

## PROGRAMME COORDINATION GROUPS

*A new mechanism for UN organizations to work together*



**A** Programme Coordination Group (PCG) is a new structure developed as part of the One UN Initiative in Viet Nam to deliver results in a more coordinated and effective manner. The 11 PCGs in Viet Nam consist of staff from various UN organizations working together on a common theme or topic, such as HIV, social and development policies, education and disaster management. The objective of this new coordination structure is to enhance efficiencies, improve coherence, reduce transaction costs for the UN and other stakeholders, and support institutional learning and staff development across organizations.

With the exception of the PCG on HIV, which is convened by UNAIDS only, all other PCGs are co-convened by two UN organizations. The PCGs are responsible for ensuring a collaborative approach to programming, policy advice and advocacy on the thematic areas under their purview and provide a common UN voice vis-a-vis Government and other partners. For instance, during the autumn 2008 floods in Viet Nam, the PCG on natural disasters effectively coordinated the UN's response and regularly met with the Government and donor community.

A key objective of a PCG is to coordinate the implementation of a specific set of outputs from the One Plan, the single planning framework which combines and synthesizes the work of the 14 resident UN organizations in Viet Nam, and support Viet Nam's socio-economic development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Each PCG focuses on one or more of the five key outcomes of the One Plan.

### EACH PCG FOCUSES ON ONE OR MORE OF THE FIVE KEY OUTCOMES OF THE ONE PLAN:

- Outcome 1:** Social and economic development policies, plans and laws
- Outcome 2:** Quality social and protection services
- Outcome 3:** Policies and capacities for environmental protection and the rational management of natural resources and cultural heritage for poverty reduction, economic growth, and improving the quality of life
- Outcome 4:** The principles of accountability, transparency, participation and rule of law are integrated into Viet Nam's representative, administrative, judicial and legal systems
- Outcome 5:** Policies and capacities to effectively reduce risks of, and vulnerability to, natural disasters, communicable diseases and other emergencies

Programme Coordination Groups	One Plan Outcome(s)	UN Co-chair	GOVN Co-chair
Social and development policies	1	UNICEF	MPI
Trade, employment and development	1	UNIDO	MOLISA
HIV	1, 2	UNAIDS	MOH
Gender	1, 2, 4	UNFPA	MOLISA
Health and reproductive rights	2	WHO	MOH
Protection	2	UNICEF	MOLISA
Education	2	UNICEF	MOET
Sustainable development	3	FAO	MONRE
Governance	4,2	UNDP	MPI
Natural disasters and emergencies	5	UNDP	MARD
Communicable diseases and animal diseases	5	FAO / WHO	MOH

## MAIN ACTIVITIES

As an inclusive mechanism for UN organizations to work together on key, shared issues, the PCGs:

- ensure better coordination of the implementation of a specific set of outputs from the One Plan, including joint planning and programming;
- encourage a coordinated dialogue with the Government and other partners, including engagement with relevant partnership groups;
- ensure that gender and a human rights-based approach are mainstreamed into the UN's work;
- develop common annual work plans that include all activities of the UN organizations related to the theme of the PCG;
- prepare two reports annually – a mid-term progress report and an annual PCG report; and
- carry out joint annual reviews and planning meetings in coordination with relevant implementing partners.

The 11 PCGs are diverse in size, structure and management and are flexible enough to be able to adjust to the continuously changing environment in Viet Nam.

## CURRENT STATUS

All 11 PCGs have their own Terms of References and have been fully operational since the third quarter of 2008. PCG guidelines have been prepared and meetings held with all co-conveners to address cross-PCG concerns and related issues. At the end of 2008 and beginning of 2009 review meetings were held with Government, donors and NGO/civil society partners to evaluate work in 2008 and plan for 2009.

The end of year reviews showed that Government and other development partners are very supportive of the PCGs and value this new coordination structure. At the same time much work remains to be done to work out the most effective structure and processes. It is clear that the PCGs are time-intensive for co-conveners, and as most staff are used to working independently of each other, breaking down the 'agency silo' mentality will take time. However, in the context of the One UN Initiative the PCGs offer a major change in the way the UN works and 'Delivers as One' at the country level and they will remain an essential element of the change process going forward.

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