

(DRAFT)¹
**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR
UNDG MDG TASK FORCE (2011)**

I. Background

At its 29th January, 2009 meeting, the UNDG tasked the WG on Programming Issues to establish a MDG Task Force at senior level to move the MD/MDGs agenda forward and provide direction and operational support to UNCTs.

At the High-level Plenary Meeting (HLPM) of the 65th session of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals (MDG Summit) that was held in New York in September 2010, the international community reaffirmed the commitment to achieve the MDGs by 2015 by approving the Summit Outcome Document entitled “Keeping the Promise: United to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals”².

At its 6th October 2010 meeting the UNDG endorsed nine recommendations on the follow-up to the outcome of the 2010 MDG Summit. These are aimed at enabling the UNDG to respond more proactively and coherently to the needs of countries, in particular those most lagging behind in achieving the MDGs, and steer the implementation of the UNDG Strategic Priorities and Work Plan for 2010-11, which place the acceleration of MDGs/IADGs achievement at the core of the UN collective efforts to maximize impact at country level, while coordinating with the HLCP³.

The UNDG meeting reviewed the work of the MDG Task Force in 2010 and unanimously decided that the Task Force should continue its work and noted that the UNDG should review the ToRs of the Task Force, reflecting that it is a task specific and time-bound mechanism. The UNDG further recommended that:

- (i) the overall scope of the MDG Task Force would be the IADGs, including the MDGs with its main objective to follow up and better equip UNCTs to support national counterparts with the implementation and follow up on the outcome of the 2010 High Level Plenary Meeting of the MDGs;
- (ii) the Task Force should respond proactively and coherently to the needs of countries and ensure stronger focus and drive in operationalizing the UNDG Strategic Priorities and Work Plan for 2010-11 in MDG related areas while coordinating with the HLCP;
- (iii) The Task Force should play a role as an advisory body to the Millennium Campaign (MC) to ensure adequate coordination among UN agencies on key MDG related messages, and also to establish synergies between the activities of the MC and UNCTS, wherever applicable;
- (iv) the duration of the Task Force should be time bound;
- (v) the Task Force should report directly to the UNDG.

¹ This draft Terms of Reference was called by the UNDG meeting on 6th October 2010. Once this document has been approved by the MDG Task Force, the Co-Chairs are expected to submit it for formal endorsement by the UNDG at its next meeting. The report of the UNDG meeting held on 6 October is available at: <http://www.undg.org/docs/11545/Final-UNDG-meeting-report---6-October-2010.pdf>

² The HLPM Outcome Document is available at: <http://daccess-ods.un.org/access.nsf/Get?Open&DS=A/RES/65/1&Lang=E>

³ The Recommendations on the High Level Plenary Meeting on the MDGs: Follow-up by UNDG is available at: <http://www.undg.org/docs/11504/UNDG-Follow-Up-to-MDG-Summit-Revised-after-UNDG-meeting.pdf>

II. Objectives and Expected Tasks

The MDG Task Force will be guided by the UNDG recommendations on the follow-up to the outcome of the 2010 MDG Summit, which are as follows:

- i) Strengthen national ownership of and commitment to the Outcome Document;
- ii) Strengthen and build on the inter-linked nature of the MDGs with each underpinning the success of the others;
- iii) Support the design, implementation and monitoring of national development strategies;
- iv) Improve the targeting of UNCT support to address inequality, marginalization and discrimination;
- v) Identify good practices to contribute to solutions-knowledge exchange;
- vi) Enhance South-South and Triangular Cooperation;
- vii) Provide special support in countries in crisis and post-crisis;
- viii) Broaden partnerships for development;
- ix) Give special and urgent attention to the youth.

The Task Force will focus on providing coordinated UNDG inter-agency input to strengthen the ability of UNCTs to adequately support national counterparts in the implementation and monitoring of MDGs and other internationally-agreed development goals relating to operational activities at country level, as well as following up on concrete activities as associated with the UNDG strategic priorities and work plan for 2010-2011 related to the MDGs. To that end, it will, in order of priority:

- 1) Develop guidance and evidence for consideration of any other methods and approaches that may benefit from a joint UNDG approach, and lead to achievement of the MDGs by 2015, especially in regard to operationalizing UNDG's nine recommendations on the follow-up to the outcome of the 2010 MDG Summit (i).
- 2) Collaborate with the UNDAF Programming Network to ensure provision of adequate support to the 30 roll-out countries in 2011, in particular on issues such as MDG monitoring, MDG gaps, and actions to promote MDG acceleration. An Operational Note will be developed on how the MDG Acceleration Framework can be implemented at country level, including in the context of inequality, marginalization and discrimination, also on the basis of age and gender, and it will include a specific section on the relationship of the MDG Acceleration Framework to the UNDAF process (i, iv, v, and ix).
- 3) Help ensure that various ongoing MDG-related initiatives to support countries' achievement of the MDGs in the context of inequality, marginalization and discrimination, including on the basis of age and gender, are closely linked and synergistic as they relate to operations at country level (ii, iv and ix). This will include linkages with the work of the UNDG Working Group on RC System Issues, the UNDG Policy Network for MD/MDGs, the UNDAF Programming Network (including the Interagency Group on Gender Equality and the Task Team on Aid Effectiveness), the MDG Gap Task Force, the Inter-Agency and Expert Group (IAEG) on MDG Indicators, the SG's MDG Africa Steering Group, the UN Millennium Campaign.
- 4) Promote positive experiences and practices -through the country level operational focus of the UNDG - in countries which are lagging behind on the MDGs in the context of inequality,



marginalization and discrimination, including on the basis of age and gender (iii, iv, vi; vii, viii, ix). This could include adequate follow-up on the Action Plans of the MDG Acceleration Framework (MAF) pilot countries, as well as generation of Action Plans for a selected number of additional countries by applying the MAF, keeping in mind the need to promote quality assurance, better coordination and inclusiveness among UN agencies, UNRC accountability to the process, and country ownership.

- 5) At the field level design and propose effective ways to support UNCTs to identify, analyze and disseminate effective practice and major lessons learned in development strategies for achieving the MDGs and other internationally-agreed development goals with a human rights based approach; while promoting knowledge sharing across the wide UN system to benefit the capacity of UNCTs and their national counterparts, as well as identifying and promoting knowledge exchange tools and knowledge platforms. Further exploring the functions of the UNDG MDG Policy Network , including adequate promotion, identification of potential collaborations with similar UN system networks and utilization of the pool of policy advisors on MDG related issues identified across the UN-wide system, and ensuring that UNCTs are well-informed about its existence and potential for in-kind support.
- 6) Advise the UN Millennium Campaign on ways to enhance advocacy and communication of the MDGs' agenda at the country level, while ensuring that at the global and regional levels there is a coherent message from the UN system on the MDGs being communicated, and further strengthening UN agencies collaboration and strategic representation at major global and regional events which are of relevance to promoting the MDGs in the development agenda. (v, vi, viii)

III. Membership

- The Task Force is open to all members of UNDG.
- The members of the Task Force should be: Director-level/senior staff from UNDG agencies who are involved in the MDGs/IADGs agenda within their respective agencies; and other relevant partners, including possibly external experts on an invited basis.
- Organizations should designate alternates to the Members.
- UNDG regional teams and UNCTs may be invited to take part in the Task Force, if required.

IV. Timeline and Working Methods

- The Task Force will be Co-Chaired by UNDP and FAO.
- UNDP and DOCO will provide the necessary support as and when required by the Task Force.
- The Task Force is expected to perform all related tasks described in section II of this ToR (to be proposed during its first meeting and subsequently approved). On occasion, it may be necessary for the Task Force to convene smaller teams, recruit consultants, seek additional technical support, etc. to enable the Task Force to complete *ad hoc* time-bound task with concrete key results.
- The Task Force will be guided by the relevant aspects of the working methods for UNDG groups on country operations (attached as Annex I).
- The duration of the Task Force will be determined through an assessment of its usefulness by the 2013 MDG Special Event.

- The Task Force will have clear outputs as agreed under section II of this ToR; these will be reviewed by UNDG after one year and determine any future assignments.
- The Co-Chair(s) will ensure the recommendations of the Task Force are consistent and coordinated with the management and operational policies developed by other UNDG and CEB groups.

V. Functioning of the Task Force

- As specified in the UNDG organigram The Task Force reports directly to the full UNDG and the UNDG Advisory Group
- The Task Force will be guided by the relevant aspects of the UNDG working methods-logistics as approved by the 6 October UNDG meeting (attached as Annex I)
- The Task Force will agree on its working mechanisms and frequency of meetings at its first meeting.
- The Task Force will set a schedule of regular meetings at the beginning of the year, assisted by its Secretariat to ensure there is no overlapping of meeting dates with other working groups and with the HLCP/HLCM mechanisms. The regular meeting schedule does not preclude, if required, *ad hoc* meetings to address specific issues; however, those issues should normally be addressed either at the regular meetings or by e-mail exchanges. Efforts will be made to minimize the amount of meetings.
- The Task Force will have agendas clearly delineated among issues pertaining to its tasks/objectives. Meetings will begin with decision items and move to information items, with a clear indication in the agenda of the nature of the item to be discussed.
- Decision items to be submitted to the UNDG must be accompanied by a one-page “decision sheet” that outlines: the issue, brief background, and budget implications.

**Annex I
Working Methods for UNDG Groups
As of 20 October 2010**

UNDG Working Groups and Networks

- A Convener and Co-Convener will be jointly responsible for directing the work of the Group/Network and having accountability to the UNDG and its Chair for driving the relevant segments of the UNDG strategic priorities and work plan for 2010-2011.
- DOCO will provide support to the logistical functioning of the Working Groups and Networks, in collaboration with each Working Group and Network Convener's organization.
- All Working Groups/Networks will be open for participation by all UNDG member organizations. Members must have knowledge and experience in the Group's area of work, as well as the relevant level of decision-making authority. Bringing to the Group their organization's knowledge and experience, they should, however, keep in mind a system wide perspective and not only that of their individual organizations. Each organization will have one voice in the groups.
- Organizations should designate alternates to the members.
- Organizations must allow adequate time for their participants to contribute effectively to the Groups' expected outputs.
- Working Group members need to keep their organizations informed on the progress of the Group's work and ensure their representatives at the UNDG are fully briefed.

Meeting logistics

- A quorum will be achieved when at least two-thirds of the group's member organizations are represented, or have indicated in advance that they are unable to attend. In that case, they may reserve judgment on a decision item until two working days (48 hours) after the draft note for the meeting is issued. The Convener will facilitate consultation with any organization reserving judgment on a decision item.
- Any supporting documents for meetings of the UNDG and its working mechanism should be circulated 10 working days in advance of the meeting.
- Decisions will be achieved by consensus. Any reservations that had been raised during discussion will also be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- Draft Notes for the record of the UNDG and its working mechanisms will be circulated within 3 working days after the meeting. Networks and task teams may decide if notes are required.