

ASSESSING CAPACITIES

In order to increase capacity for implementing the PD, UNDG members have focused on using existing institutional set-ups, reinforcing them when useful, and educating staff about the PD. The selective strengthening within UNDG and some participating entities was noted in Chapter 3. This is most evidenced by the institutional build-up of UNAIDS since 2004. UNAIDS is the newest programme among the UNDG members and evolved largely along lines found in the PD. Another example of UNDG members adapting capacity to implement the PD is shown in Box 2.

The effort to provide direction on implementing PD started out with the guidance in the UNDG

Chair's letter of July 2005 that included the UNDG action plan for PD implementation and background material on MDGs and UN reform. This was followed with other instructions and guidelines, including the UNDG Paris Declaration Guidance Website on National Ownership and Aid Effectiveness.⁷⁰ The Chair's 2005 letter also recognized pertinent earlier UNDG guidelines, including the UNDG Guidance Note on UN Country Team Engagement in PRSPs⁷¹ and ones on the Common Country Assessment and UNDAF.⁷²

Post PD, UNDP organized a workshop on aid effectiveness for the Western Balkans in 2006.

BOX 2. ADAPTING AN AGENCY'S CAPACITY TO PARIS DECLARATION PRINCIPLES

IFAD is an interesting example of adapting capacity to the PD principles. Since its first association with the PD, IFAD has sought to mainstream the related commitments. This is reflected in the wide range of operational activities that refer to the PD: policy documents, including Country Strategic Opportunities Papers; the corporate-level results measurement framework; lending related documents; and evaluations of the independent Office of Evaluation. These activities show that the PD commitments have been incorporated extensively by management and staff. This success may be a reflection of IFAD's different organizational set-up compared to most UNDG members: IFAD is small and concentrated in one location, which gives it the advantage of management and staff being able to absorb, under strong leadership from the top, the directions emanating from the PD with greater ease than large and decentralized UN organizations. IFAD has shown less of a need for the panoply of formal guidelines and for training. This efficiency was probably underpinned further by two IFAD specific factors: the nature of its close International Financial Institution interactions with its borrower governments in many areas identified in the PD, and its close involvement in, and familiarity with, the Rome Declaration, which preceded the PD by almost a year.

Adapting IFAD's capacity to the PD was enhanced by its programme to increase its presence in 15 countries that started just prior to the PD, leading to closer interaction at the country level, including through UNCTs. In addition, IFAD strengthened its internal capacity to implement PD commitments by allocating the responsibility for fostering and monitoring PD commitments to a seasoned advisor in the Programme Management Department, which is under an Assistant Vice President.

70 Available online at <http://www.undg.org/index.cfm?P=219>.

71 UNDG. 'Guidance Note. UN Country Team Engagement in PRSPs', 1 December 2003.

72 Common Country Assessment (CCA) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) were adopted as strategic planning tools for the UN system as part of the 1998 UN reform agenda. Guidelines for their preparation were first issued in April 1999. They were revised in May 2002, October 2003 and February 2007.

It also organized workshops with OECD-DAC, WB, and the African Development Bank for Eastern/Southern Africa (held in Uganda in 2005) and for North/West/Central Africa (held in Mali in 2006), and follow-up workshops on aid management for Western Balkans (2007), for West Africa (2007), and for Southern and Eastern Africa (2007). The UNDP Madrid conference on capacity development of November 2006 also focused also on aid effectiveness and PD implementation. UNDP has a website dedicated to aid effectiveness⁷³

and an internal collaborative workspace on PD implementation for sharing of tools, lessons and practices.⁷⁴

The survey of RCs examined the issue of staff guidance on implementing the PD.⁷⁵ Overall, the RCs found the guidance low or insufficient (57 percent in SCs and 80 percent in NSCs). This suggests that guidance should be: increased; adapted to country-specific situations; coherent across different agencies; and enforced by commitment from members.

KEY FINDINGS REGARDING CAPACITY

- UNDG members used existing institutional structures and reinforced them where necessary, except in the case where a new institution (UNAIDS) found the principles underlying the PD relevant to its development.
- Most of the capacity development to enable UNDG members to implement the PD has taken the form of specific instructions, guidelines and training to educate staff about the PD. Prior commitments to major PD principles embodied in such guidance as for CCAs and UNDAFs were helpful in this process.
- The main challenge for UNDG members to ensure relevancy of their guidance on the PD principles was the need to adapt guidance and training to the varying country circumstances that their UNCTs face.

73 Available online at www.devoid.org.

74 Available online at <http://content.undp.org/go/practices/poverty/aid-coordination>.

75 Survey question was: "To which extent have specific instructions, guidelines, operational directives been developed and disseminated to staff to facilitate implementation and assessment of the PD?"