A Resolution for a Quiet Revolution

Taking the United Nations to Sustainable Development 'Beyond Aid'

Pio Wennubst

Timo Mahn

A resolution for a quiet revolution

Taking the United Nations to sustainable development 'beyond aid'

Pio Wennubst

Timo Mahn

Bonn, New York 2013

Pio Wennubst is the team head for humanitarian and development affairs at the Permanent Representation of Switzerland to the United Nations in New York. While he was managing a Swiss chemical company in Africa, an eye-opening experience triggered a major career change. Mr Wennubst then studied agro-economics at the University of Bologna and comparative rural development at INA in Paris before joining the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. He further expanded his know-how in the health and financial sectors while working as a development practitioner. He has broad experience in research, teaching, policy dialogue, negotiations and coaching, and has acquired sectoral expertise in public expenditure management and private-sector development.

Timo Mahn is a research fellow in the Bi- und Multilateral Development Cooperation department of the German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE). He studied political science at the Free University of Berlin and international development management at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. Mr Mahn worked for the World Bank, KFW, the German development bank and the German Embassy in Kigali before joining the DIE. In addition to the United Nations, his research interests include international organizations, public financial management, aid modalities and aid architecture.

E-mail: timo.mahn@die-gdi.de

Disclaimer

The views expressed here are solely those of the authors.

Authors' preface

The idea to write this discussion paper was largely triggered by two events in the fall of 2012. The United Nations (UN) Conference on Sustainable Development ('Rio+20') had just adopted its outcome document in Rio de Janeiro, while in New York UN Member States were in the middle of the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) process that culminated in the QCPR Resolution of 2012, in December.

This paper seeks to make an informed contribution to the Member States' debate. Needless to say, many limitations are associated with such an endeavour, among them, timing. At the time of publication, numerous reform processes – in particular that for the post–2015 agenda – were ongoing, whose outcomes we cannot predict and which at times have required us to keep our argument more general. However, this proposal is fully in line with the ongoing discussions.

For purposes of full disclosure: Pio Wennubst previously served as facilitator for negotiating the QCPR resolution at the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations. To reflect on that experience, he spent 15 days in March/April 2013 as a guest researcher at the German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE), where co-author Timo Mahn works as a research fellow in a project about the UN Development System (UNDS). This discussion paper results from our joint research effort and expresses our own views.

Bonn and New York, August 2013   Pio Wennubst / Timo Mahn

Contents

Abbreviations

CEB	Chief Executives Board for Cooperation
CPC	Committee for Programme and Coordination
CPR	Comprehensive Policy Review
DaO	Delivering as One
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
DIE	German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik
DOCO	UN Development Operations Coordination Office
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning
GA	General Assembly
GNH	Gross National Happiness
HLCM	High-level Committee on Management
HLCP	High-level Committee on Programmes
HLM	high-level meeting
HLPF	High-level Political Forum
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
ODA	official development assistance
OESC	Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination
OP	operational paragraph
PGA	President of the UN General Assembly
QCPR	Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review
RC	resident coordinator
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SG	Secretary-General
TCPR	Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDS	United Nations development system
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

Executive summary

Introduction

Taking the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) as a starting point, this paper contributes to the broader debate about the future of the United Nations development system (UNDS). The General Assembly (GA) conducts the QCPR every four years to evaluate the UNDS's effectiveness and efficiency and provide policy guidance for the whole system. It then produces a negotiated resolution outlining how the UNDS should function. This paper suggests how the QCPR could realise a 'quiet revolution' using fundamental yet achievable reforms to instill a system-wide perspective in the UNDS. The aim is to align the UNDS with the requirements after the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) expire in 2015, when the new framework will be oriented around the Sustainable Development Agenda. It responds to four questions:

- *What* is the future role of the UNDS?
- *How* will the system function, and in which form?
- What *means* are needed to fulfil this role?
- What *process* must be followed to implement this proposal?

The QCPR as a system-wide strategy

The QCPR has evolved into a key vehicle for making system-wide reforms. It produces the only resolution that addresses the whole system instead of just the parts, enjoys strong legitimacy and garners widespread support. The landmark QCPR Resolution of 2012 is a case in point. For some entities, QCPR resolutions are mandatory; for others, adoption is voluntary. Since it was first established, the QCPR has come to fulfil three basic functions: a) ensuring that the UNDS operates in conformity with Member State priorities, b) serving as a system-wide monitor of operational activities for development and c) providing policy guidance for the UNDS.

Each QCPR resolution provides policy guidance for UNDS operations – *how* to conduct development cooperation. QCPR resolutions also contain substantial guidance in terms of mandates (the *what*), although most of the system-wide mandate originates elsewhere.

'Sustainable development' as a system-wide mandate

The Sustainable Development Agenda represents a paradigm shift in global thinking about development. In the Rio+20 outcome document, Member States confirmed its crucial importance for the UNDS, but gave no specifics. However, it is possible to identify a number of policy implications in the Sustainable Development Agenda:

- It is generally applicable in every country – due to the increasingly global nature of development challenges.
- It calls for action on significantly longer time horizons than in the past.
- It requires joint efforts by the public and private sectors as well as by individuals.

- 'Silo' approaches and structures are no longer deemed adequate because rapid increases in knowledge-sharing boost interconnectivity and interdependence.

- It entails a fundamental transformation of development cooperation going 'beyond aid'.

- Making it operable is mostly a matter of setting and adjusting regulatory frameworks to facilitate equitable and sustainable access to livelihood assets for all.

The UNDS seems to be well positioned to play a key role in implementing the Sustainable Development Agenda:

- The 'universal nature' of UNDS operational activities means it services all countries.

- UNDS multilateral collaboration perpetuates joint endeavours over extended periods of time, as exemplified by the MDGs.

- The UNDS has demonstrated its convening power by forging partnerships and uniting different stakeholders to address common challenges.

- The greatest asset of the UNDS is its input legitimacy. This creates global acceptability for its outputs and services and a unique level of credibility.

Given this background, it seems appropriate for the UNDS to become the key actor to support implementation of the new paradigm on the basis of a system-wide mandate to be adopted by Member States. Its special role is seen as addressing the 'normative gap' in practical support for the transition to the new paradigm, especially creating and operationalizing a normative foundation to guide operations.

However, the UNDS suffers from having a blurry profile. The UN Charter broadly defines the organization's purpose in development, which has been further defined by Member States through the various executive boards of individual UNDS entities. Since 2000, the MDGs have served as the overarching UNDS guidepost, although they are not specific to the UNDS. QCPR resolutions have evolved as a further source of substantive guidance – through practice, not design. There is no organic link to operations because only fragments of a negotiated system-wide mandate exist. Therefore, any post–2015 framework will require a system-wide interpretation explaining the UNDS's respective purpose and how it complements other actors.

At present, there is strong momentum for change within the UNDS. A key reform process includes the new High-level Political Forum (HLPF), which offers opportunities for Member States to provide the UNDS with a system-wide mandate to fill gaps left by the expiring MDGs. The HLPF could serve to anchor the UN's specific contribution to implementation of the Sustainable Development Agenda, thus strengthening the link between mandate and operations. That way, the HLPF would set the boundaries for the functioning of the UNDS.

A 'quiet revolution' towards a cohesive UNDS

As a holistic, transformational and global concept, the Sustainable Development Agenda calls for new cohesiveness within the UNDS. The UNDS's compartmentalised structure is a historical consequence of 'functionalism'. The MDGs also basically followed a 'functionalist' logic of compartmentalising development challenges in various functional sectors and

associated target groups. This was okay for the UNDS's conventional institutional arrangement, but is not suited for the Sustainable Development Agenda as a system-wide mandate. In fact, the lack of coherence may be limiting the system's ability to exploit crucial synergies that define the Sustainable Development Agenda. In order to maintain the UNDS's prominent role in international development architecture, its normative and operational arms may need a much tighter fit.

The UNDS is transitioning towards greater system-wide cohesion, largely stipulated by the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence in 2006. The current state of affairs could be described as a 'mixed system' that exhibits elements of system-wide orientation alongside agency-specific organizational models. Member States have been using the QCPR as one of the main 'organs' to advocate system-wide cohesion. Analysis of QCPR resolutions shows that nearly 70 per cent of the mandates now concern the whole UNDS; fewer mandates relate to individual parts.

Preparing the UNDS for the paradigm shift to Sustainable Development requires further reforms to address the remaining discrepancies. Because various aspects of the UNDS are linked, changing operational structures necessitates additional measures to strengthen system-wide oversight and mechanisms for management. A quiet revolution of incremental reforms to strengthen incentives, transparency and accountability is more feasible than a big-bang approach. This entails ECOSOC becoming a centre of oversight and functioning as a system-wide executive board within the UNDS. Under the Chief Executive Boards for Coordination (CEB), its interlocutor on the inter-agency side, the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), would assume a system-wide managerial function for ECOSOC. The UNDS should step up its efforts to decentralise so as to be able to respond to challenges in individual countries, and a revamped UN Development Assistance Framework ('UNDAF+') should become the main country-level programming tool, accompanied by resident coordinators (RCs) with more managerial functions. Contributions made by the UNDS and private stakeholders to the UN Secretary-General's partnership initiatives also need to be clarified. Finally, harmonized business practices are needed to make the UNDS more cohesive.

System-wide funding – 'Beyond Aid'

The existing funding system of the UNDS could be characterised as 'headquarter centred' and 'agency oriented', and although suitable for a traditional institutional setting, it appears to have reached the limit of structural growth. The QCPR analysis shows Member States want demand-driven, systemic funding. The thematic initiatives of the Secretary-General (SG), which go beyond the UNDS's current scope and means, can be seen as an indication of the growing demands placed on the UNDS. Establishing a system-wide mandate requires strengthening institutions that is optimally achieved through a reformed funding mechanism to incentivise coherence and speed up results-delivery. Since a system-wide mandate to implement the Sustainable Development Agenda implies varying degrees of support for all countries, the funding mechanisms will have to go 'beyond aid' to receive additional support from sources other than the usual official development assistance (ODA). Member States must commit themselves to broadening and diversifying the UNDS funding basis 'beyond aid' through innovative means.

Conclusions

Harmonizing the strategic plans with the four-year QCPR cycle has prepared the UNDS for strategic guidance. But there are no means for reconciling a system-wide mandate for the UNDS with the functioning and funds for implementation. QCPR resolutions are the right vehicle and instrument to give the UNDS a new sense of purpose and direction as it adapts its business model from aid to sustainable development. Member States should therefore up-grade the QCPR to a system-wide strategy, or a 'QCPR+' that links the system-wide *what* to the *how* and the *means* – similar to a corporate strategy in the business world.

1 Introduction

Beginning with the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR), this paper contributes to the broader debate about the future of the United Nations development system (UNDS). It sketches how Member States could use the QCPR to create a 'quiet revolution' within the UNDS to align it with the new requirements after the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) expire in 2015 and are replaced by a new framework guided by the Sustainable Development Agenda, which grew out of the Rio and Rio+20 summits.

The United Nations General Assembly (GA) conducts a QCPR every four years *"to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the United Nations development system's support [...] in the context of the UN development agenda"* and on that basis*, "to provide policy guidance for the UNDS".[1]* In short, Member States use the QCPR resolution to tell the UNDS how to function.

The Sustainable Development Agenda, on the other hand, compels the international community to adopt an alternative model of development that reconciles economic, social and environmental issues so as to not compromise the livelihoods of future generations.

We consider that both the Sustainable Development Agenda and the QCPR resolutions – especially their latest reiteration in 2012 – herald important changes for the future of the UNDS. This paper is about establishing what we consider to be the missing link between the agenda and the resolutions.

In the past, Member States used the QCPR to make iterative reforms aimed at instilling a system-wide[2] perspective in the UNDS, where a largely entity-centred logic had prevailed. We refer to this process as the 'quiet revolution'. The QCPR has become a key platform to debate the future of the UNDS, so throughout this paper we refer to the QCPR. Its basic set-up, evolution and functioning is outlined in Chapter 2. The remainder of the paper responds to the following questions:

− *What* is the future role of the UNDS? (Chapter 3)

− *How* will the system function, and in *which form*? (Chapter 4)

− What *means* are needed to fulfil this role? (Chapter 5)

− What *process* must be followed to implement this proposal? (Chapter 6)

---

1 According to standard usage, the United Nations development system consists of the 37 UN agencies, funds and programmes that collectively engage in "operational activities for development". These 'operational activities' include both activities primarily aimed at long-term development and short-term humanitarian relief measures (compare UNSG 2012a).

2 In this paper, the point of reference for the term 'system-wide' is the UNDS.

2 The QCPR as a system-wide strategy

Past QCPR resolutions have shaped the UNDS in myriad ways, and evolved into an important way to introduce system-wide reforms because the QCPR is the only (remaining) resolution that addresses the whole system and is widely supported by UN members. The landmark 2012 QCPR Resolution showed that complex negotiations can be successfully completed – and foment a quiet revolution to create system-wide perspective in the UNDS.

2.1 The basic set-up and evolution from the TCPR to the QCPR

The resolutions of the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of UN operational activities for development (QCPR) fulfil a key function for the UNDS intergovernmental governance. The QCPR is the mechanism through which the GA

> *"… assesses the effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and impact of UN operational activities for development and establishes system-wide policy orientations for the development cooperation and country-level modalities of the UN system in response to the evolving international development and cooperation environment."* [3]

The review process associated with QCPR resolutions includes a more evaluative and backward-looking dimension, as well as a more prescriptive and forward-looking dimension (UNSG 2012c). A third basic function was outlined in the seminal 'restructuring' resolution of 1977. While that resolution mandated the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to carry out such policy reviews, it defined the scope of these reviews by specifying *"the need for balance, compatibility and conformity with the priorities established by the General Assembly for the system as a whole".*[4] These sources can be used to summarise the functions of the QCPR resolution as follows:

− to ensure compatibility and conformity with the priorities established by the GA,

− to serve as a system-wide monitor of operational activities for development, and

− to serve as the main instrument for UN Member States to provide policy guidance for the UNDS.

Each QCPR process helps to focus attention – at both the central and field levels – on maintaining system-wide compatibility and conformity under GA guidance. QCPR resolutions enjoy high status because only through them can Member States provide system-wide guidance and address matters that affect and concern the UNDS *as a whole*. For formal reasons, however, QCPR resolutions are only mandatory for those entities that report to the GA,[5] while specialized agencies' adherence is recommended.

---

3 Compare the webpage of the UN Secretariat's Department for Economic and Social Affairs, www.un.org/esa/coordination/tcpr.htm (accessed 19 May 2013).

4 UN Doc. A/RES/32/197 of 20 Dec. 1977.

5 These are: the UNDP (including UNCDF and UNV), UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP, UNHCR, UNODC, UNCTAD (including ITC), UNRWA, UN Women, UNEP and UN Habitat, all of which report to the General Assembly; the research and training institutions: UNICRI, UNIDIR, UNITAR, UNRISD, UNSSC and UNU; and UNAIDS, UNISDR and UNOPS (UNS 2012). See Annex 2.

Each QCPR resolution aims to provide the UNDS with policy guidance for its operations (the *how* of development cooperation). By customary evolution, the QCPR resolutions also contain substantial guidance in terms of mandates (the *what*). The bulk of the system-wide mandate, however, emanates elsewhere.[6]

Traditionally, the Group of 77 (G–77) takes into consideration the Secretary-General's reports and recommendations and produces an initial draft that is negotiated in a series of readings, just as in any other negotiation process. QCPR resolutions have weight because they represent negotiations in the GA's Second Committee endorsed by the Plenary Session – a sign of Member States' consensus (compare Box 2).

Given this function, QCPR resolutions have become one of the most important instruments of UNDS intergovernmental governance. From a system-wide perspective, the dozen reviews conducted thus far have had greater impact than most other comparable instruments, including the system-wide coherence process that was begun in 2006.

The QCPR Resolution of 2012 marks the 35th anniversary of the instrument that was conceived by a group of experts to reform the UN's economic and social engagement for the Ad Hoc Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System (created by Member States in 1975). The experts' report recommended a regular Comprehensive Policy Review (CPR) – so QCPR resolutions can be termed a by-product of the ECOSOC reform process.

Starting in 1980, the CPR was conducted every three years, leading to a resolution called the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCPR). Then, in 2007, it was decided to conduct the exercise every four years in order to align the business cycle with the process of developing strategic plans for funds and agencies, and the name was changed to the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR). Now the strategic plans and their four-year perspectives correspond to the QCPR cycle, and the QCPR guides the development of strategic plans by the UN system organizations.

Box 1: QCPR Basics
Binding adherence: QCPR resolutions are binding for 14 funds and programmes, six research and training institutions and three other entities.
Voluntary adherence: The resolutions are non-binding for all specialized agencies.
Functions: System-wide monitoring; ensuring UNDS conformity with General Assembly (GA) priorities; providing policy guidance
Addressee: The UNDS (various parts)
Draft of the Resolution: Normally prepared by the G–77
Negotiations: General Assembly Second Committee
Preparation: Preparatory reports by DESA; procedural resolutions in the GA Second Committee in the three years between substantive QCPRs
Adoption: By consensus
Period: A substantive QCPR takes place every four years, although mandates (operative clauses) specify different timelines for action
Source: Authors

---

6   Compare with Section 3.2.

From its modest beginning in 1980, the instrument has evolved into the main instrument used by Member States to provide system-wide policy guidance for the UNDS. In the process, it has acquired significant legitimacy and clout, largely because it has become standard practice for Member States to negotiate CPR results in the General Assembly (GA) by seeking consensus.

Given its implications for the whole system, initially the new instrument met with scepticism, including from the governing councils of the specialized agencies in the UNDS. Tension between funds and programmes, for whom adherence is mandatory, and specialized agencies, which are frequently requested to conform to resolutions but are not legally required to do so, continues to this day. The planning cycles of all funds and programmes as well as a number of specialized agencies are now aligned with the QCPR cycle, meaning that the negotiation of the strategic plans of all funds and programmes follows the year after the QCPR.

The CPR process was envisioned as a shared responsibility of the GA and ECOSOC, with the latter conducting the informed review and the former issuing the respective resolution (Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the UN 2013a). As outlined in Resolution 32/197:

> *"In discharging these responsibilities, the Economic and Social Council should bear in mind the importance of assisting in the preparation of the work of the General Assembly in the economic, social and related fields so that the Assembly may give timely and effective attention to the substantive issues requiring consideration by the Assembly […].*

The TCPR/QCPR resolutions have greatly evolved over 35 years, not least in terms of the convolution of the subject matter, the scope of the issues, the depth of the preparatory process and the complexity of the negotiation process (compare Box 2).

Box 2:   Complex negotiations and the case of the 2012 QCPR Resolution[7]

As the history of UNDS reforms shows, it is difficult to forge intergovernmental consensus by negotiation. However, the negotiations of the 2012 QCPR Resolutions indicate that challenges can be overcome. The 2012 QCPR Resolution[8] is considered to have landmark status because the far-reaching changes it endorses signal that Member States consider enhancing system-wide coherence to be an important strategy for making the UNDS more relevant and effective. Although misgivings about multilateral action are increasing, the QCPR process sends a powerful message that intergovernmental agreement is achievable: complex negotiations are possible among 193 Member States.

A recent assessment of the process showed that thorough preparatory work, a structured and transparent negotiation process and proper technical support during negotiations can enable Member States to reach broad consensus – even on complex and sensitive issues. Once the 2012 QCPR Resolution had been negotiated, Member States formulated lessons factors that were crucial for its success. Stakeholders emphasised the importance of three key elements for informed decision-making throughout the negotiation process: trust, transparency and timely access to technical knowledge.

---

7   This box draws on a series of internal papers that were prepared by the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations in the run-up to the QCPR negotiation process, an internal summary of a workshop on the lessons learned from the QCPR that was organized by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in February 2013, as well as the facilitator's personal notes (Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the UN 2013b; Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the UN 2013c; Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the UN 2013d; Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the UN 2013e; Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the UN 2013f; and Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the UN 2013g).

8   UN Doc. GA/RES/67/226 of 22 Jan. 2013.

Box 2 (cont.): **Complex negotiations and the case of the 2012 QCPR Resolution**

The resolution's preliminary phase lasted nearly a year − with a meticulous preparatory process coordinated by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) to deepen understanding of the subjects by providing data, overviews of specific country programmes and technical support in the form of studies, evaluations, reports and recommendations. A series of training courses held by the UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) acquainted participants with the complex QCPR environment and presented new information. A series of dialogues on substantive matters was organized by the President of the General Assembly (PGA), and a series of very informal breakfasts was held to exchange ideas and introduce pragmatic perspectives from countries that are confronted by some of the most challenging issues.

During the negotiation process itself, it was necessary to designate a facilitator to be fully engaged throughout the negotiating process and set up a team to create the proper environment for two months of stressful, nearly full-time, negotiations. All negotiators agreed that the following factors were crucial for ensuring a transparent, informed and trustworthy process:

– a structured format,

– windows for specific thematic dialogues in the most challenging areas,

– preparatory sessions to reduce redundancies and provide background knowledge, and

– technical support *in situ* for the first and second readings prior to the negotiations.

To avoid parallel sessions and ensure adequate preparation time for the negotiators, especially those representing groups, the facilitator continuously communicated changes of sequence. QCPR resolutions proved too complex to be negotiated in the usual linear fashion.

It was also necessary to regularly remind participants that no alternative text would be prepared or introduced because the legitimacy of a resolution adopted by Member States to address an operational system is directly proportional to its degree of consensus. Space also had to be created for Member States to conduct negotiations in a serene atmosphere, strictly respecting the character of closed informal sessions (Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the UN 2011). With all the other elements needed for informed decision-making in place, at times the legislative and executive functions within the UNDS must be separated.

Some trivial factors, such as establishing an enabling environment by making rooms available, respecting schedules, communicating in a timely manner, providing food and beverages, including for late-evening sessions, were also important. All participants appreciated the timely conclusion of the negotiations.

Some regret was voiced regarding just how far Member States could have gone to reach consensus about issues like governance and aid effectiveness, considered by some representatives to have had the potential to reach positive conclusions. QCPR resolutions are said to have high legitimacy because they represent a collective choice to balance concrete measures that further consolidate and build on previous achievements with launching potentially volatile reform processes.

Source: Authors

---

3   'Sustainable development' as a system-wide mandate

The Sustainable Development Agenda constitutes a shift of paradigm that implies recognition of shared responsibilities and global applicability as well as a massive need for both intellectual and financial investments – from defining new regulatory frameworks to implementing them. Although they need to be adapted to different contexts, they concern all countries and people. The Sustainable Development Agenda extends beyond the usual practice of development aid to involve all segments of societies. The following section discusses policy implications of the Sustainable Development Agenda for the UNDS. The final section recommends a new system-wide role for the UNDS based on a new system-wide mandate in light of the current fragmented, overarching mandate.

3.1 Policy implications for the UNDS

"It has long been obvious that key socio-economic processes which operate beyond any one state's control should be managed by international bodies representing the interests of all states." (Childers / Urquhart 1994, 17)

While the label has sometimes been misused to get attention and support for niche issues, the 'Sustainable Development Agenda' clearly constitutes a paradigm shift in global thinking on development. Seeing that the current usage of resources compromises the ability of future generations to meet their needs (World Commission on Environment and Development 1987), it introduces an alternative model to reconcile the economic, social and environmental aspects of development (UN Conference on Environment and Development 1992). The Sustainable Development Agenda constitutes a "game-changer" in global development cooperation (Rochester 1993).

Since 1987, when the World Commission on Environment and Development introduced the Sustainable Development Agenda, it quickly became established in debates at the UN and elsewhere. Within a few years, the Sustainable Development Agenda was featured at a major UN conference that was attended by record numbers of heads of state. More recent proposals and thinking, such as the "water-energy-food nexus" (Hoff 2011), the "safe and just space for humanity" (Raworth 2012) or the "approaching great transformation" of a post-carbon economy (Magnuson 2013), have enhanced the original concept, while the assertion of the 'Anthropocene' epoch of the earth system has served as a grave reminder to sceptics of the global impact of human action (Steffen / Crutzen / McNeill 2007). Finally, the notion that humanity transgresses "planetary boundaries" (Rockstrom et al. 2009) has instilled a new sense of urgency in the debates.

A number of general policy implications can be identified (see Table 1 for a summary).

– One of the most salient features of the new paradigm is that it is applicable to every country because of the increasingly global effect of phenomena such as population growth, inequality, trans-boundary security threats, loss of biodiversity, water shortages and volatile financial markets.

– The Sustainable Development Agenda calls for action on time horizons that are much longer than those commonly associated with development thinking. It often requires action over several human generations – largely surpassing the decade or two that political leaders generally hold office.

– If humanity wants to ensure future generations decent lives, collective action is urgently needed to address imbalances in accessing livelihood assets,[9] both in terms of equity and sustainability. Making sustainable development tangible requires joint efforts by the public and private sectors, as well as by individuals. Everyone must

---

9   A livelihood is a combination of the resources used and the activities undertaken by a household to provide sustenance for its members. 'Resources' include individual skills and abilities (human capital), land, savings and equipment (natural, financial and physical capital) and social support structures, such as formal support groups or informal networks that assist in the activities undertaken (social capital). A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from shocks and maintain its capabilities and assets without depleting its natural resource base.

contribute toward achieving a development model that does not overstep planetary boundaries.

− Communications technology, the Internet and social media are causing a massive and rapid increase in global knowledge-sharing that creates stronger interconnectivity and interdependence; 'silo' and disconnected approaches and structures are no longer appropriate.

− The Sustainable Development Agenda entails a fundamental transformation of global development cooperation to go 'beyond aid'. Global trends in economic, social and environmental investments reveal great reductions in the ODA component as a fraction of the total financial flows to developing countries almost everywhere, meaning that there are fewer fields of intervention where only development practitioners are active.

− The Sustainable Development Agenda must set the stage for societal changes that happen through generalizing tested innovative approaches. Regulatory and normative frameworks must be drafted; usually this is the responsibility of the public sector. Human beings learn quickly and adapt their behaviour to contextual changes. In organized societies, *de facto* or *de jure* regulatory frameworks typically define the context. In terms of sustainable development, *de facto* regulations are usually limits set by natural laws, while *de jure* regulations define the degrees of intervention of regulators to impose, incentivise, permit, discourage or prohibit actions to guide personal behaviour, often in anticipation of a *de facto* rule.

Making the Sustainable Development Agenda operational will largely be a matter of adjusting regulatory frameworks to facilitate equitable and sustainable access to livelihood assets. With regard to its implementation, a "normative gap" (Thakur / Weiss 2009) clearly exists. Sustainability of access implies, first and foremost, that livelihood assets are and will be available, a precondition that might be increasingly difficult to ensure if current trends continue regarding the availability of the natural resource base.[10]

All countries must put their economies on the path of Sustainable Development; many have been making efforts for decades. Efforts initiated in a single sector often constitute a nucleus that eventually will have to be embedded in a broader development strategy in order to strengthen inter-sectoral linkages and adapt to specific contexts (see Box 3 for examples).

Because the Sustainable Development Agenda calls for action by public, private and societal actors, the question arises about the UNDS's particular role and contribution. Unfortunately, the Rio+20 outcome document provides little guidance. One of the few paragraphs to address the issue invites the "programmes, funds and specialized agencies" to

> *"…further enhance the mainstreaming of sustainable development in their respective mandates, programmes, strategies and decision-making processes, in support of the efforts of all countries, in particular developing countries, in the achievement of sustainable development"* (UNGA 2012, 19).

---

10 Attention must be paid to the link between vulnerability and sustainable development, especially in situations where de facto rules directly impact on livelihoods. This might happen in natural disasters, countries affected by long-term climate-change-related effects, and conflict situations. While we acknowledge this dimension, addressing it is beyond the scope of this paper (see Box 5).

Box 3: 'Sustainable development' in practice

The process of implementing a coherent approach to guide nations and societies towards the new paradigm of sustainable development must take place at different levels. At the national level, several attempts have already been made. Germany and Switzerland, for example, have recently begun transforming their energy policies (*Energiewende*) – with the mid-term goal of abolishing nuclear power sources that is linked to the long-term goal of procuring all energy (for electricity, heating and transportation) from renewable sources (Federal Ministry for the Environment, Natural Conservation and Nuclear Safety 2011; Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft 2013). The Kingdom of Bhutan has aligned government policy and activities based on their contribution to a National Happiness Index (GNH), which has replaced the gross domestic product (GDP) commonly used elsewhere. The GNH, with its four pillars of sustainable development, preservation of cultural value, conservation of the environment and good governance, uses sophisticated indices and draws on the latest findings from empirical research. While it was never intended to be used for international comparisons or ranking, Bhutan appears to be faring quite well on its alternative path (Helliwell / Layard / Sachs 2012). Bhutan's experience is gaining global recognition, as evidenced by the GA's first resolution on happiness[11] in 2011 and its introduction of the 'International Day of Happiness' in 2012.[12] Ethiopia, which has been branding itself as a front runner in sustainable development, aims to be carbon-neutral by 2025 through its green-growth strategy (Government of Ethiopia 2011). These examples demonstrate that, despite their stage of development, governments worldwide are setting out on the path towards sustainable development.

Source: Authors

The call for the UNDS to engage is loud and clear. A recent survey of programme countries revealed that the Sustainable Development Agenda is their highest priority for the next four years (UNSG 2012b, 9). In a move to align global priorities, the Secretary-General has placed the issue at the top of his agenda (UNSG 2012d). The UN is the birthplace of the concept (Jolly / Emmerij / Weiss 2009), with a legacy of engagement.

A close reading of the implications of the Sustainable Development Agenda suggests that the UNDS is well positioned to play a key role in implementing the new paradigm.

−   The UNDS is grounded in the principle of servicing all countries worldwide. Member States have repeatedly confirmed the 'universal nature' of the operational activities for development as one of the UNDS's original principles – most recently, in the QCPR Resolution of 2012 (OP 4). Unlike most of the MDGs, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are viewed as applying to all countries – including developed nations. The presence of SDGs in 136 programme activities in over 180 countries (UNDOCO 2012) suggests that universal engagement would be an extension of current practice – not a radical re-orientation. Global engagement would have the added benefit of strengthening the perception that the UNDS is relevant to all countries, including those that make significant financial contributions (compare the Nordic UN Project 1991, 121).

−   While not unique to the UNDS, multilateral collaboration perpetuates joint endeavours over extended periods. One key lesson of the MDG process was that it focussed energies around a set of common targets for more than a decade. Most SDG proposals envision a longer timeline – between 15 and 30 years (see UN System Task Team on the Post–2015 UN Development Agenda 2012, 37).

---

11   UN Doc. GA/Res/65/309 of 19 Jul. 2011.

12   UN Doc. GA/Res/66/281 of 12 Jul. 2012.

– The UNDS has the power to convene various stakeholders to address common challenges. Despite their shortcomings, the UNDS and the UN have formed partnerships with a wide variety of external stakeholders. UNICEF's engagement with the furniture concern IKEA[13] or the Secretary-General's partnership initiatives such as "Every Women, Every Child"[14] or "Sustainable Energy for All"[15] are examples of engagement with public, private and societal actors.

– The UN's greatest asset and 'working capital' is its worldwide input legitimacy that assures acceptance of its outputs and services. This legitimacy stems from the three fundamental principles of the United Nations – universal membership, equality of all members and neutrality – as stated in Article 100 of the UN Charter. The GA, and by extension, the funds and programmes of its subsidiary bodies, are based on the principle of *"one state, one vote"* – which provides the UNDS with a unique level of credibility from Member States.

Member States' debates about the particular role and contribution of the UNDS are closely related to what is seen as its comparative advantage (Weinlich 2011, 23 ff.). While there is a certain amount of interplay between the role/contribution of the UNDS and its comparative advantage, theoretically these should be aligned. Since other multilateral and bilateral agencies pursue similar objectives, it must be clear that the UNDS does not exist within a vacuum. Views about its comparative advantages diverge, however. For example, in light of its massive presence in the field, some donor countries advocate that the UNDS should focus on fragile states and function as a 'lender of last resort'.

Most, however, agree about the UNDS's unique value in linking a normative and operational mandate. A comprehensive study of the role of the UN in the economic and social fields, says it has *"not only a comparative, but an absolute advantage"* in its normative role (Nordic UN Project 1991, 171).

More recently, the SG's report in preparation for the QCPR stated that operational activities are needed to leverage *"development with normative, standard-setting and fact-finding work"* (UNSG 2012c). Member States broadly confirmed this view in the QCPR Resolution of 2012 (OP 58).

Taking these factors into account, one reaches the conclusion that the UNDS's special role regarding implementation of the Sustainable Development Agenda is to address the 'normative gap' in practical support for the transformation towards the new paradigm, and especially to create a normative foundation to guide operations and make it operational.

Table 1 summarises these findings.[16]

---

13 See UNICEF webpage, www.unicef.org/corporate_partners/index_25092.html, accessed 17 May 2013.

14 See "Every Women, Every Child" webpage, www.everywomaneverychild.org, accessed 17 May 2013.

15 See "Sustainable Energy for All" webpage, www.sustainableenergyforall.org, accessed 17 May 2013.

16 Two key implications of the new paradigm for transforming to a more cohesive system that goes 'beyond aid' are addressed in Chapters 4 and 5.

Table 1: The role of the UNDS in the new paradigm		
Dimension	**Sustainable Development**	**UNDS role**
Scope	global	to service all countries
time horizon	long-term	to perpetuate global action
Responsibility	public, private, society	to form and regulate partnerships
Approach	holistic and encompassing	to transform to a cohesive system
funding source	significant contributions	to go 'beyond aid'
objective	balanced access to livelihood assets	to adapt and adopt norms+regulations
Source: Authors, modeled on Melamed / Scott / Mitchell 2012		

3.2 The quest for a system-wide guiding mandate

"The UN development enterprise […] rests on shaky political foundations because neither its raison d'être nor its legitimacy have been durably agreed upon."
(Fomerand 2003, 4)

In terms of system-wide guidance about *which particular* operational activities it should pursue, the UNDS relies on some elements and stand-alone approximations of an overarching mandate. This means that attempts to more clearly define the UNDS focus are "still pending" (Weinlich 2011). This fact has contributed to the system's "blurred profile" (Vatterodt 2008, 68). What is the source of systemic guidance about *what* the UNDS should pursue?

The UN Charter must be the starting point for any inquiry into a system-wide mandate in support of the UNDS. Article 1 stresses that the UN must achieve international cooperation and be a force for harmonizing efforts to solve global problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character, while also promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion. Article 55 includes a comment on the need for full employment in a definition of ECOSOC functions, and Article 62 makes particular reference to educational, health and related matters. It is unrealistic to expect more specific guidance for the UNDS in a document written in 1945. Throughout its history, the UNDS has been charged with mandates for more and more operational activities for development (UNSG 2009, 16) but most of the concerned institutions were established after 1945.

The GA declarations about the UN Decades of Development, from 1960 to 2000, were a more substantive attempt to provide system-wide guidance for the UNDS. Although specifically addressed to "Member States and their peoples",[17] they had an indirect impact on the UNDS, especially early on. Established at John F. Kennedy's initiative, the first two decades were more successful than is commonly known (Jolly / Emmerij / Weiss 2009, 87). However, after the "lost decade" of the 1980s and the declaration of the fourth decade

---

17 Compare UN Doc. GA/1710 (XVI) and A/1715 (XVI) of 19 Dec. 1961.

(the 1990s) were overtaken by the fundamental changes brought about by the end of the Cold War, they rapidly waned in importance and eventually were replaced by the MDGs.[18]

In 1993, the famous GA Res. 48/162 about the "restructuring and revitalization of the UN in the economic, social and related fields", that hinted at a system-wide orientation for the UNDS, contained a long list of references to "established goals, targets and programmes for action", including the Development Decade and the Rio Conference on Sustainable Development. It specifically requested ECOSOC to provide the UN with cross-sectoral coordination and overall guidance, including objectives, priorities and strategies for implementing policies for operational activities. Once again, however, the point of reference was the *how* of the UNDS rather than the *what*. Similarly, the SG's biennial UN Strategic Framework that Member States review in the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) provides guidance for Secretariat activities but is not specifically related to operational activities for development.

Following the Millennium Declaration in the year 2000, the MDGs have served as the main guidelines for the UNDS. Although they did not result from intergovernmental negotiation, they are broadly accepted as providing a viable and useful framework. However, the MDGs are not specific to UN activities: providing specific guidance would require a system-wide interpretation of the UNDS's particular role and mandate, and how it complements other actors. Some reflection is needed about what the UNDS can best offer for these or other future goals.

Since the TCPR/QCPR resolutions were first established in 1977, they have developed into a source of substantive guidance relating to the *what* of UNDS operational activities. Originally rather limited, especially following the MDGs, the practice has been expanded.[19] Close reading of the 2012 QCPR Resolution reveals that it also contains substantive 'mandate-like' fragments. For example, the Resolution:

− requests an increase in investments regarding gender equality (OP 81);

− requests a demand-driven response to help countries that are affected by disasters or conflicts to transition from relief to development status (OP 94); and most explicitly

− calls upon UNDS organizations to assign the highest priority to poverty eradication (OP 71).

The long list of conferences and summits (OP 8) that are viewed as having shaped a broad vision of development and identifying challenges to improving human life in different parts of the world (OP 9) reveals other aspects of the UNDS's orientation towards a system-wide mandate. Finally, although full consensus was not reached during negotiations

---

18 Compare UN Doc. GA/RES/55/190 of 29 Jan. 2001.

19 Compare TCPR Resolution of 2002 (UN Doc. GA/RES/56/201 of 6 Mar. 2002), which *"stresses the need for all organizations of the United Nations development system, in accordance with their respective mandates, to focus their efforts at the field level in accordance with the priorities identified by recipient countries and the goals, targets and commitments set in the Millennium Declaration and by the major United Nations conferences"* (OP 10).

on the QCPR in 2012, there was dialogue that might pave the way for future system-wide mandates to the UNDS in crucial but contentious areas like human rights. A new preamble paragraph spelling out specific human rights (para. 14) hints at this dialogue.

This raises questions about the original intent and purpose of the TCPR/QCPR resolutions and their effectiveness and legitimacy in addressing substantive issues (the *what*). Who mandated QCPR negotiators to address specific parts of the UNDS's system-wide mandate? Why was poverty eradication included in the 2012 Resolution but not in the TCPR Resolution of 2004? Could the next QCPR resolution request, for example, that the UNDS focus on supporting countries by building capacities and providing policy expertise, as well as advising on legislation and norms – and leave the operational support needed to eradicate hunger to other actors?

Substantive guidance to the UNDS in TCPR/QCPR resolutions has evolved over time. Member States are becoming more interested in negotiating a system-wide mandate, as illustrated by the addition of a new chapter on poverty eradication in the QCPR Resolution of 2012. Because these are only fragments of negotiated mandates, however, the link between them and the operational guidance system remains incomplete.

Current trends reveal strong momentum for effecting change within the UNDS, with several reform processes taking place simultaneously, all of which have far reaching implications for the whole system:

- The High-level Political Forum (HLPF) will become the place to debate sustainable development at the political level, as decided during the Rio+20 Conference.[20]

- A post–2015 development framework is being discussed.

- An intergovernmental process that aims to define SDGs is ongoing.

- ECOSOC is revising its functions and structures as part of a long-term reform process.

- Deliberations have begun about system-wide support to enhance the thematic and multi-partner initiatives launched by the Secretary-General.

- Preliminary discussions in a new working group have started about the future funding of UN development efforts.

Member States appear to have the opportunity to use these reform processes to give a new and system-wide mandate to the UNDS. Opportunities regarding the HLPF seem particularly promising, as it could fill the gap left by the expiring MDGs. The HLPF would offer crucial orientation to the UNDS with regard to the *what* by regularly securing guidance from the highest political level (possibly from heads of state) regarding the UN's specific contribution to implementing the Sustainable Development Agenda. Such a mechanism seems feasible, straightforward and in the spirit of the intense debate and negotiations around Rio+20 that ended by signalling that the HLPF should be more than simply an *"enhanced Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD)"*. For the UNDS, it would strengthen the link between the QCPR Resolutions (the only resolutions that address *how* the UNDS should work) and *what* to focus on – that is, the mandate and the operations.

---

20 See UNUNGA 2013 for a comprehensive assessment of lessons about the shortcomings of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE)

Such a measure would probably entail the HLPF incorporating a regular review of the system-wide mandate for sustainable development into its core functions. Benefitting from the recent alignment of UNDS strategic planning to the QCPR cycle, the mandate review would ideally follow the same four-year cycle, with the HLPF providing guidance on the system-wide mandate for each new QCPR cycle,[21] thereby setting the necessary boundaries for UNDS functioning.

4 A 'quiet revolution' towards a cohesive UNDS

> *"It is tempting, if the only tool you have is a hammer, to treat everything as if it were a nail."* (Maslow 1966)

As a holistic, transformational and global concept, the Sustainable Development Agenda calls for more cohesion within the UNDS. The institutional set-up and functionalist basis of the UNDS do not seem appropriate for implementing a system-wide mandate. The UNDS requires significant institutional restructuring in order to maintain its prominent role in the international development architecture. Recent reforms in this direction, including the System-wide Coherence process (2006–2010), have demonstrated the importance that Member States attach to a more cohesive UNDS, and the QCPR Resolution of 2012 shows that agreement is growing in this respect.

4.1 The UNDS and system-wide cohesion

The Sustainable Development Agenda has important implications for *how* the UNDS functions: Member States will have to forge a more cohesive arrangement. A report by the Secretary General foresees the need for a *"much tighter fit between the normative and operational arms"* of the UNDS (UNSG 2012b, 9). The current lack of coherence limits the UNDS's ability to exploit the crucial synergies that define the Sustainable Development Agenda; 'business as usual' no longer seems to be an option.

The UNDS consists of 37 entities that engage in operational activities for development (UNSG 2012a, 42)[22] – aimed at both long-term development and short-term humanitarian relief measures (compare UNSG 2012a). From a legal perspective, the funds and programmes are GA subsidiary organs that are mostly active in field-level operational activities, whereas the specialized agencies are more autonomous because of their separate founding treaties and, in some cases, distinct membership and governing bodies. They are incorporated into the UN system through ECOSOC on the basis of relationship agreements. UNDS entities therefore have varying degrees of independence and types of relationships with the intergovernmental level – represented by ECOSOC and its governing bodies. The

---

21 The HLPF message about the system-wide mandate would have to take one of two forms – as either a political declaration or a second negotiated resolution. The latter could become time-consuming and, apart from the QCPR, would require a second round of complex negotiations (compare Box 4). Should political decision-makers broadly agree, however, general 'mandate-like' messages would probably suffice, and a declaration or a chairperson's summary could be used to provide system-wide guidance to the UNDS and the negotiations for a new QCPR resolution.

22 See Annex 2 for a complete list of the entities.

internal 'logic' of the different entities is also diverse, ranging from traditional development 'sectors', to particular 'target groups', cross-cutting issues and particular countries or regions. The UNDS's low level of institutional cohesion is why use of the term 'system' has been challenged (UNSG 2009; Righter 1995, 48 ff.; Jenks et al. 2005).

The 'compartmentalised' structure of the UNDS results from the concept of 'functionalism',[23] which was influential in the debates before the United Nations was established (Jenks et al. 2005). Functionalism viewed international peace and stability as an intended spillover or side effect of ever-increasing, mainly technical and issue-driven, 'functional' cooperation and increased non-political relations among states. Functionalism tends to favour the proliferation of institutions, and since cooperation sectors are limited, it also favours the increased differentiation and compartmentalisation of (development) cooperation. Avoiding overarching 'political' considerations of management and direction while preserving the organizational autonomy of individual UNDS entities was integral to the concept. The relationship between the entities that make up the UNDS has historically been one of coexistence rather than direction, whereby entities are only loosely coupled in a polycentric fashion (Righter 1995). This, and the disaggregation resulting from UNDS growth "without a pre-established blue-print" (Fomerand 2003, 2), are the two main legacies that beleaguer the UNDS today.

The nature of the development paradigm – currently the MDGs – may have further contributed to UNDS incoherence. Since the MDGs were established in the year 2000, they have greatly impacted the field of development cooperation: their instrumentality in terms of fund-raising and mobilising joint efforts is universally acknowledged. Indeed, from a narrow perspective, this was their main purpose (Fukuda–Parr 2012, 10). But their impact on the UNDS internal institutional arrangement may have been less salutary: by instigating a pick-and-choose approach among the eight goals, the MDGs seem to have encouraged donors to earmark. The MDGs followed a 'functionalist' logic of compartmentalising developmental challenges in different functional sectors and associated target groups, which was appropriate with the UNDS's conventional institutional arrangement. However, the potential adoption of a new framework based on the post–2015 Sustainable Development Agenda portends significant institutional reform.

Although the concept of functionalism was influential when the UNDS was being established, it has also been challenged. There have been many successes from international development cooperation, yet notwithstanding the achievements, institutional pathologies resulting from an arrangement that did not favour system-wide cohesion were noted early on, encouraging efforts to create system-wide cohesion. Such reform attempts began shortly after the UNDS was established.

One of the first endeavours at systematically analysing and identifying institutional challenges within the UNDS was the "Capacity Study" of 1969. During the 1970s, the UNDS's operational activities became more sophisticated and diverse, partly influenced by world conferences – including the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment (1972) – that took place during that period. After the 1980s' "lost decade" for development, during the 1990s, system-wide cohesion slowly rose on the agenda of the interna-

---

23 The seminal publication, *A Working Peace System*, by David Mitrany (Mitrany 1966) is often credited with developing the concept.

tional community. Partly because central-level reforms were deemed politically unfeasible, attention shifted to the operational and country level, where it was hoped that greater cohesion could be achieved through common premises and programming frameworks, and other measures.[24] However, only after the World Summit review of the MDGs in 2005 was there another major attempt at reform, which took the form of the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence and its report, "Delivering as One" in 2006.[25] With only two of the main headline initiatives implemented – the establishment of UN Women and the 2012 QCPR's acknowledgment of "Delivering as One" as an alternative business model – the system-wide coherence process looks rather modest.

One major success of the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence that is frequently overlooked, however, is that it created the common understanding that a more cohesive UNDS was needed. Indeed, interest in system-wide cohesion influences debates on the UN's future direction and is clearly reflected in the 2012 QCPR Resolution, albeit not (yet) in fully practical terms. As Margret Joan Anstee wrote recently: *"The one great lesson of the 66 years since the United Nations [became involved in operational activities for development] is that development efforts will not succeed unless they are integrated"* (Anstee 2012). The Sustainable Development Agenda reinforces this thinking.

Increasingly, indications of a reform towards a cohesive UNDS are seen in its structure. The UNDS is transitioning towards a higher level of system-wide cohesion. Although once it was difficult to speak of a UN development 'system' because of its low level of cohesiveness (Hill 2010; Browne 2011; Browne 2012), this is changing: throughout the UNDS, system-wide elements are already in place or are evolving. The current state of affairs could be described as a 'mixed system' with elements of system-wide orientation alongside more traditional and agency-specific organizational models.

4.2 A system-wide message from Member States

The transition that has slowly been taking place in the UNDS could be described as a move from the traditional 'functionalist' system of organization towards a more integrated, 'post-functionalist' approach. The 2012 QCPR Resolution contains fragments of structures, systems and processes that are system-wide, but which will have to be more broadly systematised in order to accommodate the Sustainable Development Agenda.

Member States have used QCPR resolutions to advocate system-wide cohesion for some time. Analysis of previous TCPR/QCPR resolutions reveals that Member States are increasingly addressing themselves to the UNDS *as a whole*. Nearly 70 per cent of the mandates (operative paragraphs) of past resolutions address either the inter-agency machinery or the whole UNDS, while the share of mandates that relate to individual components or parts of the system has dropped significantly. Member States are also becoming more reluctant to address the UN Secretariat, whose share of mandates plummeted from a high of 36 per cent in 1980 to just 11 per cent in 2012 (compare Table 2 and Figure 1 for the details, and Annex 2 for methodological background).

---

24 Compare Kofi Annan's reform initiatives, *"Renewing the United Nations"* (UN Doc. A/51/950 of 15 Jul. 1997 and *"An Agenda for Further Change"* (UN Doc. A/57/387 of 9 Sept. 2002).

25 UN Doc. 61/583 of 20 Nov. 2006.

Table 2:	The evolution of addressees of TCPR/QCPR resolutions over time										
Addressee (%)	1980	1983	1986	1989	1992	1995	1998	2001	2004	2007	2012
UNDS System	27	38	29	33	19	38	32	39	42	47	50
Inter-agency	0	4	8	26	22	11	23	17	14	18	19
Secretariat	36	31	26	18	22	23	11	8	13	17	11
Intergovernmental	5	4	11	9	12	8	11	9	9	3	4
Other	32	22	27	14	26	21	23	26	21	16	15
Source: Authors											

There are various standard usages and definitions of the term 'UNDS', including the one used by the UN Secretariat in financial reports about the UN system's operational activities for development, which encompasses 37 funds, programmes and agencies. Other definitions include the 32 members of the UNDG or 53 organizations active in development (compare Hill 2010). One of the main points of contention is about how encompassing the term should be, and if it should include specialized agencies. The fact that some agencies have agreed to abide by the QCPR[26] and others not, suggests that views vary within the system. The conclusion here is that 'UNDS' should be defined by its overall purpose, as determined in a system-wide mandate.

Figure 1: Addressees of TCPR/QCPR resolutions by different actors
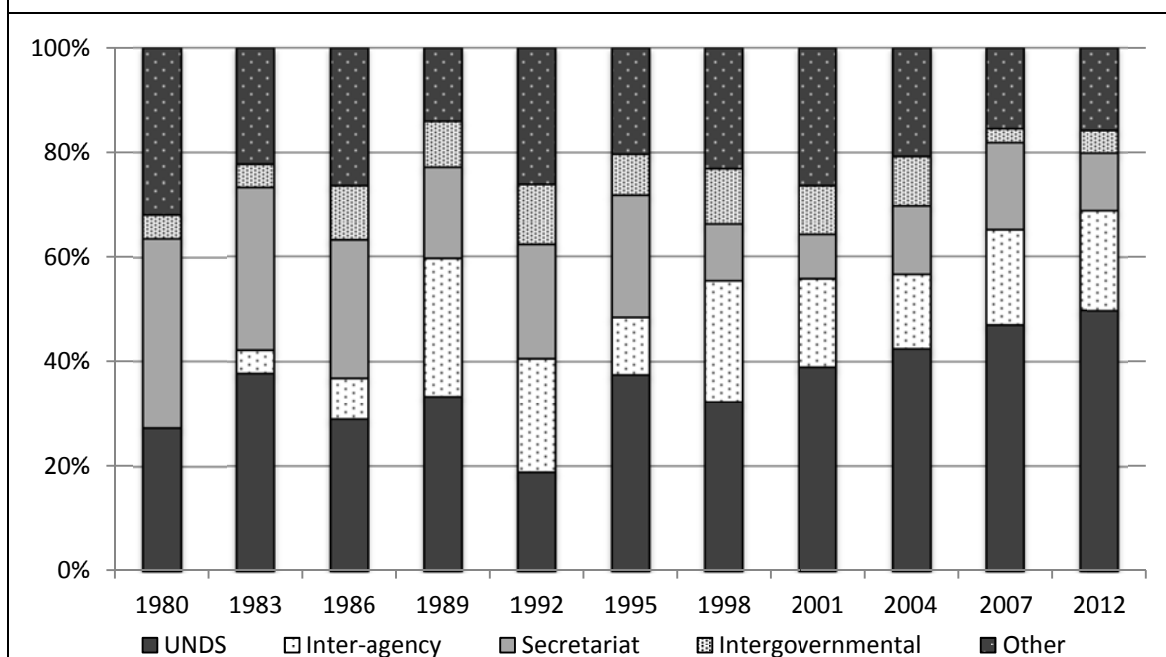
Source: Authors; see Annex 1 for the composition of categories.

---

26 In 2012, these were the FAO, UNESCO, UNIDO and WHO. The JIU considers that this constitutes "good practice" to be followed by other entities (JIU 2012, 23 and 32).

Irrespective of its final shape, transitioning to a more cohesive UNDS implies a set of comprehensive adjustments that will take time and commitment from Member States. With new inter-agency fora and organizations like UN Women, Member States have already introduced some system-wide inter-agency interlocutors. But because all system structures are connected, changing any single element necessitates further changes. For example, establishing an independent evaluation mechanism in the UNDS seems consistent with the trend towards greater cohesion, but its implementation would require new system-wide processes to review the evaluation outcomes and act on them.

In conclusion, Member States' growing emphasis on system-wide approaches to UNDS operations require parallel efforts to strengthen system-wide oversight and management mechanisms, as well as other elements necessary for a functioning, transparent and accountable UNDS. The implications will be explored below.

4.3   Elements of the quiet revolution

There are various ways to approach UNDS reform processes. Indeed, selecting the appropriate approach to reforms has long been the subject of academic debates, with 'big bang' and 'incremental' constituting the two poles of a continuum of options (Mahn 2012, 9). Revisions of the UN Charter have proven so difficult that they are often considered impossible. As with most public institutions, institutional change in the UNDS has mostly been incremental and iterative instead of prescriptive (Fomerand 2003, 30). Therefore, a quiet revolution of a series of major, yet achievable, steps to create a more cohesive UNDS seems more realistic than a one-off transformation. The quiet approach targets the UNDS's inner functioning and set-up, and strengthens incentives, transparency and accountability. It reduces the need for structural changes while attempting to create a coherent, effective and efficient operational development system.

The 2012 QCPR Resolution, which provides many indications for the direction of future reform efforts, seems to be an appropriate starting point for the quiet revolution. The QCPR process sought to reduce and eliminate incongruities in the UNDS and make it more efficient by adapting state-of-the art business practices. The following section outlines key steps for preparing the UNDS to leap into the future. A quiet revolution of reforms consolidates operating functions and fine-tunes decision-making procedures and lines of accountability in the aim of creating a fully transparent systemic response to the needs of individual countries – in accordance with the UN's system-wide mandate. The overview of the UNDS structure in Figure 2 indicates the main areas of reform. Particular attention is paid to the UNDS governance and management dimensions, where pressure for substantial change has been building for several years; in this respect, there was no progress made in the 2012 QCPR Resolution.

Figure 2: A quiet revolution in the UNDS
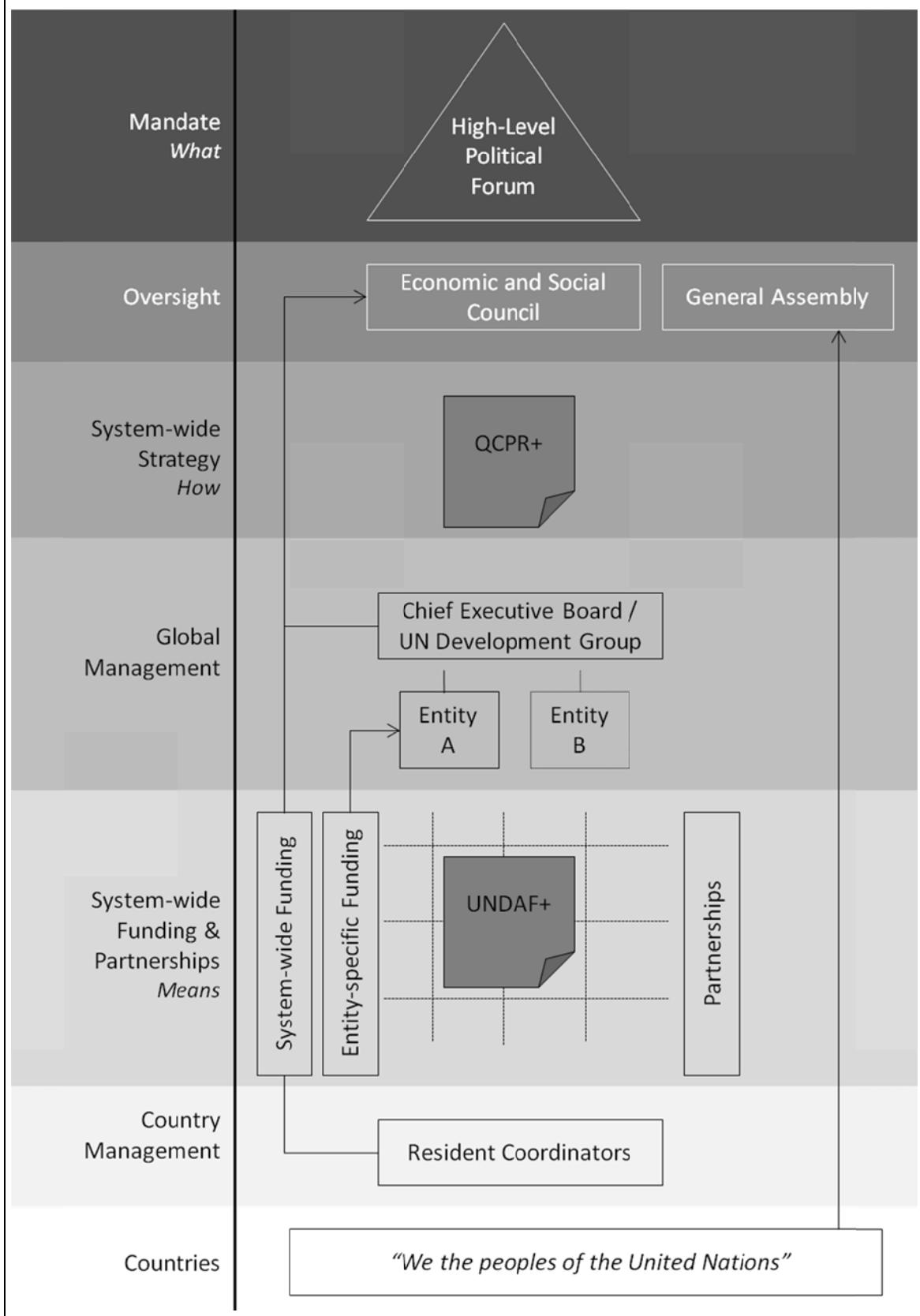
Source: Authors

4.3.1 Oversight

"The machine as a whole has become unmanageable in the strictest sense of the word." (Sir Robert Jackson, UNDP 1969)

Reforms leading to a more systemic approach to intergovernmental oversight and governance in the UNDS lag behind operational reforms and increasingly conflict with the rest of the system. While other functional areas of the UNDS are adopting system-wide approaches, lack of progress in aligning intergovernmental mechanisms is increasing friction and concern. This issue was prominent during the 2012 QCPR negotiations but not resolved. However, with the matter high on the agenda for some time now (Fomerand 2003, 30), Member States are becoming more receptive to making substantial changes.

Historically, the UNDS's intergovernmental oversight function rested with ECOSOC[27] and the executive boards of the different entities. GA Resolution 48/162 mandated ECOSOC to review and evaluate the work of the executive boards. However, for reasons including capacity constraints and inconsistent messages from Member States, the link between ECOSOC and the executive boards has always been weak. As a result, it has been reported that ECOSOC *"does not have an effective overview and role in mandates emanating from executive boards"*.[28]

Unsurprisingly, the 2012 QCPR Resolution acknowledges ECOSOC's major role in the overall coordination of funds, programmes and specialized agencies (OP 7). Member States look forward to ECOSOC's review and assessment of the QCPR implementation (OP 185). In order to close the feedback loop in assessing the effectiveness, efficiency, and relevance of activities, Member States request the SG to conduct a biennial survey of governments about the benefits and challenges of interacting with the UNDS (OP 188).

The 2012 QCPR Resolution indicates that Member States want ECOSOC to play a more substantive role. Concerning the "Delivering as One" initiative that aims to strengthen the collaboration of UNDS entities at the country level, for example, the UNDS is asked to report to ECOSOC on matters related to the new Standard Operating Procedures (OP 140). The SG's report should also include options for ECOSOC to review and approve common country programme documents (OP 143). Member States also request the SG to use the system-wide CEB inter-agency mechanism, and to present plans for establishing common support services by 2016 in two of its three main committees, the High-level Committee on Management (HLCM) and the United Nations Development Group (UNDG). These are to be developed and reviewed by ECOSOC (OP 155). Without a system-wide mechanism or institution, however, it is expected that these plans will have to be individually approved by the governing boards of each of the UNDS entities. The 2012 QCPR Resolution similarly requests the UNDS to develop a strategy and report to ECOSOC on progress establishing common premises in countries (OP 161). It also requests the SG to articulate a harmonized, results-based approach to operational activities and report this to ECOSOC (OP 169). These various mandates illustrate the Member States' intention to strengthen system-wide oversight of development operations.

---

27 This is mainly carried out by ECOSOC's 'operational segment'.

28 UN Doc. A/60/733 of 30 Mar. 2006.

The analysis above shows that the negotiators had authority to instruct the governing bodies of the funds, programmes and specialized agencies, but their authority does not seem to have extended to instructing the ECOSOC to act on system-wide issues. While this situation may be partially due to the UN Charter that prevents ECOSOC from deciding on behalf of the GA, clearly other factors were also at work. In that sense, the 2012 QCPR Resolution illustrates the current contradictions and functional imbalance in the UNDS, which become more apparent as system-wide approaches are broadening. For example, it seems inconsistent to execute intergovernmental oversight and governance based on an entity-specific approach while taking a system-wide approach to system management. This creates friction. In other words, Member States are sending more and more intergovernmental and system-wide requests that are addressed through a system-wide inter-agency management mechanism (the CEB and its committees), yet the mechanisms for system-wide governance are not on par. A more consistent approach would be to also shift functions like the authority to establish common support services for the entire UNDS to the systemic level. If provisions in the UN Charter cannot be changed, it would make sense for ECOSOC to be mandated to make system-wide recommendations that, through its operational segment, would then be endorsed by the GA. Since ECOSOC is the natural forum for system-wide guidance, it should be significantly reinforced. From a systemic perspective, it would be even more desirable for Member States to consider the option of ECOSOC acting as a system-wide executive board for the UNDS.

In terms of programmatic coherence, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) is key to system-wide oversight at the country level and ECOSOC should ensure quality management as befits its oversight function. Finally, ECOSOC will be called upon to play a more prominent role in the system-wide monitoring and evaluation of UN development activities. Should a decision be taken to set up a system-wide financing mechanism, whether or not ECOSOC will represent Member States in their oversight functions will also have to be decided.

ECOSOC seems ready to assume a more systemic role and function; it only lacks the mandate. A number of recent proposals have been made to create a new governance institution as a proxy for a system-wide oversight entity, but adding another layer to an already complex system would not be helpful. ECOSOC seems well positioned to fulfil this mandate. The need for a powerful body to provide policy guidance and instil a sense of cohesion in the UNDS has long been recognised (compare the Nordic UN Project 1991). So strengthening ECOSOC's system-wide oversight mandate to implement QCPR resolutions would help to ensure more coherence in the UNDS and avoid the need to address the GA for minor technical matters. A significantly revamped ECOSOC would not make executive boards obsolete: these boards provide agency-specific intergovernmental oversight, which, along with system-wide governance, continues to be necessary. However, Member States have requested that board oversight correspond with the system-wide guidance by ECOSOC and the GA.

Inaction on outstanding governance reforms carries the cost of rising policy incoherencies and adds complexity and accountability gaps to the challenges that come from mismatched mechanisms for inter-agency management and intergovernmental governance. Ultimately, negative externalities for UNDS functioning as a whole will result in reduced funding for each entity. There is also a clear incentive for all Member States, especially those with limited capacity to participate in intergovernmental affairs, to work towards a

consolidated governance and oversight function for system-wide matters. If the latter continue to be decided within the various executive boards, Member States' ability to influence decisions will depend on their capacity to follow, prepare, attend and service multiple fora – which is difficult for many of them.

In conclusion, given the growing imbalances regarding oversight and governance functions and mechanisms in the UNDS, there seems to be a strong need for Member States to bring about change. Instead of adding new layers to the complexity and diffusion of intergovernmental centers of governance, the best procedure seems to be to strengthen ECOSOC's system-wide governance function.

4.3.2 Management

The UN Development Group (UNDG) is the main system-wide, inter-agency interlocutor to receive instructions from the intergovernmental governance mechanisms, especially those addressed to the UNDS as a whole. It is under the UN system's main system-wide policy-coordinating body that was established by ECOSOC in 1946, the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB),[29] which has three committees: The High-level Committee on Management (HLCM) coordinates administrative, the UN Development Group (UNDG) managerial, and the High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) programmatic affairs. The UNDG is most important of the three committees in terms of the UNDS. Established by the Secretary-General in 1997 and integrated into the CEB in 2008, the UNDG is mandated to coordinate, harmonize and align the UN development activities of its 32 members by providing support to countries for internationally agreed development goals. It reports to the SG – and to ECOSOC through the CEB – about the implementation of its work plan and management of the RC system. The UN Development Operation Coordination Office (DOCO) is the UNDG's technical support unit; it provides a system-wide link between UN Headquarters and countries and helps the UNDG prepare agreements, policies and guidelines for country offices.

Analysis of the mandates in the 2012 QCPR Resolution reveals that the UNDG/CEB as the main inter-agency coordination mechanism is scarcely addressed. For once, Member States rather timidly encourage the SG, through the CEB and the UNDG, to fulfil the task for which these bodies were created (OP 16), request greater transparency in their work (OP 17) and outline a set of specific requirements to that end (OP 17a-d). This falls short of a direct mandate to the UNDG/CEB, however. The HLCM and UNDG are also specifically mentioned in the context of harmonizing business practices (OP 155); and as chairman of the CEB, the SG is requested to include appropriate information about its work in the annual overview report to ECOSOC that is reviewed by the CPC (OP 17b). ECOSOC's president is also requested to convene periodic briefings for Member States and the Secretariat "back-to-back" with CEB sessions to help make the dialogue more effective (OP 17d).

Even the passages that address specific tasks or characteristics of the UNDG, such as management of the RC system and the UNDG's reports to ECOSOC via the CEB, do not mention it by name, however. From a system-wide perspective, this is a major deficiency,

---

29   UN Doc. Resolution 13 (III) created the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) in 1946. Its current name was adopted in 2001.

resulting from diverging opinions and a lack of clarity about the extent of the "UNDS". Apparently the Member States were unsure of the proper addressee for their messages so they decided to "read them aloud" to everybody.

There are probably two main reasons why the UNDG was not more enthusiastically espoused: Since it is not a legal entity, it may not be perceived as the appropriate interlocutor for system-wide management. It might also be sidelined due to its perceived lack of capacity and authority *vis-à-vis* the executive boards of the funds, programmes and specialized agencies.

Most of the requests in the 2012 QCPR Resolution that are directed to the UNDS concern mandatory decisions which typically would have to be dealt with at the CEB level. This includes, for example, the system-wide interoperability of enterprise resource-planning systems (OP 160) that could enable the use of harmonized information and communications technology (ICT) for the system-wide exchange of information. Although the HLCM, as part of the CEB, is piloting the harmonization of business practices, it cannot generalise them as this falls outside the mandate of the Committee. The same can be said for the UNDG. The evolution of the former Executive Committee from a compact coordination mechanism for a few UNDS entities into the broad membership body that the UNDG has become was welcome. But since the QCPR is not mandatory for all members and the UNDG operates by consensus, the change has created new system-wide challenges in terms of inter-agency decision-making. This is clear in the 2012 QCPR Resolution where Member States request the UNDS to promote the development of clear and robust result frameworks, and call on funds and programmes and encourage specialized agencies to consult them in this endeavour (OP 170). From a system-wide perspective, there seems to be a need for an inter-agency mechanism that can enforce decisions when disagreement persists among the different UNDS entities.

What is called for is a strong link between ECOSOC, the intergovernmental entity that provides system-wide oversight and governance, and the CEB/UNDG, the system-wide mechanism for inter-agency management. While UNDS entities are and should remain accountable to their specific governing bodies regarding their respective mandates, future accountability for system-wide issues should rest with the CEB as manager and ECOSOC as the governing body. The necessary link between the CEB/UNDG and ECOSOC is already established through the QCPR provisions that are mandatory for UNDG members.

The current UNDG is not a suitable interlocutor for a strengthened ECOSOC. The capacity and functionality of the oversight and management functions and their respective mechanisms in the UNDS must be equally developed. UN Member States will be called upon to address the current mismatch so that UNDS governance and management levels correspond.

4.3.3 Delegation of authority

In many respects, reform of the UNDS resembles any national government's effort to shift its functions, services and responsibilities to the sub-national level. Like decentralisation processes at the country level that aim to "bring services closer to the people", the UNDS and other development organizations can be said to provide people with equitable and sustainable access to livelihood assets. Decentralising the UNDS requires changes to put

in place the necessary preconditions. Via UNDAF, the system-wide accountability at the country level would pass through the RC system and each respective country-programme government.

If UNDAF were established around system-wide core competences – such as support for policy-making, normative and legislative work, capacity-building and pilot activities – tasks could be allotted to the respective agencies under a system-wide mandate partially secured by a system-wide funding mechanism, and the new set-up could be called "UN-DAF+". Such a set-up would have the advantage of not preventing the UNDS entities from carrying out other tasks according to their specific institutional mandates, in line with the requests of a given government, with funding from other sources (including existing sources).

The QCPR process promotes better delegation of authority through the recognition of "Delivering as One (DaO)", stronger support for implementation, improved UNDAFs and a stronger role for the RCs, especially for countries that are transitioning from needing relief to receiving development assistance. The UNDS operates in a context that has extended options for programming tools and allocating resources. These options range from sending generic requests to the UNDS to delegating greater authority for allocating resources to field representatives – based on individual countries' needs (OP 103). More specific requests for support for DaO countries can be made on the basis of a package of Standard Operating Procedures and guidance regarding mechanisms to programme, monitor, evaluate, report and pool funding mechanisms with support for the RC system. All this would be done in accordance with existing management and accountability systems, including the harmonization of business practices (OP 142).

It is important to officially recognise the central role of national governments in the whole UNDAF process in order to become fully aligned with national priorities (OP 113). This means that the RC system is asked to improve its consultation with national stakeholders (OP 114). To avoid meaningless bureaucratisation, the 2012 QCPR Resolution calls for improving the UNDAF as a strategic framework, and for instituting simpler processes (OP 117). It encourages the UNDS, where appropriate, to further improve its country-level joint programming processes and for specialized agencies to align their planning and budgeting cycles with the QCPR. Together, these measures reflect the interest of Member States in transforming UNDAFs into the key country-level strategic tools.

Regarding UNDAF implementation, the 2012 QCPR Resolution reiterates the RCs' central role (under the leadership of the respective governments) in helping the UNDS to respond more effectively to national development priorities (OP 122). In addition to stipulating the RCs' current mandate, the resolution also specifically recognises the need to enhance RC planning and coordination functions (OP 126) and advocates that RCs be allowed to propose amendments to projects and programmes so as to bring them in line with UNDAFs (OP 126a). More importantly, it advocates permitting RCs to propose amendments to UNDAFs to align them with the UNDS's mandate to respond to national priorities.

The 2012 QCPR Resolution calls upon the UNDS to ensure that RCs report to national authorities about achieving the results specified in UNDAFs (OP 130b). The resolution refers to a previous GA request that RCs provide input to the performance appraisals of UN country-team members (OP 130c) to facilitate this process.

These steps towards making UNDAF a strategic tool require improvements in the managerial functions of the RC system (Mahn 2013). This includes the authorization to allocate funds channelled through system-wide funding mechanisms to implement UNDAF in country programmes to complement the existing system. For the UNDS to optimally exploit the enormous investments made to harmonize operations at the country level, key system-wide governance functions and central lines of accountability must be strengthened.

A green light from the system – either at the inter-agency or intergovernmental level – seems necessary for UNDAF to become a country-level mid-term strategy (UNDAF+) that can be negotiated (along with the funding) with partner governments.

4.3.4 Accountable partnerships

In the fast-paced environment of international development, new opportunities must often be adopted in a system (including the UNDS) before any system-wide guidance has been spelled out. Recognising this, Secretary General Ban Ki-moon recently established a number of new partnership initiatives (see Box 4), explaining: *"Lasting solutions to global problems no longer lie in the hands of governments alone. The United Nations of the 21st century must think in terms of networks and coalitions."* (UNSG 2013)

Recent thematic initiatives by the Secretary-General have a number of features in common. All are multi-stakeholder partnerships with prominent roles for the private sector. The UN also frequently plays catalytic, regulatory and standard-setting roles in these initiatives that often imply inter-sectoral alliances and eagerness to effect a paradigm shift towards the Sustainable Development Agenda. Moreover, the initiatives focus on delivering direct and tangible results in the field and seek substantial innovative funding outside traditional aid channels.

The 2012 QCPR Resolution recognises that national efforts should be complemented by global programmes that aim to expand development opportunities (OP 11), assuming that the private sector and civil society can positively contribute to achieving internationally agreed development goals (OP 16). The resolution directs that with the host countries' agreement and consent, the UNDS should assist national governments in setting up an enabling environment in which links to civil society and the private sector are strengthened (even during UNDAF preparation processes) – with a view to seeking new and innovative solutions to development problems (OP 9). The resolution further encourages the UNDS to intensify collaboration with these stakeholders (OP 20). It also spells out some clear concerns, reaffirming the central role of governments in contributing to UNDS work. At the same time it recognises UNDS capacity to engage in results-oriented, innovative national, regional and global partnerships. These concerns, relating to the respective accountability lines and mechanisms, can be categorized as 'trust and check'.

Box 4:	Initiatives of the Secretary-General	
Year	**Name**	**Self-description**
2010	Every woman, Every child	A global movement to mobilise and intensify *"international and national action by governments, multilaterals, the private sector, research and academia, and civil society to address the major health challenges facing women and children"*.
2010	Scaling up nutrition movement	A movement founded on the principle that *"all people have a right to food and good nutrition. It unites people from governments, civil society, the UN, donors, businesses and researchers in a collective effort"*.
2010	Sustainable energy for all	A global initiative to *"achieve universal energy access, improve energy efficiency, and increase the use of renewable energy"*.
2012	Global education first	An initiative led by the Secretary-General that unites a broad spectrum of world leaders and advocates who *"all aspire to use the transformative power of education to build a better future for all"*.
2010	Every woman, Every child	A global movement to mobilise and intensify *"international and national action by governments, multilaterals, the private sector, research and academia, and civil society to address the major health challenges facing women and children"*.
Source:	Authors, based on the initiatives' websites	

Several of these initiatives appear to have been inspired or initiated as a result of innovative work by the UN Global Compact (The Global Compact 2012a) that is mandated to advance universal ethical principles about human rights, labour, combating corruption and protecting the environment. It aims to have the private sector adhere to these principles and implement local integrity measures.

Both the UNDS and recipient countries must clarify their roles in support of these global initiatives (the *what*), whose lines of accountability in the UNDS and towards recipient countries must also be strengthened. This entails recognising implications at the UNDAF level in terms of the activities and UNDS funding requirements (the *how*). Moreover, funding must be ensured beyond the traditional aid boundaries, and operating partners must organise common practices for applying standard procedures, implementing integrity measures and securing due diligence.

It is therefore expected that a kind of system-wide global partnership structure will soon be created to harmonize these operating approaches (The Global Compact 2012b). Apart from including the UNDS contribution to the global initiatives in the UNDAFs – which should take place during the preparatory process, if possible – funding requirements must be included with a system for monitoring their country-level implementation. At the central level, all global partnership structures should not only regularly report to ECOSOC but also help to improve integration at a system-wide strategic level during the next QCPR cycle.

4.3.5 The harmonization of business practices

Member States are sometimes quick to overlook reform efforts aimed at harmonizing business practices although it is an area of key importance. Aside from its potential to in-

crease efficiency and effectiveness,[30] harmonized business practices are a necessary pre-requisite for a more cohesive UNDS. It is no coincidence that the "Capacity Study" from 1969 dwelled on the subject (UNDP 1969).

To prepare for the QCPR negotiation process, the UN Secretariat made major efforts to establish empirical evidence and a substantive basis for harmonizing business practices (Balogun 2012a; Balogun 2012b et al.) In this regard, the 2012 QCPR Resolution aims, *inter alia*, to expand existing 'common systems' and establish new ones to:

−   consolidate support services at the country level (para. 152),

−   establish interoperable enterprise resource-planning (ERP) systems (para. 160), and

−   anchor support services in a unified set of regulations, rules, policies and procedures (para. 155).

The move to harmonize business practices throughout the UNDS seems to be in line with the quiet revolution called for in the most recent QCPR resolution. Its transformational agenda foresees establishing system-wide business practices to increase the efficiency, effectiveness and relevance of the UNDS. A secondary objective is enhancing transparency and establishing a capacity for the system-wide collection and usage of information to help focus on the overall objectives while also managing business.

5   System-wide funding 'beyond aid'

This chapter proposes a feasible solution for uniting the *what*, the *how* and the *means* of the UNDS. A system-wide mandate requires that institutions be strengthened throughout the system, which can best be achieved with a system-wide funding mechanism to incentivise and speed results. A first attempt took place when heads of state at the 2005 World Summit agreed to try to make the "World Solidarity Fund" operational – the first system-wide funding mechanism that the UNDP was supposed to manage.[31] With the international community now preparing for the paradigm shift towards the Sustainable Development Agenda, this debate will surely receive new impetus as soon as a new post–2015-agenda has been agreed.

The existing UNDS funding system could be characterised as headquarter-centred and agency oriented, which was suitable for the traditional institutional setting but has reached its growth limits because of its supply-driven and fragmentation-inducing nature. The QCPR analysis shows Member States requesting demand-driven, systemic funding. Since a paradigm shift implies a system-wide mandate for the UNDS to support, with variable efforts, every country worldwide, the funding mechanism would need more support than available through the classic ODA rationale and resources ('beyond aid'). It also would have to incentivise coherence and delegate authority within the UNDS. Once the post–2015 framework has been agreed and the system-wide mandate spelled out, the funding

---

30   Compare with UNDOCO 2012.

31   UN Doc. GA/RES/57/265 of 28 Feb. 2003.

implications should also become clearer – and justify holding a conference on development financing to introduce the new mechanism.

5.1 The system-wide funding dilemma

During each four-year QCPR cycle, the UNDS operates with around USD 90 to 95 billion (UNSG 2012a). In the last few years, the annual envelope has not varied much while the relative share of core and non-core contributions has changed. But agencies' strategic plans relate only to core funding, which is rapidly diminishing: a reversal of this trend is not in sight.

After stressing that core resources remain the bedrock of operational activities for development because of their unified nature (OP 26), the 2012 QCPR Resolution recognises that Member States' current funding practices pose challenges in terms of fragmentation and disincentives to adopting a UN-wide focus and strategic positioning (OP 28). Most funding mechanisms tend towards a supply-driven system. The reduction in the proportion of core contributions to funds and programmes, together with the trend towards increased single-donor funding for specific projects (including by non-state actors), seems to confirm – at least indirectly – the supply-driven character of current UNDS funding practices. In other words, funding increasingly tends to support specific proposals rather than the overall mandates of the institutions concerned.

It can also be argued that even core contributions are fundamentally not fully of a system-wide nature, since they relate to the mandate of a specific agency and their amount – on top of each country's assessed contribution to the UN – largely depends on the priorities of important Member States. For example, UN Women, which is arguably the agency with the clearest system-wide mandate and institutional set-up in the UNDS, has to struggle to fund its core activities.

The funding mechanism put in place to support the implementation of integrated UN programs in "Delivering as One" pilot countries is the most obvious effort to move towards a system-wide funding mechanism at country level. However, its voluntary basis has limited its success, since it mostly depends on a limited number of donors pooling their contributions. These and other pooled funding initiatives remain of complementary value, but do not constitute long-term alternatives for UNDS 'bedrock funding'.

The dilemma for Member States is that, beyond the individual agency mandate, core contributions are not oriented to the whole system, and the few attempts at system-wide funding are based on voluntary contributions. Virtually all recent funding increases have been earmarked contributions (UNSG 2012a), suggesting that because the existing funding system tends to be supply-driven and fragmented, no progress towards compliance with a UNDS system-wide mandate can be made.

How can the funding requirements of a future UNDS mandate be assessed? Such attempts face the fundamental challenge that no system-wide analysis exists about what the world needs from the UNDS. While progress in harmonizing business practices and other structural measures should provide a more comprehensive picture, further analysis and assessments are needed. The increase in the SG's thematic initiatives, which go beyond the

scope and means of the current UNDS, could be signs of growing demands on the system. Member States can be expected to agree, especially since the 2012 QCPR Resolution requests that UN funds and programmes report on concrete steps taken to broaden their donor base and thus reduce reliance on a limited number of donors (OP 35). Finally, the resolution encourages funds and programmes to work with numerous stakeholders so as to diversify sources, especially for core funding (OP 37).

It must be emphasised that Member States seem to be concerned not only with quantitative aspects of funding, but especially with aligning UNDS core principles to national priorities (OP 37). In a clear sign of frustration, Member States have expressed concern about the lack of progress in defining a 'critical mass' (OP 38) in the 2012 QCPR Resolution by reiterating its potential positive impact and calling for a set of common principles to define the critical mass of core resources in response to the needs of programme countries (OP 39). There seems to be a clear demand that system-wide funding must respond to the needs of countries, that is, be demand-driven. To make sure that their message is fully understood, Member States also ask the SG to report on the funding of operational activities for development and call for the system-wide application of optional incentive mechanisms for increasing core resources to be applied on a system-wide level (OP 55) – above and beyond the existing funding mechanisms. Crucially, the 2012 QCPR Resolution also encourages UNDS governing bodies to consolidate all available resources into bud-getary frameworks derived from their strategic plans (OP 41) and requests that these be included in a system-wide budgetary framework within the UNDAFs (OP 42). Concerning lines of accountability, the QCPR Resolution stresses that funding for operational activities should be aligned with the programme countries' national priorities and plans (OP 34), which indicates a demand-driven, country-led approach. The QCPR recognises that pooled funding mechanisms are important tools for advancing "Delivering as One" (OP 135) and requests the UNDS to support programme countries applying the model with an integrated package the includes funding (OP 141), emphasising that Member States comprehend that a more systematic approach will be required for future funding.

The 2012 QCPR Resolution thus sets the stage for developing system-wide support for the UNDS to fulfil its mandate for the Sustainable Development Agenda. This attempt resembles decentralisation processes in countries that aim to better respond to citizens' needs – whereby shifting authority to the local level implies structural changes in the state apparatus at both the central and local levels. Such structural changes are challenging because shifts in authority are usually accompanied by changes in financial flows, with part of the envelope that used to flow from the treasury to line ministries redirected to local authorities. Past successes in adopting decentralization models show that using pilots and preparing changes in an accurate and transparent manner helps diffuse the tensions that are especially acute during the transition period.

In the UNDS case, there seems to be scope to build on the "Delivering as One" experience of piloting a system-wide, country-focussed approach that was recognised by Member States in the 2012 QCPR Resolution. However, it seems that more work is needed, considering that UNDAFs have generally not yet become strategic, results-oriented programmes that define the UNDS response to the specific demands of individual countries.

5.2 Proposal for a system-wide funding mechanism

System-wide funding is intended to advance the UNDS system-wide mandate that would be applied in a differentiated manner, with country-led processes determining needs to be quantified, qualified and prioritised in a system-wide, results-oriented programming framework managed by RCs. Such a proposal would by no means replace existing funding structures because it would be focussed on the UNDS system-wide mandate instead of its entire development work. Should Member States mandate the UNDS to facilitate the shift towards sustainable development, the programming framework would encompass all UNDS contributions as well as the SG initiatives – in line with priorities set by local authorities. Voluntary funding would continue to cover other activities regarding agency-specific mandates.

The system-wide financing mechanism would have to be created on the basis of existing approaches, including the Expanded Funding Window for "Delivering as One", that would be adapted to the concept. Ideally, the mechanism would be centrally managed by an administrative entity, such as the UNDP Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office, be steered by a Committee of the CEB and report to ECOSOC. The latter would operate as a system-wide executive board providing an appropriate level of oversight for Member States. RCs would manage the mechanism at the country level, using an adaptation of the UNDAF as its managing tool. An enhanced UNDAF is critical for ensuring that 'demand-driven' system-wide funding guarantees results-oriented support for country programmes. Depending on the magnitude of the programme, the RC would either report directly to local authorities, or to a local steering committee that in turn would be accountable to the authorities.

The mechanism would have to define a distribution formula to allocate funds based on such notions as 'critical mass' in order to ensure adequate support, and set rules for establishing priorities if there is not enough funding. To ensure appropriate responses to the demands of national programmes, it would have to take into consideration principles of decentralisation, and it would also have to enhance the RCs' role in allocating resources to UN entities based on priorities agreed with local authorities. For the particular case of support for countries transitioning from crisis to development, see Box 5.

The proposal outlined above is based on the diagnosis that the debate about core versus non-core contributions to the UNDS will not lead to significant funding increases without a dramatic change of perspective. The demand-driven nature of a system-wide funding mechanism, along with the Member States' clear, long-term mandate for the UNDS, should prevail once the managerial tools, results-based orientations and harmonized business practices explained in the QCPR have been put in place or are being implemented.

If regulations guaranteed access to funding for UNDS entities that comply to implement system-wide measures prescribed by the QCPR, the system-wide funding mechanism would serve to incentivise a coherent system. Such a mechanism would not only help to reduce the overlapping of activities and dispersion of resources that result from fundraising having become a primary preoccupation of the RC and UN country-team members but would also help eliminate the current competitive environment that promotes the fragmentation of activities. In the long term, once the system-wide funding mechanism's functionality has been proven, it could absorb the costs of the RC system and any system-wide structures the UNDS needs, including core contributions to funds and programmes.

In terms of their funding sources, current funding models are largely based on voluntary contributions from traditional donors, national contributions to national programmes ('self-funding') and South-South cooperation. Implementing the Sustainable Development Agenda, however, would seem to require collective efforts to overcome the recipient/provider dichotomy that mirrors the North/South divide found in many UNDS fora. Such an outcome would be an important by-product of an innovative financing mechanism to direct funds towards sustainable-development objectives. Regular debates have been held in political fora about how to secure more non-earmarked funding that goes 'beyond aid', such as the tax on financial transactions that was discussed in the European Union in early 2013. In any case, the debate about funding system-wide operations through innovative sources 'beyond aid' can only begin after the *what* and the *how* of the UNDS are in place.

Box 5:   Support for countries in transition under the system-wide funding mechanism

The proposal for a system-wide 'beyond aid' financing mechanism depends on Member States' political will to define the UNDS's system-wide mandate. For example, it is conceivable that during the debates, Member States could acknowledge that the UNDS has a vital role to play in countries affected by natural disasters or conflicts that are transitioning from relief to development (OP 94). It bears consideration that the 2012 QCPR Resolution invites Member States to examine their own financing mechanisms so as to provide rapid and flexible financing for prevention, resilience, preparedness and response (OP 96). It further reiterates the need for the UNDS to take steps to strengthen the link between financing mechanisms (OP 100), including delegating authority to allocate resources (OP 103), improving alignment with national priorities and responding more swiftly (OP 102). In terms of the system-wide funding mechanism, this implies defining an up-front and pre-loaded window for fast-track funding to provide support in case of emergencies (including natural disasters), and for countries in transition.

Source: Authors

---

6   Conclusions

Using the 2012 QCPR Resolution as a starting point, we propose giving a new sense of purpose and direction to the UNDS as it adapts its business model to the 'beyond aid' Sustainable Development Agenda. We view the QCPR process as the right instrument for this purpose – which was broadly confirmed when Member States were able to reach consensus during the complex negotiations about the 2012 QCPR Resolution, sending a strong message to the UNDS that a system-wide approach was needed.

In our assessment, the UNDS has neither a comprehensive hub to reconcile its system-wide mandate with its operations, nor to reconcile the mandate with the means for its implementation. This distinguishes the UNDS as a whole from the way each of its components operates. While such mechanisms have long existed at the level of individual entities, they do not yet exist for the whole system. An established system-wide mandate for the UNDS (the *what*) that is not linked to its means of implementation is likely to fall short of its full potential, however, as is focussing on the *how* without defining the *what*. The main concern should be to first reconcile the system-wide mandate with the operations and then with the means of implementation.

We suggest that Member States beef up the QCPR instrument from its current limited function and status into a system-wide strategy, or a 'QCPR+' to create a cohesive UNDS that links the system-wide *what* to the *how* and provides further guidance about means of implementation. These main elements of the QCPR+ are the equivalent of a corporate strategy in the business world. Under this scenario, the QCPR+ and the UNDAF+ would embody the UNDS system-wide strategy at UN headquarters and in the field.

6.1   A feasible evolution in the QCPR cycle

The linkage between mandate and strategic guidance and operations would greatly benefit from an improved sequencing of events. Below we outline four elements to implement the proposal.

First, the UN Secretariat's Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) should gradually be given more authority to monitor activities and progress with regard to implementing the 2012 QCPR Resolution at the central and country levels. Under the SG's guidance, DESA should continue to assure improved analysis in system-wide reports on UN funding, performance, programme results and operational activities for development, including the comparison of system-wide data, definition and classifications – as outlined in the 2012 QCPR (OP 187). The growing number of specific requests and mandates in QCPR resolutions underscores the need to rigorously monitor their implementation. For this, DESA preparatory work will be crucial. Member States should play a proactive role by introducing coherent, system-wide messages to UN governing bodies, whether they are based in New York, Geneva, Rome, Vienna, Paris, Copenhagen or Nairobi.

Second, the 2012 QCPR Resolution called for an independent system-wide evaluation mechanism to focus on key UNDS mandates; this would provide information to governing bodies and help UNDG members promote system-wide mandates in their operations. The 2012 QCPR Resolution reaffirmed the need to strengthen independent, impartial, system-wide evaluation of operational activities for development (OP 176) by enhancing existing mechanisms (OP 177) and requested the SG to establish an interim, multi-stakeholder mechanism to coordinate independent system-wide evaluations about a pilot evaluation mechanism to be submitted to ECOSOC in 2013 (OP 181). The 2012 QCPR Resolution also requested the JIU to make a system-wide evaluation of the Action Plan of Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. No system-wide evaluation of UNDAFs is foreseen, but the 2012 QCPR Resolution requests funds and programmes and encourages specialized agencies to increase their use and evaluation of UNDAFs (OP 182). However, these mandates appear to be incoherent: How could any non-system-wide body independently evaluate a system-wide framework like UNDAF? This indicates that more thought is needed about how to strengthen accountability lines so countries will accept UNDAFs as strategic frameworks for operations.

Third, fully aligning UNDS-entity planning processes with the QCPR cycle results in better strategic guidance for operations. A complete QCPR cycle usually lasts around five years. It starts with preparations for the next cycle beginning in year '0'. During this year, unlike in other years, ECOSOC does not adopt a follow-up resolution to the previous QCPR. Instead, the SG prepares a report with recommendations that serves as an input for

the 'zero' draft of the upcoming QCPR Resolution. The resolution is negotiated during that year's GA and if all goes well, is approved at the end of year '0'. In year '1', the system-wide guidance in the resolution helps in developing the strategic four-year plans of the funds, programmes and specialized agencies that are then approved by their respective governing bodies, taking into consideration the system-wide guidance provided by the QCPR resolution. The first of a series of three annual resolutions on implementing the QCPR is adopted during the ECOSOC in year '1'. In year '2', the QCPR begins implementing the 4-year cycle of the strategic plans. In the fourth (and last) year of the QCPR cycle – which is the third year that strategic plans are implemented – a new cycle to prepare a new QCPR resolution begins. Figure 3 provides a schematic overview of the full QCPR cycle.

Fourth, the programming cycles of most UNDS entities have already been aligned with the four-year QCPR cycle, which means that the UNDS is prepared for strategic guidance that Member States should deliver in the form of a QCPR+. What needs to be incorporated in the future is the review of the UNDS system-wide mandate at the political level. To avoid a big gap between that review and the elaboration of the strategic plans, it would be wise to introduce the revised mandate in an HLPF Declaration during year '0' – when preparations are being made for the new QCPR.

Figure 3:   The QCPR cycle

Source: Authors
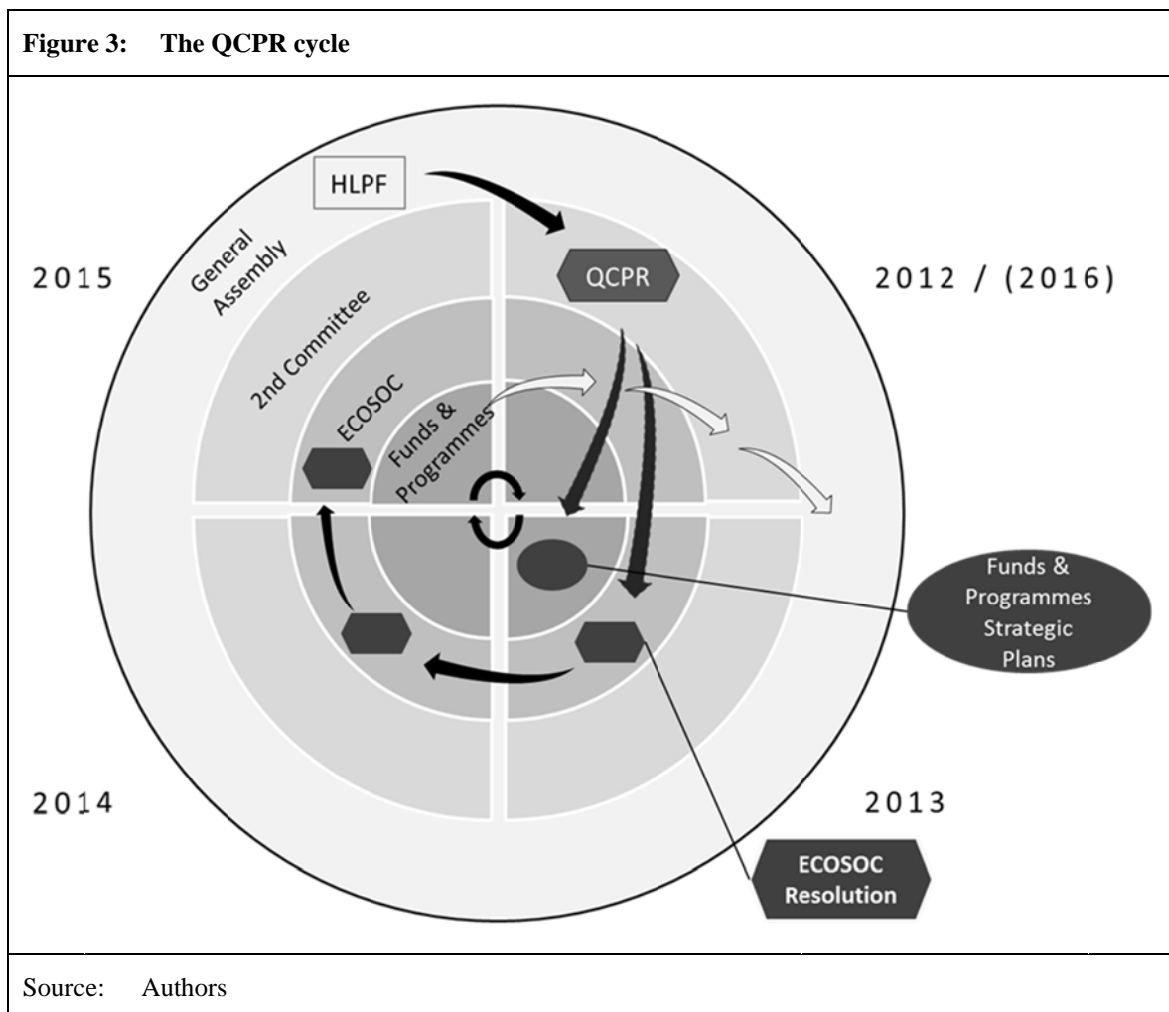
Given the QCPR cycle, Member States could implement this proposal in the following steps:

–   2013–14: QCPR implementation focuses on key system-wide priorities to be decided at the CEB level and included in the strategic plans of the funds and programmes.

–   2014: Preparatory work, including legal advice on strengthening system-wide accountability lines and decision-making at country and headquarters levels. This includes revamping UNDAFs, linking funding to priorities, and setting up a monitoring system and a more authoritative, managerial CEB mandate that includes the UNDG.

–   2014: A resolution is adopted to revise and upgrade ECOSOC's system-wide decision-making functions, with better oversight of system-wide global partnerships.

–   2015–16: Preparation of the HLPF Analysis on the comparative advantages of the UNDS (2015) and the Declaration of its system-wide mandate (2016) for the next QCPR cycle.

–   2016: Preparation of system-wide funding for the UNDS mandate to support sustainable development.

–   2016: Negotiations of a new QCPR+ Resolution to replace the current QCPR on the basis of the above-mentioned HLPF Declaration.

–   2017: Convening an international conference on system-wide 'beyond aid' financing of the UN mandate to support the Sustainable Development Agenda, and preparations to make the fund operational in 2018.

6.2   Outlook

While negotiating the 2012 QCPR Resolution, Member States swung from a minimalist target of 'securing low-hanging fruits' to near-agreement on a 'daring-to-fly-high' agenda. Discussions focussed on preparatory work to analyse the elements of a system-wide governance mechanism, building on the System-wide Coherence process (GA/RES/64/289) in conjunction with the evolution of the post–2015 and SDG processes – in other words, with the UNDS's future mandate.

Even though such an agreement proved beyond reach during the 2012 round of negotiations, it was clear that this future debate is unavoidable. A pragmatic way to prepare for the next QCPR cycle would be to proceed with what is within reach and in line with the outcomes of the 2012 QCPR Resolution.

The future of QCPR resolutions lies in moving from a limited policy review to a system-wide strategy for sustainable development – the QCPR+ – that would define the mandate, operations, structure, partnerships and financial means for a four-year cycle of UNDS operations moving towards implementing a Sustainable Development Agenda 'beyond aid'.

Bibliography

Anstee, M. J. (2012): Millennium Development Goals : milestones on a long road, in: R. Wilkins / D. Hulme (eds.), The Millennium Development Goals and beyond : global development after 2015, London: Routledge

Balogun, P. (2012a): The relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) : a report prepared for the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs; online: http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/pdf/undaf_report.pdf

– (2012b): The UNDAF : presentation at the UNITAR seminar; online: http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/pdf/UNITAR_FEB_22_BALOGUN_PRESENTATION_V2.pdf (accessed 31 Oct. 2013)

Browne, S. (2011): The UN development program and system, London: Routledge

– (2012): The UN development system : the case for reform : power point presentation; online: http://future un.org/unog-library-talks-united-nations-development-the-case-for-reform/ (accessed 31 Oct. 2013)

Childers, E. / B. Urquhart (1994): Renewing the United Nations system, Uppsala: Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation

Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (2011): General information : transformation of our energy system, Berlin; online: www.bmu.de/P118-1/ (accessed 31 Oct. 2013)

Fomerand, J. (2003): Mirror, tool, or linchpin for change? : the UN and development, New York: Academic Council on the United Nations System (International Relations Studies and the United Nations Occasional Papers 2); online: http://acuns.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/MirrorToolorLinchpinfor Change.pdf (accessed 31 Oct. 2013)

Government of Ethiopia (2011): The path to sustainable development : Ethiopia's climate-resilient green economy strategy, Addis Ababa: Environmental Protection Authority

Helliwell, J. / R. Layard / J. Sachs (2012): World happiness report, New York: Earth Institute

Hill, F. (2010): The future of the UN development system : conference report; online: http://futureun.org/wp-content/uploads/wp1033-report.pdf (accessed 31 Oct. 2013)

Hoff, H. (2011): Understanding the nexus : background paper for the Bonn 2011 conference; online: http://www.water-energy-food.org/en/whats_the_nexus/background.html (accessed 31 Oct. 2013)

Jenks, B. et al. (2005): The case for a United Nations development pillar, mimeo

JIU (Joint Inspection Unit) (2012): Strategic planning in the United Nations system, Geneva

Jolly, R. / L. Emmerij / T. G. Weiss (2009): UN ideas that changed the World, Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press

Magnuson, J. (2013): The approaching great transformation : toward a livable post carbon economy, New York: Seven Stories Press

Mahn, T. (2012): New challenges, new partners, a new UN development system? : conference report, Wilton Park; online: http://www.wiltonpark.org.uk/resources/en/pdf/22290903/2012/ wp1183-report (accessed 31 Oct. 2013)

– (2013): Country-level aid coordination at the United Nations – taking the resident coordinator system forward, Bonn: DIE (Studies 77)

Maslow, A. (1966): The psychology of science : a reconnaissance, 1st ed., New York: Harper & Row

Melamed, C. / A. Scott / T. Mitchell (2012): Separated at birth, reunited in Rio? : a roadmap to bring environment and development back together, London: Overseas Development Institute (Background Note May 2012)

Mitrany, D. (1966): A working peace system, Chicago, Ill.: Quadrangle Press

Nordic UN Project (1991): The United Nations : issues and options : five studies on the role of the UN in the economic and social fields commissioned by the Nordic UN project, Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International

Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the UN (2011): The PGA handbook : a practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly, New York; online: http://www.unitar.org/ny/sites/unitar.org.ny/files/UN_PGA_Handbook.pdf (accessed 14 Nov. 2013)

– (2013a): ECOSOC-Tagungsstruktur, internal document

– (2013b): QCPR note 1, internal document

– (2013c): QCPR note 2, internal document

– (2013d): QCPR note 3, internal document

– (2013e): QCPR note 4, internal document

– (2013f): QCPR note 5, internal document

– (2013g): QCPR note 6, internal document

Raworth, K. (2012): A safe and just space for humanity : can we live within the doughnut?, Oxford: Oxfam; online: http://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/dp-a-safe-and-just-space-for-humanity-130212-en.pdf (accessed 31 Oct. 2013)

Righter, R. (1995): Utopia lost : the United Nations and world order, New York: Twentieth Century Fund Press

Rochester, J. M. (1993): Waiting for the millennium : The United Nations and the future of world order, in: *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 27 (4), 864–865

Rockstrom, J. et al. (2009): A safe operating space for humanity, in: *Nature* 461 (7263), 472–475; online: http://dx.doi.org/10.1038/461472a (accessed 14 Nov. 2013)

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft (2013): Energiestrategie 2050, Bern: Eidgenössisches Departement für Umwelt, Verkehr, Energie und Kommunikation; online: http://www.bfe.admin.ch/themen/00526/00527/?lang=de&dossier_id=05024 (accessed 31 Oct. 2013)

Steffen, W. / P. J. Crutzen / J. R. McNeill (2007): The anthropocene : are humans now overwhelming the great forces of nature?, in: *AMBIO: A Journal of the Human Environment* 36 (8), 614–621; online: http://dx.doi.org/10.1579/0044-7447(2007)36[614:TAAHNO]2.0.CO;2 (accessed 14 Nov. 2013)

Thakur, R. / T. G. Weiss (2009): The UN and global governance : an unfinished journey, Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press

The Global Compact (2012a): Catalyzing transformational partnerships between the UN & business, Switzerland (Conference Background Note)

– (2012b): Operationalizing the UN partnership facility (Agenda Task Force Session), mimeo

UN Conference on Environment and Development (1992): Rio declaration on environment and development; online: http://habitat.igc.org/agenda21/rio-dec.html (accessed 31 Oct. 2013)

UN System Task Team (2012): Realizing the future we want for all : report to the Secretary-General, New York: UN System Task Team on the Post–2015 UN Development Agenda

UNDOCO (United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office) (2012): The impact of UN coordination : stories from the field : synthesis of 2011/12 resident coordinator annual reports, New York; online: http://rconline.undg.org/EXTERNAL/undg/UNDG_AR_Layout_ R5.pdf (accessed 31 Oct. 2013)

UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) (1969): A study of the capacity of the United Nations development system : Jackson report, Vol. 1, 2, New York

UNGA (United Nations General Assembly) (2012): The future we want (General Assembly Resolution A/RES/66/288)

– (2013): Lessons learned from the Commission on Sustainable Development : an advance unedited version; online: http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/1676SG%20report%20on%20CSD%20lessons%20learned_advance%20unedited%20copy_26%20Feb%2013.pdf (accessed 31 Oct. 2013)

UNS (United Nations Secretariat) (2012): Informal note 1 : the relationship between the GA resolution on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of UN operational activities for development and the specialized agencies, 7. Nov. 2012; online: http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/pdf/information _note _ 1-relation_btw_ga_and_sas.pdf (accessed 31.Oct. 2013)

UNSG (United Nations Secretary General) (2009): Functioning of the resident coordinator system, including costs and benefits (Report of the Secretary-General E/2009/76)

– (2012a): Analysis of funding of operational activities for development of the United Nations system for the year 2010 : an advance, unedited version, New York: Department for Social and Economic Affairs; online: http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/pdf/2012_funding_report-figures_and_tables.pdf (accessed 31 Oct. 2013)

– (2012b): Quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system : an advance, unedited version, New York; online: http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/ pdf/sg_report_for_2012_qcpr.pdf (accessed 31 Oct. 2013)

– (2012c): Quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system: recommendations : an advance, unedited version; online: http://www.un.org/esa/ coordination/pdf/sg_qcpr_report_adv_unedited_version.pdf (accessed 31 Oct. 2013)

– (2012d): The Secretary-General's five-year action agenda, New York: United Nations

– (2013): Secretary-General's address to the General Assembly on 22 January 2013; online: http:// www.un.org/sg/statements/index.asp?nid=6563 (accessed 31 Oct. 2013)

Vatterodt, M. (2008): The implementation of the Paris declaration on aid effectiveness by the United Nations : progress to date and need for further reforms, Bonn: DIE (Studies 35)

Weinlich, S. (2011): Reforming development cooperation at the United Nations : an analysis of policy position and actions of key states on reform options, Bonn: DIE (Studies 59)

World Commission on Environment and Development (1987): Our common future, Oxford

Annex

Annex 1:	Categorization – Addressees of CPR resolutions
United Nations Development System	**Operational activities for development of the UNDS**
	Agencies and the United Nations development system
	Development cooperation programmes of the United Nations system
	Members of the United Nations development system
	Operational activities of the United Nations
	Organizations and bodies of the United Nations system
	Organizations of the United Nations development system
	Organizations of the United Nations system engaged in operational activities for development
	Organizations of the United Nations development system, in particular UN Women
	Organizations of the United Nations system
	Organizations of the United Nations system, including those with no field level representations, and the regional commissions
	Organs and organizations of the United Nations system
	Organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system
	Organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system engaged in operational activities for development
	United Nations
	United Nations Development Group
	United Nations development system
	United Nations development system, including its agencies, funds and programmes
	United Nations operational system
	United Nations system including the funds, programmes and specialized agencies
	United Nations system
	United Nations System Chief Executive Board for Coordination of the United Nations system-wide policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women and strategy on gender main-streaming
	United Nations system, including the fund and programmes, the specialized agencies and the Secretariat
Intergovernmental	All relevant governing bodies, in particular the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme
	Economic and Social Council
	Executive boards and governing bodies of the funds, programmes and specialized agencies
	Executive boards and secretariats of the United Nations Development Programme and United Nations Populations Fund and the United Nations Children's Fund
	Executive boards of the funds and programmes
	Executive boards of the funds and programmes and the governing bodies of the specialized agencies
	Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Populations Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and UN Women
	Executive boards of the United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies
	Governing bodies of (all) funds, programmes and specialized agencies

Annex 1 (cont.):	Categorization – Addressees of CPR resolutions
Intergovernmental (cont.)	Governing bodies of all organizations of the United Nations development system
	Governing bodies of the (relevant) organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system
	Governing bodies of the organizations of the United Nations system
	Governing bodies of the organizations of the United Nations system concerned with activities for development
	Governing bodies of the organizations United Nations development system
	Governing bodies of the relevant organizations
	Governing bodies of the specialized agencies and other relevant United Nations entities
	Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme
	President of the Economic and Social Council
	States members of the governing bodies of all organs organizations and bodies of the United Nations system
	United Nations System Chief Executives Boards for Coordination
	United Nations System Chief Executives Boards for Coordination in the United Nations Development Group
Interagency	Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme
	Country offices and the resident coordinators
	Department of Technical Cooperation for Development
	Development agencies of the United Nations system
	Entities of the United Nations system
	Executive Committee of the United Nations Development Group
	Executive heads of all the organizations concerned
	Executive heads of the funding organizations
	Executive heads of the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system
	Executive heads of the United Nations funding and technical agencies
	Field offices
	Funding agencies of the United Nations system
	Funding organizations
	Funding, technical and specialized agencies
	Funds, programmes and specialized agencies
	Funds and programmes
	Funds and programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system
	Funds, programmes and agencies of the United Nations development system
	Funds, programmes and specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations development system at the regional level and the regional commissions
	Funds, programmes and specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations system
	Heads of the specialized agencies, the United Nations funds and programmes and the regional commissions

Annex 1 (cont.):	Categorization – Addressees of CPR resolutions
Interagency (cont.)	Joint Consultative Group on Policies
	Member organizations of the United Nations Development Group, in particular the member organizations represented in its Executive Committee
	Organizations of the United Nations development system, its regional commissions and other regional and subregional entities
	Organizations participating in programming
	Programmes and projects in low-income countries
	Regional commissions as well as interregional, regional and subregional cooperation
	Regional commissions as well as the funds, programmes, specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations development system at the regional level
	Relevant United Nations entities
	Resident coordinator system
	Resident coordinator
	Resident coordinator system and the United Nations country teams
	Resident coordinator, the specialized agencies, small technical agencies, the regional commissions and organizations of the United Nation system with field-level representation
	Resident coordinator/humanitarian coordinator system
	Resident coordinators and the United Nations country teams
	Separate sectoral and specialized entities, funds, programmes and specialized agencies
	Special Unit for South–South Cooperation
	Specialized agencies
	Specialized and technical agencies
	UN Women
	United Nations agency
	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
	United Nations Development funds and programmes
	United Nations Development Programme
	United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Food Programme
	United Nations Development Programme, The United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)
	United Nations Evaluation Group
	United Nations funds and programmes, the specialized agencies as well as centres of excellence in the South
	United Nations funds, programmes and agencies
	United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies, including non-resident agencies
	United Nations Office for South–South Cooperation
	United Nations regional commissions
	United Nations system at the country level
	United Nations system country team

	Annex 1 (cont.): Categorization – Addressees of CPR resolutions
Secretariat	Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation
	Joint Inspection Unit
	Secretariat
	Secretary-General
Other	(all) Governments
	Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme; President of the World Bank; heads of regional development banks
	All countries
	All countries that are able to do so
	All Governments
	All Member States and the organizations of the United Nations development system
	Bilateral donors and the United Nations system
	Countries, including donor and programme countries
	Developed countries
	Donor countries
	Donors and recipient countries
	Donors and countries in a position to do so
	General Assembly
	Governments and organizations of the United Nations system
	Heads of organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system
	International community
	International community and relevant United Nations entities, including the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, the United Nations funds and programmes, as well as the specialized agencies
	International financial institutions and other development partners
	Joint Consultative Group on Policies and to the maximum extent possible the specialized agencies
	Joint Consultative Group on Policies, the funding organizations of the United Nations system, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations system, the United Nations Population Fund, the World Food Programme and the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the fund administered by the United Nations Development Programme
	Joint Inspection Unit, the United Nations Evaluation Group, and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat
	Major donor countries
	Member States
	Member States and relevant United Nations organizations
	Member States and the United Nations development system
	Member States and the United Nations system

Annex 1 (cont.):	**Categorization – Addressees of CPR resolutions**

Other (cont.)	Member States and United Nations funds and programmes
	National governments
	National Governments, relevant United Nations development agencies, including specialized agencies and other relevant stakeholders
	Organizations of the United Nations development system its regional commissions and other regional and subregional entities
	Other countries
	Programmes, funds and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, and other relevant entities, such as international financial institutions and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
	Recipient countries
	Recipient countries and the organizations of the United Nations system
	Recipient governments
	Secretary-General and the United Nations development system
	United Nations agencies and the donor community
	United Nations Development Programme and the Department of Technical Cooperation for Development of the United Nations Secretariat
	United Nations humanitarian entities, other relevant humanitarian organizations, development partners, the private sector, donor countries and affected States
	United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities
	United Nations system and the Bretton Woods institutions
	World Bank Group
	World Bank, regional development banks and all funds and programmes
	World Food Programme, executive boards of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Populations Fund, United Nations Children's Fund
Note:	This analysis included all addressees in consecutively numbered operational paragraphs. When the addressee was not mentioned, the cases were included in the category 'other'.

Annex 2: UNDS Entities		
Specialized agencies (14)		
Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)	International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
International Labour Organization (ILO)	International Maritime Organization (IMO)	International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
International Telecommunications Union (ITU)	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)	United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
Universal Postal Union (UPU)	World Health Organization (WHO)	World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)
World Meteorological Organization (WMO)	World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)	
Funds and programmes (14)		
UN Development Programme (UNDP)	UNDP – UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)	UNDP – UN Volunteers programme (UNV)
UN Children's Fund (UNICEF)	UN Population Fund (UNFPA)	World Food Programme (WFP)
Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)	UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
UNCTAD – International Trade Centre (ITC)	UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)	UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)
UN Environment Programme (UNEP)	UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT)	
Research and training institutions (6)		
UN Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI)	UN Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR)	UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)
UN Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD)	UN System Staff College (UNSSC)	UN University (UNU)
Others (3)		
Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)	UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR)	UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS)

Publications of the German Development Institute

Studies

78   *Reeg, Caroline:* Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Upgrading in India: learning from success cases, 299 pp., Bonn 2013, ISBN 978-88985-585-5

77   *Mahn, Timo:* Country-Level Aid Coordination at the United Nations – Taking the Resident Coordinator System Forward, 146 pp., Bonn 2013, ISBN 978-3-88985-584-8

76   *Loewe, Markus et al.:* Which Factors Determine the Upgrading of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs)? The case of Egypt, 288 pp., Bonn 2013, ISBN 978-3-88985-583-1

75   *Mallik, Vidyadhar:* Local and Community Governance for Peace and Development in Nepal, 179 pp., Bonn 2013, ISBN 978-3-88985-582-4

74   *Brandi, Clara et al.:* Sustainability Certification in the Indonesian Palm Oil Sector: Benefits and challenges for smallholders, 258 pp., Bonn 2013, ISBN 978-3-88985-581-7

73   *Klingebiel, Stephan:* Entwicklungszusammenarbeit – eine Einführung, 86 pp., Bonn 2013, ISBN 978-3-88985-580-0

[Price: EUR 10.00; books may be ordered from the DIE or through bookshops.]

Discussion Papers

21/2013   *Hampel-Milagrosa, Aimée / Markus Loewe / Caroline Reeg:* Which Factors Determine the Upgrading of Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises? Evidence from Egypt, India and the Philippines, 24 pp., Bonn 2013, ISBN 978-3-88985-604-3

20/2013   *Schmitz, Birgit:* Macroprudential Financial Market Regulation, 38 pp., Bonn 2013, ISBN 978-3-88985-602-9

19/2013   *Klingebiel, Stephan:* Multilateral Aid: Structural change and donor preferences, 14 pp., Bonn 2013, ISBN 978-3-88985-601-2

18/2013   *Janus, Heiner / Stephan Klingebiel / Sebastian Paulo:* Beyond Aid: Konzeptionelle Überlegungen zum Wandel der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit, 19 pp., Bonn 2013, ISBN 978-3-88985-600-5

17/2013   *Keijzer, Niels:* Unfinished Agenda or Overtaken by Events? Applying aid- and development-effectiveness principles to capacity development support, 65 pp., Bonn 2013, ISBN 978-3-88985-620-3

16/2013   *Lundsgaarde, Erik:* Bureaucratic Pluralism and the Transformation of Development Cooperation, 29 pp., Bonn 2013, ISBN 978-3-88985-619-7

[Price: EUR 6.00; books may be ordered from the DIE or through bookshops.]

A complete list of publications available from the DIE can be found at:
http://www.die-gdi.de