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Programme questions: evaluation

Triennial review of the implementation of recommendations made by the Committee at its sixty-third session on the evaluation of the Development Coordination Office regional support

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

Summary

In the present triennial review report, the Inspection and Evaluation Division of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) determines the extent to which the recommendations emanating from the OIOS evaluation of the Development Coordination Office regional support ([E/AC.51/2023/2](#)) have been implemented.

During the triennial review, the Inspection and Evaluation Division examined the status of implementation of two recommendations contained in the evaluation. The Development Coordination Office has taken steps to respond to the recommendations; however, given that the launch of the UN80 Initiative, specifically the workstream on a United Nations regional reset, has overtaken continued progress in implementing the recommendations, OIOS has closed them without implementation.

In response to the first recommendation, namely that the Development Coordination Office conduct a needs assessment of resident coordinator offices and a mapping exercise on which types of support the Office was best placed to provide through its regional or New York offices, the Office carried out a global survey on the effectiveness of the management accountability framework and a survey on the strengths and weaknesses of the regional collaborative platforms. The Office also initiated a review of its structures and responsibilities at the Headquarters, regional and country levels following the adoption of General Assembly resolution [79/258](#), in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a refined comprehensive and detailed report on the financing of and governance over the resident coordinator system to the Assembly at its eighty-first session. Continued

* [E/AC.51/2026/1](#).



progress on these efforts has been paused pending the finalization of the UN80 Initiative, which includes a workstream on a regional reset in which proposals will be developed on how to restructure regional capacities for sustainable development.

In response to the second recommendation, namely that the Development Coordination Office clarify the regional collaborative platform connector role of regional office teams, the Office has engaged in regular dialogue with the Deputy Secretary-General, who is the Chair of the platforms, and worked to clarify the connector role through an Office recalibration exercise. As with the first recommendation, continued progress on these efforts have been paused pending the finalization of the UN80 Initiative.

I. Introduction

1. At its sixty-third session, in 2023, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered the report of the Inspection and Evaluation Division of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) on the evaluation of the Development Coordination Office regional support ([E/AC.51/2023/2](#)).
2. In the triennial review, the Inspection and Evaluation Division examined the status of implementation of two recommendations contained in the evaluation. Both recommendations were assessed to have been closed without implementation.
3. Data collection for the review included:
 - (a) Review and analysis of submissions made in the OIOS Teammate+ recommendation tracking database;
 - (b) Analysis of documentation submitted by the Development Coordination Office;
 - (c) Interviews conducted with five Office officials.
4. The present triennial review report includes responses to comments received from the Development Coordination Office during the drafting process. A final draft was shared with the Office for its formal comments, which are contained in section IV below. The Inspection and Evaluation Division of OIOS expresses its appreciation to the Development Coordination Office for the cooperation extended during the preparation of the report.

II. Results

Recommendation 1

5. Recommendation 1 reads as follows:

To address the uncapped and wide-ranging demand for support from resident coordinators/resident coordinator offices and the regional office capacity constraints and the unsustainability of the current approach to meeting demand, the Development Coordination Office should conduct a needs assessment of the resident coordinators/resident coordinator offices and a mapping exercise on which types of support the Office is best placed to provide through its regional or New York offices. The needs assessment and mapping exercise should comprise the following elements:

- (a) Assess and categorize resident coordinator office support needs to understand the primary needs and which, if any, are not being adequately met;
- (b) Conduct a mapping exercise on which types of support the regional and New York offices and other United Nations entities are best placed to provide;
- (c) Clearly define the support to be provided by the regional offices (including which type of support might be better provided by the New York office);
- (d) Develop a plan and timeline for implementing the identified changes to the structure and/or roles and responsibilities of the regional and New York offices;

(e) Communicate support structure, roles and responsibilities to resident coordinators, resident coordinator offices, country teams and the wider United Nations system.

In undertaking this exercise, the demands placed on the regional offices by United Nations Headquarters should also be taken into account.

Indicators of achievement: needs assessment and mapping exercise to determine support areas of the Development Coordination Office and United Nations system conducted; plan and timeline produced; structures, roles and responsibilities communicated through the resident coordinator system and wider United Nations system

6. In response to the first recommendation, the Development Coordination Office took several steps to assess and map the areas of support required by resident coordinator offices, which included:

- Analysing data from the annual survey of resident coordinators between 2023 and 2025,¹ which served to assess progress in implementing General Assembly resolution [75/233](#) and included a component on regional and global dimensions of United Nations development system reform.
- Conducting a global survey in March 2025, as part of a review of the management accountability framework aimed at clarifying roles, responsibilities and relationships for a well-coordinated, effective and efficient United Nations development system, in which resident coordinators, heads of resident coordinator offices, United Nations country team members and staff at regional and global levels were asked for their perceptions of the relevance, clarity, usefulness and effectiveness of the framework in driving reform. The responses to the survey and a desk review of Department of Economic and Social Affairs quadrennial comprehensive policy review reports, the United Nations Sustainable Development Group System-wide Evaluation Office evaluation on progress towards a “new generation of United Nations country teams”² and evaluative evidence from OIOS, inter alia, informed the Development Coordination Office-led process to review the management accountability framework, initiated in 2025 and including country, regional and Headquarters components.
- Conducting a survey in May 2025 of members of the regional collaborative platforms to gather feedback on what was working well, where the platforms were falling short and which barriers limited effectiveness. The survey results informed discussions on the future configurations of the platforms at a meeting of United Nations Sustainable Development Group principals in May 2025.

7. In addition to assessing data related to regional support to resident coordinators, the Development Coordination Office initiated a review of its structure and responsibilities at the Headquarters, regional and country levels. This initiative was introduced in retreats with resident coordinators and the Deputy Secretary-General in 2023 and 2024. A formal process to examine the future configuration of the Office was ultimately launched following the adoption of General Assembly resolution [79/258](#) on 24 December 2024, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a refined comprehensive and detailed report on the financing of and governance over the resident coordinator system to the Assembly at its eighty-first session. In response to the resolution, the Deputy Secretary-General commissioned a

¹ Conducted by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

² United Nations Sustainable Development Group System-wide Evaluation Office, document SWE0/2025/001.

review of the structure and responsibilities of the Office in early 2025, appointing a task team to deliver an accelerated approach to the Office recalibration exercise by the end of 2025. The task team reviewed the “one size fits all” model of resident coordinator offices and has reportedly proposed a revised structure and related organizational chart for the work of the Office at the Headquarters, regional and country levels. At the time of drafting of the present report, communication of the revised Office structure had been paused pending finalization of the work on the UN80 Initiative.

8. Since the actions above were taken by the Development Coordination Office, implementation of the OIOS recommendation has been overtaken by the launch in March 2025 of the Secretary-General’s UN80 Initiative to transform how the United Nations works. The Initiative includes a workstream under the sustainable development pillar on a regional reset with the goal of integrated regional support for stronger delivery, including a “vision [of] a coherent regional set-up with capacities clustered in and around the regional commissions. [The workstream leads] will take steps to move from scattered capacities to an integrated regional system that better articulates global mandates, region-wide strategies and country-level action”.³ A new system-wide working group, chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General, will “develop proposals on how to advance a reset of regional capacities for sustainable development”⁴ and will “propose how to institutionalize regional integrated platforms”.⁵ The goal of the regional architecture workstream is to “unite regional leaders across all pillars around joint plans, strategies, crisis response and resource mobilization for cross-cutting issues”.⁶ This is expected to include co-locating regional Development Coordination Office teams with other regional entities, with the regional economic commissions serving as physical hosts.⁷

9. On the basis of this evidence, OIOS has determined that the Development Coordination Office had taken steps to assess and categorize resident coordinator support needs and conduct a mapping exercise of how those needs would be met. However, given that the launch of the UN80 Initiative has overtaken continued progress in implementing the recommendation, OIOS has closed the recommendation without implementation.

Recommendation 2

10. Recommendation 2 reads as follows:

To address the challenges that the regional offices have faced in fully realizing their role in connecting the regional collaborative platforms with the resident coordinators, the Development Coordination Office should continue to work under the leadership of the platform Chair to further clarify the platform connector role of regional office teams and communicate that clearly to both resident coordinators and platform members, taking into account the regional section of the management and accountability framework of the United Nations development and resident coordinator system and the regional collaborative platform functioning and working arrangements document. Ideally, recommendation 2 should be addressed once the needs assessment in recommendation 1 has been conducted, so that it may inform the role of the regional offices as regional collaborative platform connectors.

³ [A/80/392](#), para. 49.

⁴ *Ibid.*, para. 50.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 66.

⁷ *Ibid.*, para. 67.

Indicators of achievement: discussion with the Chair of the regional collaborative platforms regarding the roles and responsibilities of the Development Coordination Office with regard to the platform; communication of clearly defined roles and responsibilities to resident coordinators, country teams and platform members

11. Between 2023 to 2025, the Development Coordination Office held regular discussions with the Deputy Secretary-General in her capacity as Chair of the regional collaborative platforms to keep her well informed of issues regarding the platforms. That dialogue occurred through regular team meetings between the Deputy Secretary-General and the Office (typically held weekly, with a periodic agenda item on regional collaborative platform functionality) and as part of ad hoc communications to the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, including regular liaison at the technical level through emails, meetings and discussions on the regional aspect. Furthermore, a meeting was held in October 2023 to explicitly discuss Office regional support and the connector role of regional collaborative platforms, with subsequent discussion of that issue included in meetings in 2024 and 2025 ahead of the annual platform gatherings. In addition, the Deputy Secretary-General and the Office senior management team have participated in several retreats, including in December 2024, where the Office's regional office function was discussed.

12. The Development Coordination Office has also worked with the Deputy Secretary-General in her capacity as Chair of the regional collaborative platforms to further clarify the Office's connector role in the platforms. The Office has conducted surveys with resident coordinator offices to identify country-level needs and requests for support from issues-based coalitions. The Deputy Secretary-General has also sent annual letters to regional collaborative platform Vice-Chairs to follow up on the implementation of platform workplans.

13. Furthermore, in early 2025, the Development Coordination Office, under the leadership of the Deputy Secretary-General, began a process to review the management accountability framework that included an assessment of the Office's regional connector role in the regional collaborative platforms. That review resulted in an analytical document that further clarified the connector role of the regional office teams and served to reassess regional roles and responsibilities. However, no further progress has been made on finalizing the results of the review given the ongoing regional workstream of the UN80 Initiative discussed in paragraph 8 above.

14. Given that the launch of the UN80 Initiative has overtaken continued progress in implementing this recommendation, OIOS has closed the recommendation without implementation.

III. Conclusion

15. In the three years since the OIOS evaluation of the Development Coordination Office regional support was published, the Office has taken steps to further assess and redefine its role at the regional level in order to strengthen support to resident coordinator offices, including through the Office recalibration exercise. However, the launch of the UN80 Initiative workstream focused on regional roles has effectively overtaken these discussions. Upon completion of that workstream, OIOS expects changes to the Office presence at the regional level that will contribute to an enhanced United Nations regional architecture.

IV. Management response

16. The Development Coordination Office notes that OIOS has closed the two recommendations without implementation, given that the launch of the UN80 Initiative has overtaken continued progress in implementing the recommendations. The Office expresses its gratitude to OIOS for recognizing the efforts that have been made thus far towards implementation, as well as the remaining challenges. The Office remains strongly committed to strengthening the regional architecture of the United Nations development system, in line with the Secretary-General's efforts as part of the UN80 Initiative.
