Back to the Future: Inciting the relevance of Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review through continuous engagement.

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What is the QCPR relevance today?

The Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) is a strategic driver of UN system-wide policy coherence and operational cohesiveness by underlining and following up common programmatic priorities and coordination instruments that align UN complex network of entities, promoting the impact and relevance of their deliverables. Its primary function is to identify and tackle inefficiencies stemming from UN system decentralization – such as duplications of projects, competition for funds and inconsistent policies – and request and review initiatives created to addresses them and improve the performance of UN operational activities (A/RES/44/211). Accordingly, the QCPR is the main intergovernmental instrument to trigger, back and assess system-wide reforms, by sharing member states vision of how to position UN operational activities and setting benchmarks and soliciting steps to be undertaken by those in charge.

Today, the definition of the current QCPR's agenda is structured by the implementation of the Repositioning of UN Development System, which frames the debates over the institutional governance behind UN operational activities, and the Agenda 2030, which set the normative background in which these changes take place (72-279). While the former introduced a horizontal paradigm that focus on the interdependence of Sustainable Development Goals achievement, the latter intends to forward a more cohesive institutional structure of the UN system to overcome the fragmentation between individual agencies and build on their complementarities. This is a particularly positive and demanding context for the system-wide mandate of the QCPR, since the focus on the interconnections among SDGs requires and legitimate an intertwined approach within (and outside) the UN system, giving momentum for reforms.

The repositioning of UNDS has set the tone towards much needed adaptations, introducing novelties and deepening initiatives that intend to bring this system-wide vision into UN routine, improving UN operational activities performance and relevance. The new Resident Coordinator system and the Funding Compact embody the institutional and material dimensions of this new era and have the potential to unlock UN's contribution for the achievement of the benefits promised by the Agenda 2030 new horizontal paradigm. To do so, the QCPR is fundamental to shed light on how this can be accomplished, offering member states the opportunity to require feedbacks and accompany ongoing and expected outcomes of reform initiatives.

Accordingly, building on the authors' research[1] and analysis of the implementations of previous reforms topics that present reforms encompass, this chapter briefly introduces reflections over their

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[1] Mainly researches of Delivering as One initiative in its pilot countries from 2006-2017, in which appropriate methodological approaches compensated small-n case studies and permitted general inferences presented here.

present status and offer some insight to what the QCPR should address. The chapter cast attention on 3 subjects that are central for structuring a system-wide approach to UN activities by effectively promoting common agendas and practices that strategically position UN to be impactful, which are *system-wide institutions, the funding of UN operational activities* and *system-wide data.* The *system-wide institutions* set a shared framework that result on a common governance to UN entities, while the *funding* of their activities implies incentives that might reinforce or undermine the system cohesiveness, the gather of *system-wide data* being fundamental to build knowledge on the dynamics behind *system-wide institutions* effectiveness and estimate the impacts of their *funding* pattern, enabling the necessary learning to forward the vision of an integrated UN system.

The *system-wide institutions* range from headquarters to country level and from bureaucratic to intergovernmental, such as UN Chief Executive Board and the own QCPR to the shared leadership and actions plans of UN entities country level presence expressed by the Resident Coordinators and the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks. These *system-wide institutions* amass an otherwise diffuse set of endeavors by UN individual agencies. The *funding of UN operational activities* correlates to the alignment among UN system, the core and non-core imbalance being object of fierce debates that recently culminated in the Funding Compact, whose voluntary character demands attention on how to unravel its potential. Finally, the there is the need to pitch in favor of gathering *system-wide data*, which is scattered given the historical divide between thematic areas and individual agencies, what curbs the intent to pay due attention to the relation among them. Together, these subjects structure a vision for the UN system's future by structuring its governance, financing and developing the knowledge how to achieve them.

1. System-wide Institutional Pillars

The institutional framework that constitutes the UN System is formed by *system-wide institutions* the connect the funds, programs, specialized agencies and related organizations, serving as pillars put in place to incite coherence among these organizations. These institutions were introduced by successive reform cycles in the expectation that agencies would behave as a collectivity and avoid diverging policies and duplicated activities. However, the effectiveness of these system-wide institutions have been object of growing scrutiny, inspiring their revision and the introduction of new modalities.

Ongoing reforms focus on advancing changes and refining institutes whose implementation and impact have defied multiple rounds of reforms, such as the common leadership, planning and harmonized business practices that structure the UN system presence at the country-level. The contribution of QCPR decisions are central for their efficient implementation by accompanying developments and defining and requiring how they should be assessed and reported. This is fundamental to identify trends, problems and issues and propose corrective actions, ensuring that the investments and validation of member states in favor of reforms continues and deepens.

The most dramatic innovation is the *new RC system* hosted at the secretariat and detached from UNDP that until this reform managed this system with its resident representative accumulating both functions. Now hosted at UN Development Coordination Office (DCO) and financed by a Special Purpose Trust Fund, its added-value and financial sustainability are still open to analysis. On top of this new leadership, the common plan shared by UN entities working in a given country

was formalized as the single most important instrument for planning and implementing activities on the ground. Under an empowered leadership and now renamed *UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework* – in substitution for the previous UNDAF, One Plans and other similar documents –, they intend to incite the teamwork of UN agencies and bolster a *new generation of UN Country Teams*.

Below we reflect on the status of these institutes targeted by current reforms to expose lessons from previous reforms and shed light on existing dynamics that are necessary to acknowledge to truly advance a *new generation of UN Country Teams*. Since the QCPR is an instrument by which member states not only hold accountable but also are direct and are informed by the secretariat and its reports over reforms implementation, the intent is to stimulate a more balanced reflection on UN's system-wide pillars and topics (figure 1).

Figure 1: Frequency of UN's system-wide pillars and topics in QCPRs:
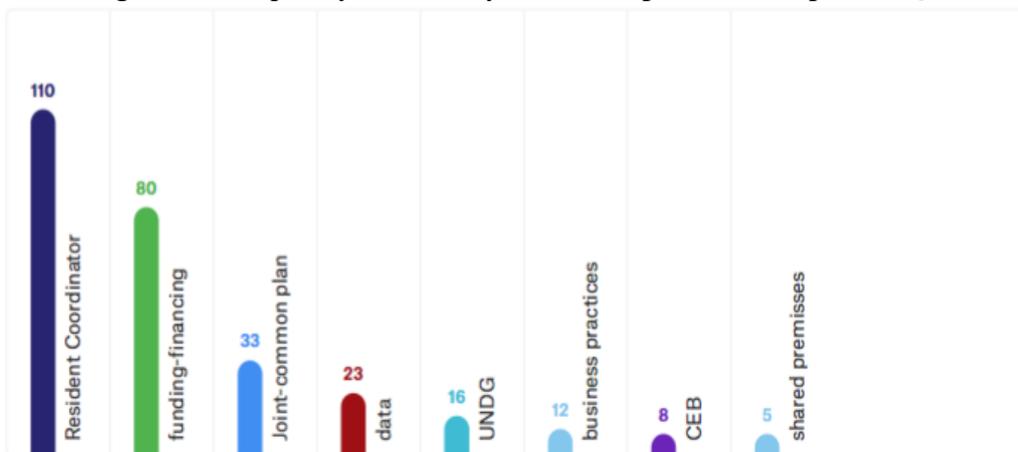
source: elaborated by the author based on 2012, 2016, 2020 QCPRs using Atlas.ti software [2].

1.1. Common Plans

The application of the idea of shared plans by UN agencies have encountered challenges related to the complexity to converge not only UN entities individual agendas but also adapt them to national specificities and to the priorities of host governments and donor countries. Accordingly, *common plans* that are evaluated positively as drivers of UN system cohesiveness by participating UN agencies, RC and national governments alike were successful due to the achievement of better divisions of labor among UN agencies activities, while promoting national ownership and serving as guides to donors' contributions (Campos, 2018c).

Common plans and better divisions of labor

The common plan strategic function to develop a common agenda and action plan warrants better divisions of labor among UN system by settling their divergences and encouraging their collaboration. For instance, UN agencies have different perceptions on how to divide activities among them, with large funds and programs with extensive filed presence perceiving operational

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[2] For disaggregated data and full analysis consult the author.

capacity as the main criteria, while specialized agencies and smaller programs and funds advocate in favor of their thematic mandates (Campos, 2018a). This leads to duplicated endeavors and the competition for funds to fund projects specially in cross-cutting issues, such as gender equality and environmental protection. These inefficiencies are effectively overcome in common plans that rely on agencies mandates and operational capacity alike to assess their comparative advantage in a given country and divide their responsibilities over plans' outcomes, what is verified by the implementation of One Plans in some countries that have pilot Delivering as One Initiative (Campos, 2018c).

This distribution has been made under the leadership of the RCs and in agreement with agencies that have recognized the added-value of common plans even when most of its activities were conducted in parallel with them (Campos, 2018c). The participation in common plans decision-making promotes agencies' awareness of each other's activities, what constrains the development of similar individual projects given the higher risks of duplications not to pass unnoticed and tarnish their reputation. By defining responsibilities and augmenting the visibility of ongoing and planned initiatives, common plans promote an enabling context for partnerships within UN, in which agencies can better explore the complementarities of analogous activities that inherently stem from their overlapping mandates. This implies that common plans have a spillover effect beyond their internal results matrix that incites informal accountabilities among agencies regarding their individual activities, underling the gains of their inclusiveness.

Common plans and national ownership

The deliver of activities more in line with host governments expectations of UN country presence is other positive output of common plans, which are especially relevant to channel genuine efforts to tackle protracted appeals for greater focus on long-term solutions to development problems in the place of agendas that disproportionally prioritize short-term humanitarian interventions. The introduction in common plans of outcomes dedicated specifically for development issues promote this adjustment between UN agencies and national agendas by specifying outputs that inspire the development of concrete actions. This is illustrated by the addition of the *economic development* outcome in the UN's Operational Plan[3] in Mozambique and the creation of interagency joint programmes under this outcome, such as the Youth Employment and the Effective Trade Policy, what has broadened activities beyond the focus on humanitarian issues that were seen as excessive by the local authorities (Campos, 2018c).

This programmatic adjustment to national governments demands resulted not only from the addition of development-related outcomes to but also from common plans that better explore the humanitarian-development nexus (Campos, 2018c). Bridging together the agenda of agencies that usually concentrate on one or the order theme, common plans have become means for assimilating humanitarian interventions to more strategic development planning. The integration of humanitarian agendas to the longer term rationale of common plans prospect convergent agendas in favor of host governments demands for more sustainable solutions for local problems. For instance, the aforementioned Youth Employment joint programmme has advanced the agenda of

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[3] Mozambique's 2007-2009 Operational Plan substituted the 2007-2009 UNDAF following the implementation of Delivering as One Initiative, preserving the outcomes Governance, Human Capital and HIV-AIDS and adding this forth.

economic integration of refugees and persons of concern under UNHCR mandate, pressing for and validating its engagement and adaptation to local specificities[4].

Joint Programmes (JP) are important means to materialize and institutionalize the divisions of labor and programmatic priorities contained in common plans and tailored to and in support for national priorities. The creation of Joint Programmes under common plans outcomes have explored the complementarities of UN agencies and fostered their collaboration by the development of joint activities on top of or along side existing individual agendas. They have proven track record of harmonizing the country-presence of UN system, promoting its impact and relevance, despite the considerable challenges faced due to the different operational capacities and business procedures of participating agencies (Campos, 2018c). This is illustrated by the JP on Child Nutrition of FAO, WHO and UNICEF in Vietnam, which has averted duplications in a topic prone to them in consequence of overlapping mandates; while the JP on Food Storage of UNDP, WFP and FAO in Mozambique offered more durable solutions to avoid harvest losses and its impacts over each of this agencies complementary mandates regarding food security.

Common plans as reference to donors

The ability to develop well crafted common plans, with clearer and localized goals and division of responsibilities, has a demonstrated record of guiding donors' contributions to UN operational activities funding (Campos, 2018b). Previously agreed and strategically developed system-wide activities have lured and convinced donors to invest in them, accommodating earmarked contributions to pre-determined action plans. This is reported by representatives of UN agencies when asked about common plans positive outputs and is verified by donors' investments on JP and pooled funds, such as One UN Funds and the MDGs Achievement Funds (Campos, 2018b; Campos, 2018c). This points to the fact that there are internal ways for the UN system to tame the negative influence of the current funding pattern over its cohesiveness, not depending solely on the significant modifications in the predominance of non-core earmarked contributions.

Common Plans in the SDG era and the normative-operational nexus gap

The effort to integrate Agenda 2030 to the joint planning of UN local activities had undermined, to some extent, the positive records of tailored common plans, since many plans started to be structured under outcomes that almost literally reproduce individual SDGs and their indicators, in detriment of translating them to local circumstances (Campos, 2018a). This unintended consequence sheds light on the need of more refined approaches to this normative-operational nexus in order to create outcomes that represent global norms and local specificities alike, furthering a bottom-up approach that avoids outcomes that automatically replicate SDGs. Accordingly, UN system is not positioned to do everything everywhere and common plans must identify its comparative advantages in a particular context, which must be reflected by its outcomes.

On the other hand, well-crafted common plans have exerted influence in favor of national bureaucracies' internal alignment in previous reform cycles (Campos, 2018c), what expose their potential to profoundly contribute for the advancement of the Agenda 2030. National governments associate their experience in negotiating UN interagency plans with greater concertation among

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[4] This joint programme was lead by UNDP-UNCDF and other participating agencies were ILO, FAO, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNIDO.

their own ministries. Given the line ministries division into thematic agendas, they consideration of linkages among their agendas is not always considered. The engagement of UN agencies in the exercise of planning activities and acting if not together in a coordinated matter have made local governments to see the advantages of such approach and motivated the its adoption by national authorities. The interdependence among development cooperation and public policies issues areas is not new, but their mainstreaming in the era of Agenda 2030 stimulates and is supported by horizontal policies and institutional structures.

1.2. Common leadership

The record of UN agencies' common leadership contribution of their cohesiveness is mixed, leading to the grievances that led to its detachment from UNDP, but also encouraging the weighty investments on the new RC system – which now need to be politically and financially sustainable on the long run. The appraisal of the new RC system implementation is under the QCPR mandate, but what should be assed and is less clear and debates over previous reforms can shed light on this.

Building an RC system from the scratch entails risks that should be openly addressed, the cost of not doing so being the reversal of the expected results of reforms into the same inefficiencies they were created to cope with. The history of UNDP, which has emerged to coordinate the fast growing Development agenda implemented by UN agencies but stared to offer its own projects, is a reminder of the risk of the new RC system to develop its own agenda detached from its coordination mandate. Accordingly, the depart of the system from UNDP does not end concerns over RC's partiality. To avoid speculations over the agenda of the new RC system, the rationale behind the development of its internal structures needs to be straightforward, what could be better understood by greater transparency of the Special Purpose Trust fund destinations. This allows member states and UN agencies alike to improve their knowledge over the new system, facilitating their timely contribution in favor of or in support for potential course corrections.

Besides the RC's, the team of their offices (RCO) should be able to back interagency collaboration, conflict management and collective accountability, helping to deliver well crafted common plans and support their implementation. Recently, the hires for RCOs have prioritized senior economists and related positions and the cost benefit of this for the new system should be addressed. On the one hand, this has the potential to create duplications, since some UN agencies already have professionals with this profile, such as UNDP and UNIDO. On the other hand, many agencies have underlined the need for extra administrative support to effectively engage in interagency activities given their country offices limited resources (Campos, 2018c), what could be more efficiently cover by RCOs staff rather than by their regional or even headquarter offices. The mainstreaming of Agenda 2030 might have influenced those hires, attaching decisions over UNDS repositioning to SDG advancement, which are intertwined but different agendas.

Despite the greater attention received by the RC system, its effectiveness is inseparable of other drivers of UN cohesiveness, such as common plans and adequate funding, what should be acknowledge by more balanced and investments among them. Accordingly, the funding of the new RC system is central should reflect this and be channeled to fund the integrated approach needed for inciting coherence among entities. This could be done by reserving RCO budgets to the negotiation and implementation UNSD Cooperation Frameworks as well as for supporting and

following up joint programs and funds.

1.3. Harmonized business practices

The harmonization of business practices across UN entities is necessary to promote UN system alignment. Despite the development of standard business operations procedures by UNSDG, they are layered on top of extant and diverse practices of a wide array of organizations. These multiplicity of business operations are embedded on agencies organizational cultures and present great challenge for advancing common business operations among them. Accordingly, the preferable term is to *harmonize* procedures without displacing their institutional core individuality but to an extent that sufficient to forward common activities efficiently.

Due to the administrative nature of this topic, the QCPR usually limits it-self to to request and follow initiatives taken by those in charge to advance them, such as UNSDG push for common back offices and common premises. For instance, the *Mutual Recognition Statement* of the UNSDG' Business Innovations Group operationalize the principle of *mutual recognition* of best practices and procedures underscored by the 2016 QCPR (A/RES/71/243, prg.52).   This enables agencies to resort to each other's policies and practices without accumulating demands of their diverging business processes, such as additional requirements in the areas of human resources, procurement, facility services, logistics. This reduce transaction costs for collaboration across agencies and between them and governments, who denounce the draining process of dealing with multiple agencies procedures. The QCPR reiterated support encourages agencies participation and should request the assessment of its implementation, such as its impact over Business Operations Strategies at the country level.

More ambitious reforms aimed at business harmonization among UN agencies and followed by the QCPR is the establishment of common back offices and joint premises to reduce costs and incite their collaboration. While sharing premises might facilitate the development of common back office services and UN teamwork, they are not a necessary condition for the former and neither a guarantee for the latter. This is illustrated by UN common premises in Brazil and Vietnam, since, despite the fact the UN House in Brazil was inaugurated before the Vietnamese Green One UN House, the UN operations in Vietnam have presented greater harmonization.

The inauguration of the UN house in Brazilian in 2012 was not preceded nor followed in the short-term by robust common plans, in accordance with the then default approach of UN system to this plans that were based on loosely defined common agendas. On the other hand, the Vietnamese house was opened in 2015, after almost a decade of adopting the system-wide approach of the Delivering as One initiative, when shared agendas gradually transformed common plans into action plans with clear collaboration lines among UN entities, which have come a long way by overcoming their initial insulation and the fragmentation of their activities (Campos, 2018c).

Left the UN House in Brazil, right the Green One UN House in Vietnam:

credits: UNIC-Rio and UN-Viet Nam.

In Vietnam, almost all UN agencies reside in the common premises after the recent relocation of the International Labor Organization, which have classified this as a proactive gesture taken in favor of ongoing reforms after dully assessing the impacts over its activities efficiency and integrity (GB.335/INS/10, prg. 26). On the other hand, the majority of UN entities working in Brazil have offices outside the UN House, what corresponds to roughly the double of those sharing facilities (see table 1). Representatives of UN agencies with experiences in these countries stating that working in the same space without jointly planning their activities – individual or collective – was not as significant to promote their synergies and harmonize their procedures as being part of a strong common planning decision-making and implementation process (Campos, 2018c). This sheds light on how integrating country-level services is not detached from the appropriate development of effective common plans.

Table 1: UN system's agencies residence in Brazil and Vietnam.[5]

UN system's agencies residence	In today	Out today	Non-resident
UN-House Brazil (2012)	IFAD UN-Women UNEP UNDP UNAIDS UNFPA	UNICEF UNODC (moved out) UNESCO WHO ILO UNHCR WFP UNOPS UNIDO UN-HABITAT UNIC	OHCR

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[5] Place of residence refer to main offices, since agencies often have offices in more than one location nationally where their projects are implemented.

	FAO	IFAD	UNCTAD
	UNICEF		AIEA
	UNIDO		ITC
	WHO		
One UN House	UN-HABITAT		
Vietnam	IOM		
(2015)	UN-WOMEN		
	UNESCO		
	UNODC		
	UNAIDS		
	UNDP		
	UNFPA		
	ILO		

Source: elaborated by the author.

2. UN System operational activities funding

The reflections over the funding of UN operational activities is dominated by the debates over the imbalance of core and non-core contributions, overshadowing UN's potential to internally develop forms to adapt to this funding pattern and conditioning the solution of its deleterious effects to its reversal. The UN operational activities have always been financed by voluntary contributions, what have changed is now donors earmark their destinations for specific projects, countries and themes, taking out from within UN decision-making power over resources allocation and inciting the duplications of projects and the competition for funds among UN agencies.

However, the nuances among the different types of earmarked contributions and the power of *system-wide institutions* to integrate UN agencies can be better explored to cope with those inefficiencies. The different degrees of rigidity of earmarked funding is acknowledge and UN agencies recognize that some have even driven their cohesiveness, such as the strategic use of pooled funds (Campos, 2018b). *System-wide institutions* compensate, at least partially, the fragmentation effect of earmarked contributions, since effective common plans and leadership at the country level promote better divisions of labor and programmatic coherence among UN agencies, settling divergences and curbing duplications while also serving as guides for the allocations of donors resources (Campos, 2018c).

The bids to reverse the dominance of non-core funding are recurrent in QCPRs since their outset, systematically following short of their fulfilment, such as the non-operationalization of the concept of critical mass, what pressures the commitment of the *funding compact* to reach 30% share of core resources of voluntary funding for development-related activities by 2023. On the other hand, the *funding compact* ratified new avenues to deal with current funding patterns, calling for the raise of the share of non-core resources that are more softly earmarked, such as interagency pooled

funds and single agency thematic funds, which are more predictable and offer strategic contributions to finance activities (RES/A/74/73).

The quality and flexibility of earmarked funds relate to their alignment with UN Operational activities geographic, thematic and programmatic priorities lay out in the QCPRs, such as least developed countries, gender equality and cross-agencies endeavors. The secretary general report on the implementation of the previous QCPR point out to an increase of contributions to interagency pooled funds and agency-specific thematic funds, corresponding together to a 10.5% share of non-core resources (RES/A/75/79). Despite the fact that this is a significant share, there are room for improvements and QCPR could address how to fulfill these funding modalities potential and trigger investments in them that are lagging behind, such as the lack of contributions for the Joint SDG Fund.

The debates that precede QCPR negotiations are contexts that enable stakeholders to identify the reasons for disinvestments, allowing the development of strategies to address them and attract donors. This include shedding light on reforms funding and assessing the balance of commitments channeled for different pillars of reforms agenda. Accordingly, there is a need to support and assess the allocation of contributions not only for the Special Purpose Trust Fund, but also for interagency pooled funds, which have a proven record of empowering RCs and inciting UN agencies engagement with reforms.

Interagency pooled funds function as selective incentives that drive UN agencies teamwork, being fundamental to truly characterizing their presence on the ground as a team (Campos, 2018c). The Delivering as One initiative implementation have exposed that RCs formal authority and mandate to coordination UN agencies is not sufficient to engage individual agencies and frame their behavior into a collective vision. Accordingly, the resources of the MDG Achievement Fund and the One UN Funds in countries that have pilot that initiative have granted RCs the necessary material clout to reaffirm their role, overcoming resistances, financing joint activities and materializing integrated operations of UN agencies that have enacted a system-wide culture within them.

Therefore, the QCPR can advance debates over the funding for UN operational activities beyond the request for more balanced of core and non-core contributions by casting attention and requesting investments on mechanisms that foment agencies cohesiveness by curbing earmarked funding deleterious effects.

3. System-wide data

The gather and analysis of system-wide data is fundamental not only to build trust through transparency, maintaining and inciting further engagements and investments in reforms by member states and UN bureaucracies alike, but also to create and embed a system-wide organizational culture across UN agencies. Accordingly, there must be a systematic gathering of system-wide data instead of the current demand-driven paradigm, such as the requests of QCPR for reports to be deliver in very short notice in time for the next ECOSOC operational for development segment and UN General Assembly. The effort to develop tools that continuously

raise these data lead to efficiency gains in the long run. Reports based on readily available data can concentrate on their analysis rather than on juxtaposing and organizing scattered data.

The lack of common definitions and shared classifications among UN system entities defies the gathering of system-wide data, their quality depending on the alignment of categorization methodologies across UN agencies, while their analytical added value is contingent to their repositories accessibility (Campos, 2018d). Thus the QCPR should incite and welcome initiates that forward standards for agencies reporting of their activities, such as the data cube initiative forwarded by UNSDG and CEB that improve the quality of UN financial information. On the other hand, is necessary to continuously revamp existing databases and create new one in line with emerging demands. For instance, providing desegregated data of the Special Purpose Trust Fund expenditures would help assess the added value of its allocations.

The available data of the new RC system expenditures informs the amount that remains in the DCO and the allocations by country, but disaggregating by the nature of expenses, such as with staff and personal or other general operating cost, can be informative. This could be easily done by breaking down expenditures under UNSDG budget categories. The access to this data contribute for the assessment and development of this new system, being relevant to avoid and address imbalances of investments in reforms, since the effective performance of RCs in favor of UN cohesiveness is not isolated from other system-wide institutions and funding modalities that also need investments to be effective.

Accordingly, the QCPR should request an approach to data that allow the continuous assessment of the overall status of UN system institutional framework and the performance of its operational activities, addressing the relation between them, what includes but is not limited to the implementation of the Repositioning of UNDS. This systematize information and clarifies UN added value as a system, engaging member states and individual agencies that are not fully aware of the advantages of a system-wide approach. In this effort, credible data is fundamental to maintain reforms momentum, being better understood if presented alongside practical examples of existing inefficiencies reforms intend to tackle and efficiency gains they have promoted.

Final Remarks

This chapter builds on research of the implementation of previous reforms of UN system to present pervasive dynamics behind UN operational activities that should inform the assessment of current reforms by the QCPR. The chapter underlines that *system-wide institutions* that structure UN system reinforce each other and that the effectiveness of the common leadership for harmonizing UN country-presence, materialized by the new RC system, is attached to well-crafted common plans and interagency pooled funds, which, however, are not receiving the same attention and investments.

Robust common plans have had significant positive outputs, from better divisions of labor among UN agencies to promoting national ownership of UN operational activities and guiding the allocation of donors' contributions. Better divisions of labor have settled divergences about using agencies operational capacities or thematic mandate as the criteria to distribute responsibilities, avoiding duplicated projects and inciting collaborations among UN agencies through joint

programmes. The alignment of common plans outcomes to national governments agendas fostered their ownership, unravelling the development-humanitarian nexus of UN operational activities by inciting adaptations of the prolific humanitarian agenda of UN agencies to host countries urge for developed-related activities. Clearer structured action plans have attracted donors, which have financed joint activities developed under common plans outcomes and taming earmarked contributions deleterious effects. However, such potent plans demanded draining procedures, agencies with little resources struggling and resorting to their regional or headquarters bureaus for back office support, which sometimes was provided by RCs, previously backed by UNDP.

The Agenda 2030 and the UNDS Repositioning have introduced incentives that have hinder some of these previous reforms positive records. On the one hand, the integration of the Agenda 2030 to common plans have often resulted in outcomes that automatically reproduce SDGs, weakening their tailoring to national specificities. On the other hand, the funding of the new RC system concentrates high investments, while contributions to interagency pooled funds, such as SDG Fund, are below expectations, what contrasts with their proven record to incite coherence by providing material clout to empower RCs and serving as selective incentives to engage UN. Against this backdrop, in order to assess the possibility of the new RC system to address these gaps, the chapter suggests that the QCPR requests quality data over UN system operational activities and reforms, such as disaggregated data over the new system funding, raising more specific topics in the body of the text.

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