

Advancing the New Way of Working

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BACKGROUND PAPER PREPARED BY OCHA AND UNDP

Key outcomes from the workshop:

1. Clarify the elements that make up the New Way of Working distinct from other approaches.
2. Identify the elements that are requested from country level needed for a NWOW toolkit to implement the New Way of Working, including examples of steps that have been taken to develop and pursue collective outcomes.
3. Provide clarity how different actors are providing technical advisory support for the New Way of Working, including from headquarters and regional level.
4. Demonstrate examples of collective outcomes based on country-level experience.

What's "new" about the New Way of Working?

One year has passed since the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul and the signing of the Commitment to Action by former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and nine UN Principals, endorsed by the World Bank. The Commitment to Action spelled out a New Way of Working towards "collective outcomes" that drive humanitarian and development actors to not only work better together, but to design their cooperation towards specific goals that reduce the needs, risks and vulnerabilities of people affected by crises. The adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2030, which have universal Member State support; and the imperative of "leaving no one behind" and reach the "furthest behind first", thus set out a path not just to meet needs, but to reduce risk, vulnerability and overall levels of need. It is the notion of "collective outcomes" that holds the potential to bring these capacities together to tackle drivers of need and accelerate development gains for the most vulnerable, particularly in protracted and recurrent crises.

The New Way of Working is one of the elements of Secretary-General António Guterres reform agenda, in which he calls on individual agencies, the UN system, and the "system as a whole" to break down silos and "bring the humanitarian and development spheres closer together from the beginning of a crisis to support affected communities, address structural and economic impacts and help prevent a new spiral of fragility and instability."¹ This also fits with the Secretary-General's broader focus and orientation towards a new prevention agenda which includes both man-made crises such as violent conflict as well as natural hazards, with the recognition that increased coherence between pillars will contribute to reducing crises. In the words of the Secretary-General, Humanitarian response, sustainable development and sustaining peace are three sides of the same triangle.

¹ UN Secretary-General-designate António Guterres' remarks to the General Assembly on taking the oath of office, 12 December 2016

The New Way of Working recognizes that the primary goal of humanitarian action is to provide life-saving assistance and protection in line with the humanitarian principles, but that, especially in protracted crises, humanitarian assistance should be designed in a way that helps build a bridge between short-term assistance and medium-term outcomes. By committing to the New Way of Working, development actors, for their part, signal a renewed effort to deliver development programming and financing that will broaden the reach of development outcomes to the most vulnerable, particularly those in fragile settings.

The approach further recognizes that in order to deliver tangible development gains to the most vulnerable, “collective outcomes” offer a series of building blocks, deliverable in 3-5-year timeframes, to address the areas of persistent need, risk and vulnerability that drive humanitarian crises. These are not long-range institutional reform agendas, but tangible results that are measurable in people’s daily lives. For example, instead of developing separate strategies for the emergency food assistance and longer-term food security, or short-term water delivery and longer-term water infrastructure, under the New Way of Working, shared results would be identified in each of these sectors, around which humanitarian and development actors could lend their respective capacities to enable measurable results. This would provide a focus for investment and accountability for a range of stakeholders, including donors.

Advancing the New Way of Working in practice

The New Way of Working has been met with broad interest and support from many corners, and there are numerous on-going efforts to explore the practical implications that it will have on existing tools, processes, and forms of collaboration. It has now been embedded in the parallel and self-reinforcing mandates created by the UN Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) for the UN Development System and the General Assembly resolution covering emergency response for the humanitarian system. A regional workshop in Dakar, Senegal, demonstrated that in contexts marked by chronic vulnerability with frequent spikes of acute need, close collaboration between humanitarian and development actors has been recognized as a “must” – as is an increase in local capacity and leadership. A high-level workshop in Copenhagen, Denmark, firmly established the New Way of Working as a multi-stakeholder agenda, confirming commitment to provide the necessary political, operational and financial support to enable progress and overcome barriers to implementation. During the World Bank Spring Meetings in April in Washington D.C., a High-Level Roundtable further confirmed the commitment to the New Way of Working and emphasized the key role of national Governments and local stakeholders in the implementation of the New Way of Working.

However, as the approach has gained a broad base of supporters, the basic elements of the approach, and its implications for operations on the ground, should be reinforced. For the approach to become a reality in a consistent manner, it will require continued support for country-based efforts to shape the approach to suit different contexts, while ensuring that it remains recognizable as an approach, i.e. guided by the achievement of ‘collective outcomes.’ This requires the identification of tools, mechanisms and processes to support UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinators, government counterparts, and the broader humanitarian and development communities they engage to identify opportunities to pursue collective outcomes, recognizing the critical role of NGOs and others outside of the UN system that are central to the achievement of results. The Commitment to Action identified four specific areas in which cooperation between humanitarian and development actors, and the tools that facilitate their cooperation, will be affected by a new approach: (i) Analysis; (ii)

Planning; (iii) Coordination and Leadership; and (iv) financing. These four areas can be examined to identify enablers of collective outcomes, but making changes in these areas is not in and of itself the goal. While the specific direction of the New Way of Working should be shaped by the specific operational context, many have asked for examples of useful tools, good practices and early learning and results that may offer insights to others.

Group discussions at the workshop will therefore be guided by two overarching questions:

- a. *When you go back to your context, what steps do you need to identify opportunities to achieve collective outcomes, and what changes and support do you need to implement them?*
- b. *If you have already pursued elements of the New Way of Working or a similar approach, what lessons can you share with others? What are the operational implications for the range of stakeholders engaged in delivering results in different settings (NGOs, Government, UN actors, donors) and which obstacles did you face?*

Developing country-specific models that are shaped by context

The outcomes above are expected to support field leaders in facilitating a process in-country that meets the unique requirements of their context. For the UN system in particular, a prerequisite is that field leadership teams are empowered and capacitated appropriately to engage with a range of stakeholders and lead a complex process of identifying and delivering shared results. The structure and process for taking forward the New Way of Working, including the impact it has on enabling tools, mechanisms and processes (analysis to planning, coordination and financing) will vary depending on a range of factors in each context, such as: conflict dynamics that shape humanitarian independence; the role of governments and existence of viable national or area-based plans that target risk and vulnerability; available financing channels for joined-up, multi-year programming; existing humanitarian and development coordination systems in-country; and in-country capacity to design and implement and measure collective outcomes, among others. The perspectives of non-UN actors have not been as centrally considered in these discussions to-date, and reflecting those views and considerations is an important aspect of the workshop.

Background: examples of steps and country approaches

While the application of the New Way of Working will vary based on context, the steps below provide one basic example of how collective outcomes can be set and met in dynamic contexts:

- i. Conduct a Common Country Analysis by drawing on the Humanitarian Needs Overview and other key risk, vulnerability, and root cause analyses that are available to achieve a more targeted understanding of vulnerability at household and community levels, as well as local capacities to address them.
- ii. Define UNDAF or other national framework strategic priority areas for vulnerability reduction that target key drivers of risk and vulnerability.
- iii. Identify transformative but realistic, concrete, measurable reductions in levels of need, risk and vulnerability that humanitarian and development actors can adopt as “collective outcomes” for 3-5 years, as part of vision 2030 exercise. This may mean operationalizing UNDAF strategic priority areas in tangible, measurable terms at country level. In some cases, it may include formulating a “compact” or similar partnership framework around each or all outcomes.
- iv. Propose and support processes to align agency-specific projects and work-plans to support the achievement of the collective outcomes. This does not imply a de facto merging planning of tools entirely, but looking for opportunities, whether sectoral, area-based or otherwise.
- v. Coordinate context-appropriate resource mobilization for these collective outcomes (ensure short-, medium- and long-term interventions are predictably financed with a diverse set of financing tools over a multi-year period.)

Some field-based examples of current efforts that are in line with this approach are:

In Ethiopia, the Government is leading efforts and is working with humanitarian and development partners to redirect programming and financing to ensure “resilient water supply” in the most drought-prone areas. In partnership with the UN RC/HC, bringing together the wider humanitarian and development communities, it was noted that areas of persistent water trucking were the same ones that had been left out of development programs to support water infrastructure. Based on mapping to identify gaps between the development ONEWASH programme and emergency water trucking during the 2016 El Niño drought response, the Government mobilized development financing from the ONEWASH national scheme to meet around 30% of the Humanitarian Requirement Document’s WASH target, while providing resilience water supply and measurably reducing drought risk for 1.3 million people as part of the WASH cluster response and contributing to longer-term development results (including under SDG 6).

In Yemen, a review of the UN Humanitarian Response Plan; the World Bank Country Engagement Note; the EU country strategy and the outcomes of the UN Strategic Assessment Mission identified four common strategic outcomes across the Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus. They include: (1) equitable assistance; (2) local service delivery; (3) preservation of state institutions; and (4) preparation for economic recovery and reconstruction. The strong commitment to preserve institutions for essential delivery has worked as a catalyst for important operational progress towards this collective outcome. Thus, for the first time, core IDA grants to preserve institutions and service delivery in conflict were allocated to Yemen through UN implementation, working in partnership with local institutions. The UN-WB-EU-

ISDB partners have agreed on the importance to work across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and develop joined up response strategies through the Yemen Humanitarian-Development Peace Platform that brings together data across the humanitarian-development-peace spectrum and contributes toward a common understanding of risks, needs, gaps, and opportunities for joint analysis, operations, and advocacy in support of common or shared outcomes.

In Burkina Faso, the RC has taken important steps towards implementing the New Way of Working designing its Common Country Analysis (CCA) and using information on vulnerability and risk from the Humanitarian Needs Overview to inform its UNDAF priorities, thereby establishing a shared understanding of needs and risks as a basis for joined up planning. The country team is now in the process of developing UNDAF results in line with the 2030 Agenda, with a dedicated pillar covering issues related to risk reduction and vulnerabilities, and to develop a number of collective outcomes as intermediate target. The RC's vision for advancing the New Way of Working is one of tripartite collaboration, which brings together the Government, the UN system and NGOs across the humanitarian, development and peace nexus, in line with the SDG's vision for an inclusive new partnership for development.

In Mauritania, the UN has worked with the OECD on a resilience systems analysis which will inform a shared understanding of risks and needs, which also builds on humanitarian assessments. Operational partners have involved OECD member states in this process, to create ownership of the analysis and a shared narrative from the start. The country team aims to articulate specific, measurable collective outcomes as a basis for creating a compact with key financing partners and NGOs.

In Central African Republic, the Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan co-signed by the national government, the UN, the World Bank and the European Union provides a long-term framework for addressing root causes of crises, which is aligned with the humanitarian response plan. The new UNDAF has the potential to bring together key UN priorities related to addressing vulnerability and risk and serve as a bridge between the humanitarian strategy and the RCPCA, with the formulation of measurable specific collective outcomes. The RCPCA process envisions the establishment of "compact"-like arrangements, to support the implementation of its pillars.

In Sudan, the aid community is implementing the NWOW by making the collective response to the protracted crisis more fit for purpose through strategic collaboration and coordination in planning, implementing and monitoring the humanitarian response. To that end, the first-ever Multi-Year Humanitarian Strategy 2017-2019 and the new UNDAF were developed simultaneously, involving consultations with all stakeholders concerned, aiming at enhancing the programmatic linkages. In April/May, a Humanitarian-Development Nexus/ Coordination Review Mission (Global Clusters, IASC, UNDG) that helped unpack the NWOW in the context of Sudan, was followed by a joint OECD-UN mission (MPTF, OCHA) 'From Funding to Financing' which fed into broader efforts to deliver an effective financing strategy for Sudan and to explore how collective outcomes could be financed, considering best practices in other contexts. Furthermore, a joint UN-WB HDP Initiative aims to provide better-informed durable solutions for Internally Displaced Persons through stronger quantitative data on their poverty characteristics. Results will inform joint strategy and planning, with recommendations for UN agencies, World Bank, the government and development partners.