulated prior to the meeting and will be available on the UNDG website by July 8th.

Questions and comments:

Norway noted that the results and financial reports had been received as agreed upon and that the results report, based on the revised results framework, was better than in the previous year. The meeting was reminded that it had been discussed from the very beginning of the DTR-F how a meaningful results framework for a global funding mechanism could look like.

Norway asked if the DRT-F plan to make country specific indicators or more generic indicators so that they can be aggregated up to a global level-and if so, when would the DRT-F be in a position to share this? The latter would be important for Norway to be able to continue to successfully “sell” the idea of a global funding mechanism for integrated policy advice. They noted that the existing results framework is thin on detail.

Norway asked why the DRT-F didn’t think about allocating in tranches earlier. They liked the emphasis on learning aspects for UN staff and suggested that this would be useful in making the case for the DRT-F as well as for similar inter-agency funds in the future. Norway noted that N/A had been changed to 0 in the baselines and questioned why this was done.

Norway commented that they understood that donor predictability was important, and that the lack of success in mobilizing other donors combined with the fact that the Norwegian contribution has gone down could have a negative impact on results. It was noted that whilst 5 donors were mentioned by the presenters, in reality there were only 3, since the others were residual amounts carried over from the Expanded Funding Window. It was noted that these kinds of funds should be important, especially in terms of delivering on the 2030 agenda, but it seems to be extremely difficult to get pooled resources to facilitate integrated policy work. Norway suggested that if donors see agencies themselves contributing to pooled funding mechanisms then they would be more likely to contribute funds. It’s important also for partner countries to contribute resources to such pooled funding mechanisms.

UNICEF agreed on the need to strengthen focus on pooled funding mechanisms to facilitate integrated policy support in the SDG era.

OHCHR noted the importance of harvesting lessons learned and knowledge. Typically resources are dispersed to country level and then countries are left on their own to implement. We need to look more closely at how countries are embracing integrated policy advice. We need to build in and strengthen the global policy support and capacity to these types of funding mechanisms. DOCO plays an important role, but also the UNDG and normative agencies in this practice.

MPTFO asked what normative support is coming from HQ and how has HQ helped and hindered integrated policy advice? This would be an important lesson learned as we take this work forwards, though support must be different for different countries.

UNDP asked how the country level results framework would fit in with the project framework and emphasized that we don't want to create systems outside what already exists.

Responses:

DOCO suggested that in terms of improving the results framework, a co-creation space could be established. The aim would be to create a light results framework that can be aggregated up to the global level. It was agreed that there is need for a strong focus on results and accountability and DOCO committed to providing an amended results framework within two months of this meeting.

DOCO accepted that they shouldn't have given the money out in one tranche. The mistake was that DOCO didn't spend enough time learning from colleagues that are managing equivalent funds at the global level.

DOCO suggested the need for a "Marshall" plan for training staff in how to do integrated policy work. The concept was accepted by the group though the name was questioned. It was suggested that this was a significant 'lift issue' and that perhaps there should be a percentage of resources that would be used to target staff learning? It was also noted that the UN should not over-rely on consultants but should develop staff capacity in this area.

DOCO noted that when it comes to good practice around advocacy-some of the best advocacy on norms and standards is being done by OHCHR and there is much that could be learned from them.

Agenda Item 3. Views from the Field

RC Montenegro

Explained the work done with the Youth in Montenegro-project. The DRT-F brought together the UN system as well as the government to work around cross-cutting issues like youth. The resources from the DRT-F enabled the UN to leverage important support from both UNIDO and ILO. They also supported the role of small agencies that usually don't have the resources to work jointly with the rest of the UN family at country level.

The RC argued it was important that any new fund would finance innovations which should include funding for piloting and demonstrating results on the ground

RC Albania

The DRT-F work in Albania has largely been on gender, including gender based violence. At municipal level community coordinating committees were established. These involved all stakeholders dealing with gender based violence so that those coming into the system will benefit from a whole of system response. This work covered 26 municipalities. As an indication of the impact of this work, in 2014, 94 cases of gender based violence were reported, whereas in 2015, over 3,000 cases were reported, showing the growing cultural acceptance of dealing with these issues.

DRT-F funding also facilitated women's political participation. In 61 Administrative districts the UN supported the "zipper" law, which meant that voter's roles were listed: women/ men/ women. Now 35% of municipal council representatives are women.

The RC noted that with the more difficult fundraising environment globally tensions can surface within the UN family, due to the limited resources available. Contributions from funds like the DRT-F can ease these tensions.

Questions/Responses

DOCO asked how does funding from the DRT-F helped the RC's to carry out their function.

UNFPA asked what the RC's would see as useful support from the global level.

Norway asked if agencies produced their own reports in addition to the One Report. Norway also noted that they appreciated that earmarking was seen as possible within the SOPs. Norway further asked if agencies have to be paid in order to work together and if so, where does that leave us with the 2030 agenda? It was noted that global funding for integrated policy advice is unlikely to be large and suggested that agencies themselves might need to put their own resources into the pooled funding mechanisms.

The RC from Albania explained that in terms of the leadership element, having resources from the DRT-F advances coherence at the country level and it further facilitates collective resource mobilization.

It was noted that the governments of middle income countries can pick up good work and pilots and take them to scale. An example of such work was a project that targets religious intolerance which is a high priority for the Albanian Prime Minister. UNESCO has the capacity to act but doesn't have the resources. Pooled funding helps with issues like this.

The RC from Montenegro reported that the UN's capacity was increased through the DRT-F. Further that UNDP and UNICEF do report separately, but the country office results reports (a core element of the SOPs) is an important element of coordination with government. The RC confirmed that the UN Annual Progress Report is the only published report for a public audience that is done on an annual basis.

The RC reported that the DRT-F does facilitate and promote integrated policy work. The Heads of Agencies in Montenegro do communicate often, but some additional resources help to move the policy agenda forwards.

The RC noted that support from DOCO, particularly around mentoring support on integrated work, would be helpful and not too costly. We should be wary of significantly increasing transaction costs (ie. in terms of linking tranche disbursement to results reporting).

The Chair noted that the DRT-F resources should be seen as being able to enable and facilitate coherence, rather than to incentivize.

Closing Remarks/Final Comments

The MPTFO spoke to learning from the DRT-F in terms of developing a new funding mechanism. This funding mechanism is still in the design phase, and will aim to fit closely with the 2030 agenda, focusing

on normative and standard setting work. It will aim to potentially work in all countries, rather than only those with an active One Fund. It will aim to facilitate UN capacity around integrated policy advisory work.

The idea of the new fund is to link timing directly to the UNDAF planning cycle, for countries to make proposals in areas where they have a comparative advantage, to facilitate risk taking through pooling funds and to have a competitive fund, so that only the best proposals are selected. It was also noted that there would be a longer time period that 12-18 months.

Those working on fund design are also looking closely at the other lessons learned. For example, what support needs to be provided from Secretariat and agency HQ's, in the design stage and in the implementation phase. The aim is also to get a broader donor base. It seems that many partners are talking about the importance of pooled funding for integrated support yet there is still some way to go. 10% of Humanitarian Funding is pooled, but only 5% of Development Funding is pooled.

Getting the right balance between transaction costs and the level of reporting is important. The plan is to prepare-finalize a concept note on a future fund for wider discussion.

Norway asked for a clarification of whether it was concluded that DRT-F would be terminated and absorbed by the new fund under planning. Norway said it was confirmed that they in principle still were in favour of such funds but underscored that no further commitment could be made before the development budget for 2017 is approved.

Next Steps/Follow-ups

- DOCO confirmed that an evaluation of the DRT-F is envisaged. It was previously thought that this would be immediately on closing the fund in Sept. 2017, but earlier timing options would be reviewed so that such a learning opportunity could be incorporated into design planning of a relevant pooled funding mechanism targeting integrated policy work.
- It was confirmed that an annual report will be produced respectively for 2016 (by end June 2017) and 2017 (by end June 2018).
- The idea of an interim narrative report (without financial numbers) with a learning emphasis would be produced in the first quarter of 2017 was raised and the Secretariat would take action. A country level policy results framework would be prepared and field tested and shared as soon as possible with the DRT-F Consultative Group.