

Key take aways from the UN Country Team Leadership course, October 2019

Having participated in the UNCT Leadership course, organized by the UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development from 7 – 11 October 2019, we want to emphasize a number of crucial take aways and formulate a call to action to ourselves and our peers, as well as to all actors engaged in making the reforms of the UN Development System a success.

In particular, we would like to stress **three issues for change**:

1. Leadership for issue-based SDGs advocacy and strategic communication

As a system, we must focus on national priorities in such a way that a coherent UN response is developed at country level. This will entail all agencies articulating together their collective value proposition, with a clear understanding how each agency feeds into the overall narrative with its specific programmes, while identifying how best to include other actors whose expertise, capacities and resources will be required to advance sustainable development in country, across borders and over time.

In particular, we strive to:

- ✓ Prioritize integration between social inclusion, economic development and environmental sustainability in the UN SD Cooperation Framework
- ✓ Identify the most appropriate overarching approaches to addressing national priorities, bearing in mind that the response required from the UN system increasingly moves toward policy advice, especially in middle income countries
- ✓ Facilitate opportunities for multi-stakeholder dialogues to harness the means and capacities of all sectors and actors

2. Mindset shift and behavioral change towards collaborative leadership in support of UNDS reform

Implementing the UNDS reform requires a shift in mindsets and behaviors at all levels of the UN system. We welcome the UN System Leadership framework and engage to apply its characteristics and ways of working.

In particular, we strive to:

- ✓ Firmly place the core UN norms and values at the center of the work of the UN Country Team
- ✓ Use the Leadership framework as a guide to assess desirable behaviors and progress made
- ✓ Give overarching priority to the best responses we can collectively come up with to achieve progress on national priorities and identify the most conducive combination of entities and programmes, likely to produce the most impactful results
- ✓ Dedicate a % of a total UNSDCF budget to be used for joint programmes.

At the same time, we call on the Development Coordination Office to

- ✓ Design an induction package for all UNCT members on the 2030 Agenda and subsequent consequences for the UN development system, as well as on the UN mandate at large and changes across all areas of reform. The package should also include issues related to leadership, coordination, as well as the application of the management and accountability framework of the UNCT

- ✓ Focus the RC assessment and selection process on transformative and visionary leadership, the ability to take measured risks, as well as on emotional intelligence and people management skills
- ✓ Ensure that the UNCT leadership course in the context of UN Reform, or similar capacity development initiatives, are extended to all UNCTs as teams, and plan for bringing these learning and training opportunities to mid-level staff, building the next generation of reform-minded UN leaders
- ✓ Strengthen capacities of HQ and regional personnel on the vision and principles of the 2030 Agenda and subsequent changes induced through UNDS reform

3. Multiply approaches towards financing the SDGs

In order to mobilize the trillions required to finance the achievement of the SDGs, the UN System must increasingly play a role in leveraging financial flows towards sustainable development outcomes. This includes engaging with the private sector, investment funds and other actors to incentivize innovation, entrepreneurship and investment in issues, initiatives, products and services that are likely to advance human wellbeing for all within planetary boundaries.

In this light, we strive to:

- ✓ Develop financing strategies with clear targets (especially in Middle Income countries and Small Island Developing States)
- ✓ Harmonize country level and regional financing strategies

Furthermore, we call on the UN Development Coordination Office to

- ✓ Foster capacity-building for RCs and UNCTs in this area

We also call on our respective Headquarters to:

- ✓ Integrate a measure of joint programming and associated financing into training initiatives for heads of agencies at country level
- ✓ Foster collective and inclusive approaches across the UN system to financing the SDGs.

Overall, we call on the UNSDG at large to:

- ✓ Increase incentives to foster collaborative initiatives and joint approaches at country level

Finally,

We call on all UN Country Team members, whether physically present in country or based elsewhere, UN Resident Coordinators, the UN Development Coordination Office, as well as all other actors at national, regional and global level, engaged in making the UNDS Reform a success, to walk the talk of the reform and truly engage in the efforts to strengthen the collective response the UN System is able to provide to member states as they implement the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.

UNSSC UNCT Leadership course
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