



Sistema de las Naciones Unidas en Uruguay
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Stocktaking “Delivering as One” in Uruguay November, 2007



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Part I. Overview of what has happened in 2007, in response to being a pilot

I.1. What were the goals and expectations set at the beginning of the pilot process by the Government, UNCT and other stakeholders?

The selection of Uruguay as one of the eight “Delivering as One” pilot countries is the outcome of a process initiated in 2003-2004, when the System promoted the “MDG Round Table Panels” attended by over one thousand representatives of civil society organizations, political stakeholders and opinion leaders, with the key participation of many UN Agencies, Funds, Programmes and Commissions (henceforward, “Agencies”). Building on that highly participatory process and after the current Government took office in March 2005, the UN System agreed with the new authorities to prepare a *Common Country Assessment and a United Nations Development Assistance Framework* (CCA/UNDAF 2007-2010) although the CCA/UNDAF process was not mandatory in Uruguay. A key element for starting a UN strategic planning process was to factor in the country political timing and to align the CCA/UNDAF process with the governmental period. Indeed, the coming into power of new governments both at national and departmental level coupled with the subsequent establishment of both programmatic and budgetary priorities in 2005 created an opportunity to align the UNDAF with the national priorities and objectives defined by the new Government at national level and local governments at the departmental level. In other words, the UN went hand in hand with national partners in the UNDAF process. The CCA/UNDAF was the most relevant factor for Uruguay being candidate and selected as “Delivering as One” pilot country, which has resulted in the formulation of the “One UN Programme” that stems from the joint working experience among the Agencies and also between the UN System and the Government. The voluntary character of this process was a key factor in enabling the UNCT to be proactive, develop a true sense of ownership and learn from and throughout the whole process. Another relevant background factor was, in 2006, the ongoing pilot process whereby the three ExCom Funds and Programs active in the country (UNICEF, UNFPA and UNDP) were establishing Joint Offices.

The “Delivering as One” pilot process is seen by the Government as an opportunity to “experience” with new working modalities, hence generating multiple expectations. Among these expectations, the Government authorities include the following: (a) to strengthen the multilateralism in the framework of the debate about the future of the UN; (b) to strengthen the coherence, efficiency and impact of the Agencies in the field; and (c) to enable the Government to achieve a more strategic planning in relation to the international cooperation as a whole and the UN support in particular. The “Delivering as One” pilot process is expected to be an opportunity to build on the Government strategies to consolidate a long-term capacity



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development process both at the level of the State and the society, with the participation of citizens in the debates on public policies, as stated by the Director of the Planning and Budget Office of the Presidency of the Republic (OPP by its acronym in Spanish), Professor Enrique Rubio at the Regional Directors’ Meeting, held in Montevideo on 30-31 July, 2007. On the other hand, the UN System reform is expected to become a UN joint working process aiming at achieving more coherence, supporting the national priorities, and emphasizing the hierarchy of an integrated development vision in its global, regional, national and local dimensions. The Government understands that the UN reform process is being discussed at the intergovernmental level and that the ongoing pilot program is a process, an experience which as such must be valued, built upon and analyzed throughout its development, notwithstanding the fact that final outcomes cannot be anticipated at the present time.

Furthermore, during the “Regional High-Level Consultation on the Coherence of the United Nations System” held on 25-26 June, 2007, in Managua, Nicaragua, the Government of Uruguay expressed through the Deputy Director of the OPP, the country’s interest in contributing (through the pilot experience) to thinking, analyzing, and discussing the role of cooperation in “middle-income countries” and the UN reform. Indeed, “middle-income countries” represent the majority of countries receiving cooperation as well as the majority of countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. In this regard, during his speech, he pointed out that: “We are convinced that many countries face similar issues and therefore we need a UN System that provides a more coherent, efficient and effective technical and financial cooperation resulting in more impact in support of our priorities. We understand and request that all gains derived from a higher efficiency by the UN System “Delivering as One” in Uruguay should directly benefit the country”¹.

The need to redefine cooperation involving “middle-income countries” (MIC) is crucial, as their positive indicators cover borderline situations. These are countries that do have high human development indicators but simultaneously suffer severe structural vulnerabilities in key areas. These vulnerabilities, in addition to domestic imbalances and inequities, require high-level policy advice, which should be country and situation specific as well as well articulated. It should also support capacity development and the execution process itself when required. Therefore lessons could be learned from the Uruguayan pilot, because it is an “upper middle-income country”, on how important is the advocacy, the human rights based approach, the normative role of UN Agencies, the systematisation and dissemination of knowledge as well as the technical cooperation and the UN support to a broad range of activities, in order to identify and eradicate such vulnerabilities. The challenge of being the only “middle-income country” in the “Delivering as One” pilot process generates a unique kind of expectation and responsibility, at the level of both the Government and the UN System in Uruguay, to

¹ Speech by Dr. Conrado Ramos, Deputy Director of the Planning and Budget Office of the Presidency of the Republic during the “Regional High-Level Consultation on the Coherence of the United Nations System”, Managua, 26 June, 2007.



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demonstrate how relative the MIC concept is². The conceptual change sought in relation to international cooperation includes the idea of, instead classifying and ranking countries, rather classifying the interventions of the UN System, according to each country’s needs.

Both the “upper middle-income” and “high human development” classifications of the country, as well as its own budgetary capacity to respond to its own needs, lead to the fact that the added value of the UN System in Uruguay basically relies on capacity building and contributing: the capacity to support design, execution, and evaluation of quality policies; strengthening national capacities; generating opportunities for dialogue across different stakeholders and fostering demonstrative experiences at territorial level.

On several occasions the Government also expressed its expectations that the pilot contribute to developing its capacity of strategically planning all international cooperation received by the country from the UN, International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and bilateral, decentralized and “South-South” cooperation. Strengthening the strategic planning for cooperation responds to national priorities and challenges in terms of medium to long-term development as follows: a) sustained and sustainable economic growth; b) reduction of poverty and eradication of extreme poverty; c) reduction of inequity and discrimination; and d) strengthening quality of democracy and citizenship participation, all of them in the framework of enhanced social equality.

The Government has expressed its interest in strengthening, through this “Delivering as One” pilot process, the OPP, in coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in its role as coordinating organism of the international cooperation for development. Therefore, the OPP has expressed interest in building upon the “Delivering as One” pilot and in particular, on its “One UN Programme” pillar, to avoid duplications and overlapping among Agencies’ work, as well as among sectoral Ministries. The OPP also seeks to optimise the use of financial and technical resources that the Agencies contribute to the country.

In the framework of individual contacts that the Agencies maintain with their civil society counterparts, the latter have expressed their interest in an enhanced coherence and coordination among the Agencies working in the field. Given the complexity of the process, the Government and the UN country team (UNCT) agreed on not directly involving the civil society organizations during the initial stage of drafting the “One UN Programme” document, prioritising instead the participation of Ministries and other State institutions as well as the Agencies. However, the civil society organizations have effectively participated and participate in projects that the Agencies execute, either individually or jointly. These projects are incorporated into the “One UN Program”, in its outputs and resources matrix. Furthermore, it must be pointed out that after the first meeting of the Steering Committee to be held on 5 December, 2007, a systematic consultative process will be sought with civil society

² There is some volatility in one category based on the per capita income in countries sensitive to external crises such as the one experienced by Uruguay in 2001-2002. In fact, these countries rank as borderline and can change category in a short time.



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stakeholders, in order to receive inputs and design joint projects and activities based on the “One UN Programme” agreed-upon outputs (to be funded through the Coherence Fund). These specific projects and activities can involve Agencies, State institutions and civil society organizations.

Regarding the expectations of the Agencies, from the outset of the pilot, on several occasions (UNCT meetings, the Regional Directors’ Meeting held in July and during other meetings and events), the Agencies have expressed concern because the burden of additional work stemming from this pilot process. Several Agencies did not have sufficient support of required additional technical or financial resources to manage the process and tackle the overload of this process. In spite of these constraints, the Agencies are highly committed to deliver a more efficient and cooperative effort as well as to mobilise additional resources for Uruguay³.

Concerning the donor countries and organisms, a permanent dialogue between the Resident Coordinator (RC) and their respective embassies, cooperation agencies or delegations in the country, has enabled to document their positive assessment and expectations about this process as well as their support. Given that Uruguay is a country that normally does not receive a significant flow of technical or financial cooperation, the pilot is an opportunity for the country to mobilise key additional resources to be strategically earmarked and executed.

The “United Nations Federation of Staff Associations” is involved in the “Delivering as One” pilot through appropriate consultative mechanisms.

I.2. What are the key features of the pilot?

One of the most visible changes generated by the pilot is the quantitative and qualitative changes in joint programming among the Agencies, as well as between the UN System and the Government.

During 2007, as a result of the pilot as well as a result of the ongoing inter-agency synergy dynamics, the Agencies strongly invested into the joint programming initiatives and processes. The key initiatives are the following: a) the work of Inter-Agency Groups in the fields of: Population and Gender (FAO, ILO, IOM, PAHO/WHO, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIFEM); HIV-Aids (ECLAC, PAHO/WHO, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA); Food Security and Rural Development (FAO, PAHO/WHO, UNDP, UNFPA); b) cooperation to strengthen the “National Statistics System” (ECLAC, UNDP, UNFPA, UNIFEM); c) the programme “Support to Local Development and Governance in Uruguay” (ILO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNIFEM, UNOPS); d) work on childhood policies (UNDP, UNICEF); e) work on rural

³ The Government is fully committed to the resource mobilisation strategy for the pilot process, mostly for the “One UN Programme”. Regarding the UN System change management, the Government considers that it is not its responsibility to express any opinion on this issue or its funding.



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development (FAO, IFAD, UNIDO, UNOPS); f) work on population and migration (IOM, UNESCO, UNFPA); g) work on health and gender (PAHO/WHO, UNFPA), and h) the work of the informal group for joint programming in the areas of youth, gender and statistical systems (ECLAC, IOM, PAHO/WHO, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNIFEM).

Another major feature of the joint programming is the enhanced presence of the non-Resident Agencies (NRAs) as they joined because Uruguay being a “Delivering as One” pilot country. Eight NRAs have subscribed the “One UN Programme”, namely: IFAD, ILO, UNAIDS, UN-Habitat, UNIFEM, UNEP, UNODC, WTO. Actually, in November 2007, sixteen Agencies have already signed the “One UN Programme” (two more have announced their willingness to sign in the next few days), compared with ten Agencies having signed the UNDAF in April 2006.

As a result of the pilot, the participation of the NRAs has been significant and highly substantive in the elaboration of joint programmes proposals. Some NRAs have assumed the thematic leadership (for example, ILO in the drafting of the conceptual note for the Thematic Window on “Youth, Employment and Migrations” of the UNDP-Spain MDG Achievement Fund – hereinafter Spain MDG Fund).

The “Delivering as One” pilot process resulted in a stronger ownership by the Government implying i) an enhanced dialogue between OPP/the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the UN System and ii) the Government organisms involvement in joint programming that strengthened cross-cutting methodological approach with strategic vision.

The financial features of the country, as well as its commitment with the cooperation delivered by the UN System, allow it to participate in the Budgetary Framework accounting for 40%, representing almost half of existing resources, a factor that needs to be taken into consideration when reformulating cooperation for borderline countries.

Regarding the operations area, the pilot has already generated some changes. Systematization of information across Agencies has been enhanced in order to manage resources in a more efficient way (as for example, the purchase of airtickets or the publication and printing of material).

Finally, in terms of communications and visibility of the UN System, it must be pointed out that, although still very linked to events or activities that the System traditionally develops as one (UN Day, Human Rights Day), its presence in the mass media has increased. “Delivering as One” has been presented to the donors and the private sector and in every single occasion that the UN as such are involved. In the framework of the “Delivering as One” communication strategy, the enhanced presence of the UN System as such in the media, closely linked to joint programmatic activities, should be furthered in 2008. It must also be underlined that the number of public activities (seminars, workshops, launching of publications) organized by



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several Agencies has kept growing, especially in the following areas: gender, population-related issue, childhood policies, local development, HIV/Aids, among others.

I.3. What has been accomplished in 2007 in terms of substantive outputs?

Between March and September 2007, the System and Government formulated four joint projects for the Spanish MDG Fund (“Gender equality and Women’s empowerment”, “Environment and Climate Change”, “Culture and Development” and “Youth, Employment and Migrations”). In the formulation process, 12 Resident Agencies and 2 NRAs participated. Leadership and stewardship in the drafting committees was by rotation in terms of mandate and expertise, supported by the Resident Coordinator’s Office (RCO). Furthermore, the “One UN Programme” document was prepared and its formulation and drafting involved 16 Agencies (8 Resident Agencies and 8 NRAs), the OPP, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and 12 sectoral Ministries, the main State institutions as well as Local Governments, which normally act as counterparts to the Agencies.

Another visible outcome of the pilot and of the ongoing joint programming process is the alignment of cooperation plans or programmes of the Agencies and the CCA/UNDAF, in particular among ExCom Agencies⁴, now gathering momentum with the approval of the “One UN Programme”.

Also worth mentioning is the alignment between “national priorities” and the strategic objectives of the Government set forth in the 2006-2010 Budget on one hand, and the “One UN Program” objectives included in its Appendix “Outputs and Resources Matrix” on the other hand. Moreover, coherence, complementarity and potential synergies between the cooperation provided by the UN System to the Government and the other financial resources provided through the IFIs, as well as bilateral, decentralized or South-South cooperation, were duly sought and taken into account in the formulation of the One UN Programme.

Another positive outcome that needs to be highlighted is the mobilization of new resources. As an “upper middle-income country” with a “high human development” index, traditionally, Uruguay has not been eligible for cooperation. Therefore, the possibility of being granted additional resources – through the “Coherence Fund” and the Spanish MDG Fund in the Thematic Window of “Culture and Development” – or contributions by other donors is highly valued by the Government.

⁴ UNDP and UNFPA subscribed their CPD with the Government on January 26, 2007, for the period 2007/2010 perfectly aligned with CCA/UNDAF and UNICEF, in turn, as a result of the MTR of its 2005-2010 Cooperation Programme decided to request an extension until December 31, 2010, to harmonize the cooperation cycle with the other two ExCom Organizations. This fact also contributes to strengthening the “One UN Programme”.



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In relation to the UN System activities in the field, acting as such and not only through the intervention of each of the Agencies, one of the outcomes that stands out is the response - highly appreciated by the Presidency of the Republic - to the emergency caused by the floods in April in a country that is not disaster prone. In emergency response, several Agencies acted jointly with a very dynamic participation: FAO, OCHA, PAHO, RCO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF. Coordination challenges at national/local level as well as within the System⁵ were transformed into an opportunity for the System to articulate its activities and deliver as one, as well as communicate as “one voice” in the country.

In terms of the characteristics of the process - in particular, the elaboration of the “One UN Programme” and the four joint projects presented in the Thematic Windows of the Spain MDG Fund - one of the features to be highlighted is that of inclusiveness, on many occasions even to the detriment of expediency. As already mentioned, 16 Agencies participated in the elaboration of the “One UN Programme”.

In order to ensure the highest possible level of participation of all the Agencies as well as the Government’s leadership and ownership in the formulation of the “One UN Programme”, the corresponding working groups were established and integrated by focal points from all the Agencies and Ministries as well as relevant State organisms. Between May and September several meetings were held within the UN System (UNCT, “CCA/UNDAF Thematic Group”, focal points of ad hoc groups from Agencies) or bilaterally between the UN System and Government, to agree on the programmatic contents (objectives, structure, setting of priorities) and draft the “One UN Programme”. Specific working groups were established, eventually merging into one single drafting group.

There was a process of coming together, joining efforts and working more smoothly which evolved over the year and stemmed from both the UN System and the Government. A true sense of ownership also resulting from enhanced flows of information about what each Agency does, has been built along the year. The Agencies will benefit from this stronger sense of ownership and enhanced knowledge, when planning their activities, which will contribute to increased efficiency and effectiveness.

I.4. What does the team intend to focus on in 2008?

1. In 2008, the “One UN Programme” will be operative, with an active Steering Committee as of December 5, 2007 as well as the Coherence Fund becoming simultaneously operational. The Steering Committee will also define the projects that allow for the joint attainment of outputs and effects agreed upon in the “One UN Programme”. The Coherence Fund will allow the corresponding allocation of financial resources to cover the funding gaps of these projects.

⁵ The only one is the lack of coordination with the World Meteorological Organization.



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2. Together with the government, a consultation and information process with the Civil Society will be carried out, and regular channels will also be established to collect their opinions, suggestions and expectations in relation to the execution of the “One UN Programme”.
3. Joint impact projects will be promoted such as the one corresponding to the Thematic Window on Culture and Development.
4. The UNDAF mid-term review will be conducted, as foreseen, and it will incorporate and harmonize the nine new outputs of the Joint Programme.
5. A specialist in monitoring and evaluation will be hired to select the necessary indicators to assess the impact of the pilot and develop a methodological proposal to conduct process follow-up.
6. A resource-mobilization strategy will be developed, tailored to the specific characteristics of the “middle-income countries”.
7. In terms of the leadership pillar, protocols will be defined on the responsibilities and operation of the Steering Committee of the “One UN Programme” and the UNCT.
8. Work will be done on the concept of Change Management, focused on the change of the UN System and on how to streamline additional work - resulting from the pilot process - by the Agencies devoted to achieving more coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, results and impact.
9. The UN System is committed to attain the objectives relative to the “One UN Office”.
10. The Inter-Agency Communications Group will be strengthened and information activities will be organized to make the System more visible in Uruguay.
11. The adoption of the “borderline country” concept would imply reconsidering the type of intervention that the UN System delivers in Uruguay and similar countries.

Part II. Analysis of the pilot process thus far and review of the potential/emerging results that it could have in the coming years around the following key themes:

II.1. National leadership and ownership and alignment with national priorities and development strategies, taking into account contributions of other aid providers.

The UN reform process in Uruguay has been fully owned by the Government and the definition of outputs and outcomes of the “One UN Programme” is perfectly well aligned with national priorities. This leadership is conducted both in outlining the strategic priorities as well as in budgetary terms. Although cooperation provided by the UN System in Uruguay is not exclusively economic in nature, it is important, in terms of the ownership of this process, to highlight that the Government has proposed to earmark resources from the Coherence Fund to certain strategic activities. With the UN System support, these strategic activities are expected



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to generate positive results and impact. Otherwise, these key results would not be achieved because these activities were not included in the five year Government budget for 2006-2010.

The coordination process within the Government is led by the OPP in a growing effort of articulation with the different line Ministries. Few aspects remain to be solved. This is independent of the joint activities carried out by the specialized Agencies with their respective ministerial counterparts.

The Government leadership is also extended to the coordination of the international cooperation not only the one provided by the UN System, but also by all the other partners.

The relation of the UN System with the Government and the role the latter played during the elaboration of the “One UN Programme” is considered a qualitative change regarding ownership and the way the Government relates to the cooperation provided by the UN System in general terms. This experience contributed to the Government’s capacity building process in centralizing information on cooperation—a process that had already started in March 2005—and to obtain enhanced knowledge not only on each one of the Agencies but on the UN System as a whole.

II.2. Ability of the UN System to ensure a strategic and focused use of all its assets to meet national priorities. Strategies to ensure access of the Government, including Line ministries, to specialized expertise of the UN system (including that of non-resident Agencies) with due attention to cross-cutting issues. Strategies to facilitate inclusiveness, participatory nature and joint ownership of the pilot process.

At the outset of the pilot it was necessary to undergo a process to internalize its objectives, characteristics and scope so authorities would understand the new working model that would steer the elaboration of the “One UN Programme”. This included inter-institutional projects by the State, and inter-agency projects by the UN System, so as to allow for more integrated responses to complex issues.

As a consequence of the reform process and of the necessary joint programming carried out, the UN System in Uruguay has developed capacities and strategies not only to align its cooperation with national priorities but also to include the valuable collaboration of Non-Resident Agencies and at the same time look after and foster cross-cutting issues such as Human Rights, Gender and local Development.

As previously stated, the activities of the Thematic Groups (Food Security and Rural Development, Population and Gender, HIV-Aids) under the leadership of different Agencies, is an example of inter-agency coordination. In addition, the Agencies have achieved greater coordination and increased alignment on national priorities. The Inter-Agency Programme “Support to Local Development and Governance in Uruguay” (ILO, UNDP, UNFPA,



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UNIFEM, UNOPS) aims at building a framework to articulate partnerships that support a programmatic approach to local development and, in particular, to support pilot initiatives based on the Millennium Development Goals for governance and sustainable local development, is another example of inter-agency programming, oriented to attaining the MDGs alongside the national priorities.

Apart from the work carried out by the OPP, in the framework of the Thematic Windows, the different Ministries involved had an active participation to further strengthen their respective links with some of the specialized Agencies.

II.3. Quality of the support programmed and being implemented by the UN

In the course of several years, the quality of programmatic support provided by the UN System has been highly appreciated by the Government. During the UNDAF and “One UN Programme” design process this highly positive assessment has been reiterated by the Government. However, since the “One UN Programme” was recently signed, its implementation cannot be assessed at this stage. The Government states that the dialogue with the UN System, through the RC, has been highly positive for Uruguay’s cooperation with the different sources of assistance.

II.4. Impact on overall resources (funding) available through the UN system to the countries to meet their national goals within the framework of IADGs, including MDGs

Given that Uruguay is a “middle-income country”, the core resources that Agencies receive are very limited. Therefore, many of the resources that the UN System manages have been mobilized by their representatives and the RC, supported by a successful strategy that mobilizes partnerships and resources. Systematic contacts have been established with new and traditional donors, which are particularly interested in the reform process and in the characteristics of the country as a “middle-income country”. Several governments have expressed their interest in providing financial support to the initiatives carried out through the Coherence Fund of the One UN Programme, while other donors are considering their participation.

II.5. Impact on transaction costs to partners

Given the short period of time, significant transaction costs have not yet been achieved.



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II.6. Any early indication of impact on overhead costs of the UN system at the country level and coordination costs related to the pilot

Given the short period of time elapsing since the project started, it is too early to assess the impact indicators on the overhead costs of the UN System at country level, as well as of the coordination costs relative to the pilot. Nevertheless, it can be said that the workload of the Agencies has significantly increased. Seven percent of indirect costs would be acceptable to the Agencies as long as it were applied to all Agencies alike without exceptions.

The Government, in turn, has considered the need to open a dialogue on this issue, so it can be considered and worked out jointly. Though the current 7% foreseen is already lower than what is normally charged by several Agencies, the Government requests further reduction. It must be remembered that this percentage was negotiated at a global level for the Spanish MDG Fund, so it does not depend on the individual Agencies' decision, hence becoming a factor that introduces some degree of inflexibility.

II.7. Any new specific mechanisms through which the pilot processes are implemented and their effectiveness

As regards to other mechanisms that have improved the effectiveness of the pilot, it must be pointed out that the joint work in the framework of the elaboration of CCA/UNDAF, of the “One UN Programme”, and the preparation of the proposals for the Thematic Windows of the Spain MDG Fund, have generated a very fruitful process of inter-personal contact, resulting in a deeper knowledge, confidence and trust among professionals and experts in the different Agencies; thus creating an informal network of links that facilitate work and turn it more efficient, sincere and pro-active.

The process has implied an institutional learning for the UNCT that moved from being a group mainly focused on coordination duties, to a multifaceted working group, where consensus is built and issues are addressed through dialogue, trust and team spirit. For example, the “One UN Programme” draft was finalised at this level through a high level policy and institutional discussion, incorporating “live” changes to the draft document.



Part III. Review of lessons learned by the pilots based on analysis of the initial progress

III.1. What has worked thus far? Is there evidence of early gains in terms of coherence, effectiveness and efficiency?

As explained in former paragraphs, the elaboration of the CCA/UNDAF has been an enabling framework to further enhance the capacity to formulate joint programmes. Though this does not only include the inter-agency work, many of the activities mentioned in it are a reflection of joint work. Compared with the work conducted in the CCA/UNDAF, the “One UN Programme” is a qualitative change, through operationalising priority goals in a more integrated and strategic programming process carried out by the System.

The interagency process of elaboration of the proposals submitted to four of the Spanish MDG-F Thematic Windows implied coordination efforts by the participating Agencies. The proposals were elaborated in a participatory manner, in working groups that also involved the Government. This drive towards a joint programming, carried out in a very short period of time, set an important record in terms of the possibility to have common projects that lead to enhanced efficiency in the use of capacities and resources in each Agency. The synergies developed within the working group itself that can also be used as input for future projects. External financial incentives have led the Agencies to design new working modalities that go beyond the structures created by the inter-agency groups.

These examples may have helped pave the way to the elaboration of the “One UN Programme”. Moreover, the formulation of joint projects for some specific topics, with contributions from each Agency, followed the objective of harnessing the economies of scale. Since the beginning of the year, a qualitative change has been achieved through requiring inter-agency collaboration as a key feature in the UN System new programmatic activities. The Agencies, as a matter of fact, show that – by drawing on the opportunity to jointly plan for additional resources – they take up a firm commitment in terms of inter-agency approaches. Notwithstanding the former, the Government deems it desirable to maintain bilateral dialogue with the Agencies in issues relevant to their specific mandate and expertise.

Another coordination example will materialize in the presentation of an explanatory note by the Uruguayan Government to the GEF via the political and technical focal points in that institution – relative to the coordination efforts between UNDP and FAO as well as within the Uruguayan national institutions (Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Housing, Land Use Management and Environment). The note will also address the coordinated implementation of three projects related to climate change



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adaptation submitted to that Facility, should they be approved. This effort implied substantial joint work of participating national Institutions and Agencies involved.

The strong sense of ownership by the Government in all the activities of this process, expressed in each of the meetings held in 2007 with Agencies and with the RC as System representative as well as the alignment of CCA/UNDAF, the “One UN Programme” and the proposals presented to the Thematic Windows with the national priorities demonstrate the level of commitment and efforts to achieve greater coordination both by the Government and the UN System. A positive trait of this process is that it has harnessed the technical resources of the Agencies themselves and the Government to elaborate joint projects and the “One UN Programme” instead of resorting to hired external consultants; this results in an increase of institutional capacities of the country and the State itself, and they can be used again in the future; this is also an example of good tapping into existing resources.

A UN System communication strategy both internal and external is being developed and implemented. In this process, the use of the common slogan, “Delivering as One” follows the objective of reinforcing the external UN image as coordinated and efficient. In fact, the development of a joint communication strategy becomes even more relevant as new joint projects and activities are carried out by the Government and the Agencies, within the framework of the “One UN Programme”.

The financial and technical support – provided by UNFPA and UNDP to strengthen the coordination capacity of the UN System and, in particular, the RCO during 2007 – is worth mentioning. All Agencies, at different levels, have reinforced their representations or technical teams in Uruguay contributing to the success of the pilot process. In addition, the Regional Directors have fully endorsed the process and provided strong financial and technical support to the implementation of the “Delivering as One” pilot in the country.

III.2. What is proving difficult and what should be done to solve these difficulties, either locally or by HQs? What has been particularly challenging and why?

As regards to the country, even though the civil society already actively participated in the “MDG Round Table Panels”, the establishment of appropriate coordination mechanisms between civil society and the UN System is an additional challenge. It implies not only further clarification on the what but also on the how. It was considered necessary for the Government to establish its priorities at the level of the One UN Programme outcomes prior to further involve the civil society participation in the design and implementation of inter-agency projects as well as in the monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

Regarding the decision-making mechanisms of the UN System, those which were adequate, functional and efficient before the pilot are being reviewed and adjusted in order to address the



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new requirements. On the other hand, some Agencies are concerned that the RC is also the Representative of other Agencies.

There is, furthermore, a contradiction between the autonomy granted to the pilots as such, as experiences that would allow for “experimenting” new working modalities on the one hand, and the need for Agencies to systematically report to their respective Headquarters and consult them before making almost any decisions on the other hand. The majority of Agencies lack sufficient autonomy to make local decisions while some others have more possibilities to do so.

As it often happens in organizational change processes, uncertainty and concerns grow among actors involved—in this case the Agencies, staff, etc.—in relation to the direction and implications relative to those changes.

The development of the pilot has brought about a sharp increase of the demand for information, both internal and external.

The UN Agencies, in turn, have felt the need to maintain activities relative to the performance of normal duties (business as usual) while at the same time those related to the pilot process are added.

The deadlines for delivering products have been often perceived as difficult to attain, thus generating pressure and unnecessary tension. An example is the deadline for producing a draft Concept Paper on the Pilot for the CEB meeting on 20 April, 2007, which has put unnecessary pressure on the whole process of consulting, building consensus and elaborating a shared conceptual framework for the pilot.

Joint programming has represented a challenge both for the country as for the UN System. For the country, the results stemming from this experience will be crucial at the time of demonstrating how fundamental cooperation is in countries that a priori – because of the income indicators and their share of the ODA in their GDP and in their public spending – seem not to need this cooperation. Furthermore, the need to demonstrate that Uruguay is a country managed in a transparent and efficient way, led the Government to make a tremendous effort to gain experience in a successful joint programming as example for future cooperation. For the UN System, it could potentially imply a redefinition of the way cooperation modalities work in middle income countries.

Regarding the participation of Uruguay in the MDGF Thematic Windows, the fact that the timeframe for the elaboration of projects is so limited presented a difficulty—in fact, work was conducted to present a project to the “Economic Governance” Window but the deadlines could not be met—and a lesson learned. Indeed, adjustment was possible along with a more coordinated work for submissions to future MDGF Thematic Windows. For example, in the



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preparation of the conceptual note for the MDGF Thematic Window on “Youth, Employment and Migrations”, work started two months in advance.

As the beginning of the pilot coincided in time with the call for proposals for the first MDGF Thematic Windows, several efforts overlapped. On the other hand, as a result of being a pilot country, all the stakeholders developed expectations that were met with frustration when learning the results of the calls for the first MDGF Thematic Windows.

Though joint programming is key in a process geared to be as inclusive as possible and more efficient, in some situations a trade-off can be generated between both objectives: efficiency and inclusiveness. Nevertheless, both objectives were recognized as goals whose completion needed to be attained. The political and strategic decision of the pilot in Uruguay was to weigh inclusiveness to ensure ownership, benefiting the process in terms of quality and respecting the principle of voluntary participation of the Agencies. This implies that negotiations take more time but the commitments and consensus reached are more comprehensive and deeper. Thus, the results attained so far are more important in terms of a qualitative meaningful learning process than just the sum of concrete outputs.

Another issue that is also suggested as challenge is the need to advance in the analysis of the feasibility of the “One UN Office”, by handling concrete alternatives and an analysis of costs, benefits and constraints in each case. Sharing one single physical space would reinforce the interaction of the Agencies in the System and the efficiency of the whole set of operations delivered by the System. The commitment of the Government to provide the appropriate premises is important.

Progress made in the “One UN Office” pillar may be affected by a lack of autonomy of the Agencies to harmonize their processes in terms of procurement of goods and services. In any way, intense work is underway in aspects such as: human resources, financial regulations, infrastructure and information systems, joint hiring and, in general, the study of all other opportunities for optimisation in the use of resources earmarked for this pillar (although not instrumental, it is of vital importance).

The implementation stage of activities envisaged in the “One UN Programme” will test the lessons learned so far.

III.3. What types of support from the wider UN and other partners locally and internationally would increase the UN ability to deliver development assistance to the country and continue the implementation of the pilot initiatives next year?

The RCO role in support of change management throughout the process has been key; this implies the need to have more resources enabling the RCO to continue carrying out this task. The need for this office to have greater institutional standing is justified by the fact that



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Agencies have limited human resources because the country has a low ODA, further limiting the support Agencies can provide to the RCO. This means that the RCO has taken up a great responsibility in supporting the development of the process and in supporting the Agencies at the country level.

The Agencies at the country level should have more autonomy from their respective headquarters to assume initiatives at the local level as well as to decide and implement changes at the pilot country level. To that end, it is key to have the responsibilities in the process clearly assigned⁶.

Additionally, it is necessary for the Agencies to receive a unified, harmonized and consistent message from their respective headquarters regarding the meaning and priority of the pilot, so that replication of this message is done effectively.

It would be desirable to have feedback mechanisms across Agencies in the country and their respective headquarters, so as to articulate their normal activities with the new demands stemming from the pilot, to avoid inconsistency between the reform initiative (that promotes creativity) and demands coming from Headquarters in a context of “business as usual”.

For a “borderline country” such as Uruguay, it is important to think of a new cooperation model with the donors. UN cooperation cannot work well if the Agencies and countries receiving cooperation are encouraged to compete against each other to obtain resources, and the donors compete to provide them. Rather, it is necessary to generate synergies with and among the donors.

Given the positive impact of the regional, Headquarters and DGO missions so far, it is considered very positive to receive new missions that help reinvigorate those aspects that are still difficult to develop in the Uruguay pilot experience (change management, dialogue with stakeholders, decision-making mechanisms, leadership, “One UN Office”, harmonization of procedures). This would build the capacity to implement the “One UN Programme” and make progress in the changing dynamics brought forth by Reform in the other pillars of the “Delivering as One” pilot. The forthcoming mission on Change Management, next December, will represent a crucial element to move in that direction.

⁶ As stated in footnote 3, the Government considers that it is not its responsibility to express any opinion on the UN System change management issue or its funding.