Peacekeeping Practice Note

Delivering mission mandates effectively: Drawing on UNCT capacities through assessed funding

Version 30 September 2015

Peacekeeping Practice Notes do not constitute official policy or guidance. They are learning materials for DFS and DPKO personnel that draw on evolving practice and research. Comments on this PPN are welcome as its content will be revised on an ongoing basis. To contribute, please contact the Policy and Best Practices Service at peacekeeping-bestpractices@un.org

Contents

Executive Summary .............................................................................................................................................................................. 2

1. Purpose ........................................................................................................................................................................................................... 3

2. The “what and when”: Scenarios for mobilizing UNCT capacities with assessed funding .......... 5
   2.1. Mission-UNCT joint implementation arrangements .................................................................................................................. 6
   2.1.1. Implementation of mission-mandated substantive tasks through agencies ................................................................................ 6
   2.1.2. Partnering with agencies to implement specific programmatic activities .................................................................................. 8
   2.1.3. Joint programmes and initiatives between missions and UNCT partners .................................................. 10
   2.2. Enabling unified strategy and delivery by integrating UNCT functionalities into the mission .... 11
       2.2.1. Integrating agency staff in integrated mission structures ....................................................................................................... 11
       2.2.2. Capacitating agencies through staffing arrangements ........................................................................................................ 13

3. The “how-to” guide for mission and UNCT practitioners .......................................................................................................................... 15
   3.1. Success factors for mission-UNCT collaboration arrangements .................................................................................................. 15
       3.1.1. In support of the mission mandate ............................................................................................................................................. 15
       3.1.2. Integrated planning and strategic framework ......................................................................................................................................... 16
       3.1.3. Comparative advantage assessment (CAA) .................................................................................................................................. 17
       3.1.4. Active backing and advocacy by senior leadership ......................................................................................................................... 18
       3.1.5. Continuous consultation with HQ ...................................................................................................................................................... 19
       3.1.6. Contextualized within larger funding gap and risk analysis .................................................................................................................. 20
       3.1.7. Avoid potential “double-dipping” and ratcheting up of programme support costs ................................................... 21
   3.2. Practical steps: Preparing a proposal for the use of assessed funding ...................................... 22
       3.2.1. Foundational planning steps ...................................................................................................................................................... 22
       3.2.2. Steps to take prior to and during a mission budget submission .................................................................................................. 23

4. Remaining questions and issues: Recommendations for policy-makers ................................ 24
Executive Summary

This note presents and examines options for United Nations peace operations to utilize assessed funding in collaborative arrangements with UN agencies, with the aim to draw on the substantive and programmatic expertise of UN agencies and to build on comparative advantages between UN partners in the delivery of a mission mandate. Such arrangements can maximize the collective impact of the UN in its peace consolidation efforts during all phases of a mission’s presence in a country alongside a UNCT.

Drawing on recent examples from different contexts where peacekeeping or special political missions are deployed, the first part of this paper presents two broad categories for mission-UNCt collaboration:

1. Joint implementation arrangements funded through the mission’s assessed budget; and
2. Integrated staffing arrangements funded through the mission’s assessed budget.

Within the first category, the arrangement entered between UNMIT and several UN agencies in Timor-Leste to deliver certain mission-mandated tasks serves as a test case. Furthermore, lessons from the implementation of programmatic activities by UN agencies in the frameworks of community violence reduction programmes (CVR) and quick impact projects (QIPs) are presented and discussed. Joint programmes and initiatives between missions and agencies are also reviewed as a framework for effective collaboration between missions and agencies, including for a possible pooling of assessed funding in future joint programmes. Within the second category, this paper introduces models to integrate UNCT staff into mission structures—largely based on the recent example of the Joint Rule of Law programme in Somalia which is now being replicated in other mission settings. Secondly, options to help build up UN agency capacities are presented, either by placing agency staff on available mission posts or by seconding mission staff to agencies. This can be particularly relevant during transition phases (for example mission start-up or drawdown) where agencies are facing difficulties to quickly step up their programmes within existing voluntary resources. For all these integrated staffing options, the different administrative rules, modalities and existing challenges are presented and discussed.

The second part of this paper presents a “how-to” guide for field practitioners who are planning a joint implementation or staffing arrangement that draws on assessed funding (based roughly on either the “Timor-Leste model” or the “Somalia model”). A particular focus lies on the key steps and aspects to be considered during a strategic planning phase and during the results-based budget (RBB) preparation of the mission. Seven concrete success factors are introduced, along with guiding questions to help field planners as they prepare their proposal for a joint arrangement. These success factors are:

1. The need to clearly link any such arrangement to the mission mandate;
2. The importance of early and consistent integrated planning between mission and UNCT;
3. A comparative advantage assessment to underpin the proposal for an integrated arrangement;
4. The need for an active backing and advocacy by the senior leadership of the mission and agency;
5. The importance of ongoing consultation with headquarters both by the mission and agency;
6. A contextualization of the proposed use of assessed funds within a larger funding analysis;
7. The importance to avoid potential double-dipping and unjustifiable overhead costs.

Based on these factors, this paper highlights the foundational planning steps that need to be taken in the preparation of a memorandum of understanding upon which a joint implementation arrangement would be based. Secondly, it presents the steps to take prior to and during the mission’s RBB, and highlights the various entry points for the mission leadership and subject matter experts to advocate for such an arrangement. The closing chapter presents observations and recommendations for UN policy-makers.
1. Purpose

United Nations peacekeeping operations (PKOs) and special political missions (SPMs) are funded through assessed contributions from UN member states, while other UN entities present in a country are largely funded through voluntary contributions. The mandates of peacekeeping and special political missions have become increasingly complex over the past 15 years, ranging from rule of law, security sector reform, protection of civilians, to the extension and restoration of state authority. While the contribution of missions to peace consolidation in these areas is critical, it is clear that they require the wider UN to work together in a coherent, coordinated and complementary manner. UN agencies, funds and programmes, given their mandate and long-term presence in countries, are critical to this effort. However, extra-budgetary funds available to the UNCT are often limited while mission budgets – though larger overall (in PKOs at least) – are restrictive in how they can be used for peacebuilding programmes.1

As the independent review of civilian capacities highlighted, there is a need for the UN to deploy its resources more flexibly to increase the impact of its effort and to further “explore the use of joint delivery mechanisms (…) comprising mission and UNCT expertise”. Member states were called upon to “ensure sustained and predictable financing (…) in particular in supporting integrated efforts.”2

More recently, the review reports on UN peace operations and on the UN peacebuilding architecture have both strongly reaffirmed this recommendation to draw more on assessed funding, particularly for programme support purposes.3 It should be noted that the past two years have also seen the Security Council call on several missions to consolidate its core tasks and transfer tasks to UNCT partners where these have a comparative advantage.4

This paper is particularly focused on modalities that allow missions to draw on the capacities of UNCT partners by directing assessed funding to them to implement mandated tasks. Recent research work5 has highlighted that there are no legal or regulatory impediments for UN field missions to engage the

---

1 In line with common practice, UN agencies, programmes and funds will mostly be referred to as “UN agencies” in this paper.
4 In 2013, this was the case for MONUSCO (Resolution 2098 (2013)), UNOCI (Resolution 2112 (2013)), UNMISS Resolution 2109 (2013)) and UNMIL Resolution 2116 (2013).
5 Jeremiah Kramer 2015, Deployment of Mission Budgets through UNCT Members for Mandated Tasks in Transition Settings. (Link to the UN-internal Policy and Practice Database – PPDB)
UNCT to carry out substantive mission-mandated tasks by drawing on assessed funding. This note seeks to contribute to a common understanding among UN field and headquarters practitioners in both the UN Secretariat and UN agencies on what mechanisms are available to enter into collaborative arrangements, what issues need to be considered, and what steps need to be taken in the planning and implementation of such arrangements.

These arrangements are not intended to resolve broader UNCT funding gaps. However, in addition to supporting mission mandate implementation, they can serve as catalysts that can support efforts of UN partners in developing more sustainable funding solutions, in leveraging their comparative advantage, or in increasing their capacity as they contribute to or take over peacebuilding tasks. The mechanisms described here are relevant throughout a mission’s life cycle, including in contexts of mission withdrawal and during start-ups. During mission drawdown, the steps and provisions laid out in this paper can help to facilitate collaborative arrangements or a phased handover of certain mission responsibilities to UNCT partners, namely by facilitating joint implementation arrangements or by making integrated staffing arrangements that draw on mission funds. These same arrangements can also serve to support the start-up of missions by leveraging synergies and comparative advantages of UNCT partners in joint programming structures or other implementation models, by having other UN partners carry out mission tasks rather than for the mission to build up the required staff and programming capacities.

While there are several financial modalities that can support collaborative peacebuilding interventions, the scope of this practice note is limited to an examination of the use of assessed funding. Other funding avenues — such as the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), multi-partner trust funds, thematic trust funds, or direct donor contributions — will not be discussed here.

For further information on the use of voluntary contributions and different financing tools, see

- Peacekeeping Practice Note 2009, Supporting Programmes with Extra-budgetary Resources: Options for UN Peace Operations. (Link to the UN-internal Policy and Practice Database – PPDB)

For a general overview and discussion of the current, and envisaged, interaction between the different funding mechanisms across the UN system, see the below paper that prepared for the UN Integration Steering Group (ISG):


The underlying policy basis for such integrated approaches is the 2013 UN Policy on Integrated Assessment and Planning (IAP), signed by the Secretary-General. It defines areas for closer and deeper collaboration during various stages of the assessment and planning process for integrated UN field presences, including through Integrated Strategic Frameworks:

- The 2013 UN Policy on Integrated Assessment and Planning (IAP), and the 2014 IAP Handbook
2. The “what and when”: Scenarios for mobilizing UNCT capacities with assessed funding

Based on the premise that the UN’s financial regulations and rules provide no fundamental impediments for UN missions to implement parts of their mandate in partnership with other UN entities by drawing on a mission’s assessed budget, a number of scenarios exist where such modalities could, or have been, applied throughout a UN mission’s lifespan. The below overview presents some of these examples, which can be broadly separated into:

2.1 Mission-UNCT joint implementation arrangements based on a memorandum of understanding (MoU) and
2.2 Integrated staffing arrangements, funded through the mission’s budget.

The below overview presents these arrangements over the course of a mission’s lifespan based on existing examples, but it should be noted that the “when” of these options is in fact quite variable and not tied to the phases depicted below.6

---

6 It should be noted that there are other collaborative implementation arrangements that are not further examined in this paper as they do not involve the employment of assessed funds. They nevertheless merit mentioning, such as arrangement in Iraq between UNAMI and the UNCT under the Iraq Trust Fund, through which, under the oversight of a steering committee, projects were implemented by UNCT members under the mandate and overall leadership of UNAMI.

---

Policy and Best Practices Service
Division for Policy, Evaluation and Training, DPKO-DFS
2.1. Mission-UNCT joint implementation arrangements

2.1.1. Implementation of mission-mandated substantive tasks through agencies
Missions can earmark funds within their budget group for operational costs for activities to be carried out by UNCT agencies, provided that the respective agencies has the capacity for an effective implementation of mission-mandated tasks. For example, if a mission is mandated with institution building responsibilities, which may require a mix of personnel as well as operational costs, such as for training, small infrastructure rehabilitation or materials for national institutions, implementation through a UNCT member could be considered, as indicated in the Secretary-General’s report on civilian capacity in the aftermath of conflict. Or, if a mission had capacity building tasks, it could enter into an implementation arrangement with a UNCT partner with strength in that area to carry out the function on behalf of the mission.

This kind of arrangement can be relevant during all phases of a mission’s existence, including in a context of mission drawdown. It can allow for a phased reduction in mission presence in a manner that facilitates a transition of certain mission tasks to the UNCT (in cases where the host government cannot take over such functions). The most pertinent example for this was Timor-Leste, where UNMIT provided US$2.7 million out of its budget for operational costs to four UNCT members (UNDP, UNICEF, UNWOMEN and UNFPA) during the final six months prior to the mission’s closure. The justification provided to the legislative bodies was that due to the mission having lost staff during the drawdown, using UNCT members to implement mandated tasks could ensure continuing implementation of the mission’s mandate.

If such an arrangement is conceived at relatively short notice without making it part of the mission’s regular budget submission, as was the case in Timor-Leste, the possible scope for such an arrangement is likely to remain somewhat limited. In situations where missions wish to utilize unspent funds during a budget cycle, a number of restrictions apply on how funds can be shifted within the mission’s budget. Furthermore, missions cannot easily ‘monetize’ vacant posts within a current budget cycle, for example to use funds allocated for a specific civilian post for purposes other than for civilian staffing.

---

7 A/68/696, para 27
8 This justification was presented in a chapeau memo which is included in the annex to this note.
9 While it is at the discretion of the Director or Chief of Mission Support (DMS/CMS) to authorize a redeployment of funds within one of the three mission budget groups (1. military and police personnel; 2. civilian personnel; 3. operational costs), a redeployment between these groups requires the approval of the UN Controller and needs to be justified later to oversight committees; it can also be expected that such funding realignments during a budget cycle will likely lead to increased scrutiny by oversight bodies.
Therefore, implementation arrangements that draw on UNCT competencies should ideally be included in the mission’s strategic planning and budget process (RBB) from the outset, particularly if a larger, more long-term collaborative arrangement with a UN agency is foreseen. In such cases, a conceptual linkage should be made between the mission’s results-based budget (RBB) process and other integrated planning processes between the mission and the UNCT, such as an Integrated Strategic Framework (ISF). This being said, while the mission’s actual budget proposal to the legislative bodies may highlight the mission’s intention to employ implementation arrangements with the UNCT, it is not necessary for the mission to seek approval from the ACABQ or 5th Committee for individual arrangements at the project level – these remain at the discretion of the UN Secretariat (i.e. the mission, the lead departments, and the UN Controller).

For a detailed discussion of the Timor-Leste example, see
- Jeremiah Kramer 2015, Deployment of Mission Budgets through UNCT Members for Mandated Tasks in Transition Settings. (Link to the UN-internal Policy and Practice Database – PPDB)
- Megan Price and Lina Titulaer 2013, Beyond Transitions: UNDP’s role before, during and after UN mission withdrawal. Clingendael Institute.

10 The different prerequisites and steps in the results-based budget process, as well as suggestions for missions to consult and engage with HQ on any envisaged implementation arrangements, are described in more detail in the second part of this paper.
11 It should be noted that UNCT agencies usually work under five-year country programme cycles that are signed off by the host government. Longer-term collaborative arrangements with a UN mission would have fit within both the mission mandate and the agency’s country programme document (CPD). On the agency side, mid-term reviews of a CPD may represent a good opportunity to make adjustments that could facilitate such collaborative arrangements, while on the mission side the annual mission RBB processes and periodic revisions of the mission concept could provide opportunities for closer alignment.
2.1.2. Partnering with agencies to implement specific programmatic activities

The 2015 peace operations and peacebuilding review reports both highlight the need for more programmatic funds in the budgets of peace operations.\(^\text{12}\) A number of multidimensional peacekeeping missions already have allocations within their assessed budgets, so called “cost centres”, for example to carry out projects and activities related to Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) and Community Violence Reduction (CVR).\(^\text{13}\) While these funds usually range in the low single digit percentages of the overall annual mission budget, they represent flexible non-earmarked funds that support important programme interventions and thus provide another possible avenue for mission-UNCT collaboration in the implementation of mandated tasks. In Haiti, for example, the CVR programme by MINUSTAH has, since its rollout in 2007, been using funds from the mission’s assessed budget to implement individual labour-intensive projects of up to US$ 200,000 through a range of implementing partners, including UNCT agencies. Similar programmes are also being rolled out in Cote d’Ivoire and in the Central African Republic. Through community engagement and broad-based assessment of contextual dynamics, DDR/CVR contributes to stabilisation and peace building measures in support of immediate political and security objectives which can dovetail with, or at least be complementary to, broader peacebuilding and development strategies pursued by UN agencies.

Similarly, many PKOs have a budget line for Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) of (usually) US$50,000 per project. QIPs are small-scale, one-off projects with the main aim to create confidence in the peace process and in the mission mandate within the first two years of the mission, or later on when specific confidence building measures are required. It should be noted that the scope for missions to collaborate with agencies on QIPs is quite limited: The General Assembly has emphasized that QIPs “should be implemented with minimal or no overhead charges”,\(^\text{14}\) which in most cases rules out any indirect implementation through a UN partner. Nevertheless, the GA also recognized the need for close coordination with humanitarian and development partners, and in certain contexts there is some scope for implementation partnerships. In Kosovo, for example, a “Confidence Building Measures” programme was introduced in UNMIK’s 2013-14 budget with the aim to promote reconciliation at the local

---

\(^\text{12}\) It is important to recognise, however, that an increase in programmatic funding alone will not necessarily lead to durable solutions. Due to their limited lifespans, missions cannot budget beyond one year, which creates challenges when supporting the restoration of state institutions, such as defence and police sectors, which require much more long-term strategic plans. Therefore, additional programmatic funding for missions should be allocated within a framework that preferably feeds into the national development strategies, such as the current ISF in Somalia that mirrors the national Compact.

\(^\text{13}\) Expenditures related to Mine Action are another example for the use of assessed funds for programmatic purposes. UNMAS receives assessed funds through a separate mechanism which is not subject of this paper.

\(^\text{14}\) General Assembly resolution A/RES/61/276, section 18.
community level. Small-scale community projects are being implemented, often together with local NGOs and UN agencies.

For both DDR/CVR and QIPs it is important to note that neither of the two constitutes humanitarian or long-term development intervention. That said, when implemented through partners, the modalities of CVR and QIPs projects are similar. They are, in essence, a cooperative relationship under which the UNCT member carries out a project on behalf of the mission. This can help foster a strategic partnership, not least as the mission and agencies coordinate their approaches and UN agencies can represent an important interface with civil society organisations in the implementation of such projects, and in ensuring a degree of sustainability for the time after the mission’s withdrawal. As an example of the strategic and possibly catalytic use of mission funding, a UNOPS-implemented labour-intensive project of US$400,000 in Port-au-Prince from MINUSTAH’s CVR funding (combining two projects) subsequently attracted additional voluntary funds of around US$8 million.

On the downside, the expenditures under CVR or QIPs are under tight scrutiny by the budgetary oversight bodies. This results in considerable administrative and accounting work for both implementing agencies and the mission. This is compounded by an insufficient alignment of administrative systems, financial years, and reporting and funds disbursement procedures between field missions and UN Agencies. For example, while the collaboration in CVR between MINUSTAH and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in Haiti led to the first ever MoU between the Secretariat and ILO, the process to attain this was described as long and arduous, and involved both headquarters and their legal offices. Furthermore, given the relatively high administrative burden for projects of relatively small financial value, agencies may find it difficult to recover their operating costs.¹⁵

For further information on the implementation of CVR or QIPs projects, see
- DPKO 2014, Guidelines on Reinsertion Programmes. (Link to the UN-internal Policy and Practice Database – PPDB)
- 2013 DPKO-DFS Policy on Quick Impact Projects.

¹⁵ Funds for CVR projects are disbursed in three tranches (40/40/20). Disbursement of the 2nd tranche only happens once the previous tranche is fully spent, and the third tranche only upon completion of the project. The implementing partner is required to submit detailed accounts of expenditures and narrative reports to the CVR section in the mission which in turn produces monitoring reports. Given the often short duration and relatively low financial volume of the project, this procedure is seen by some practitioners as burdensome. In contrast, most development donors often require only quarterly or biannual reports. Several CVR implementing agencies consulted for this paper noted that due to the staffing and administrative inputs needed to meet these requirements, CVR projects oftentimes had to be combined with other programmatic activities to offset the costs. It was opined that as stand-alone activities, such projects of low financial value may not be financially viable for the agency. Another UN staff member consulted for this paper noted that the UN’s bureaucracy was at times curtailing innovative programming.
2.1.3. Joint programmes and initiatives between missions and UNCT partners

Joint initiatives and joint programmes/programming between missions and UN agencies are another frequent mechanism for collaboration. From the known examples of mission-UNCT joint programmes, these have so far not implied the pooling and use of assessed contributions through partner agencies. But such arrangements may be considered. Significant work has been done in the context of the UN Development Group (UNDG) and the Integration Steering Group (ISG) on the characteristics of joint programmes, including their funding. A range of funding models may be considered: When a mission is working with just one or two other UN partners in a joint programme, one option may be for the mission to pool part or all the funding for its part of the joint programme with the UN partner who would act as implementing agent. A key prerequisite would be that the link between the financial input from the mission’s budget and the delivered results in the joint programme must remain clear and in accordance to the results defined in the mission’s RBB. Having a single implementing agent can offer the advantage of bypassing the different rules and procedures that can impede effective stand-alone implementation by the mission and UNCT partners.

Joint programmes are often an appealing mechanism to partners and donors due to a clearly defined governance structure and due to the fact that synergies, comparative advantages and division of responsibilities can be maximized. This increases the collective impact of the UN system and is therefore often more successful in generating voluntary resources than individual initiatives. To a certain degree, missions should see the option of joint programmes as a platform for a more effective mandate implementation, if these are thoroughly planned and aligned to the mission’s mandate. Good examples for this are the joint UNSOM-UNDP Rule of Law programme in Somalia – based on a joint work plan, supported through assessed contributions that fund two mission posts in order to be filled with UNDP personnel, and underpinned by voluntary contributions from donors for the implementation of projects – as well as other recent manifestations of the Global Focal Point arrangement. The UN’s review report on Civilian Capacities and the report of the High Level Panel on Peace Operations underscore that the flexible use of more programmatic funds under missions’ assessed budgets can be critical for a more effective mandate implementation, and joint programmes can be a good vehicle for this.

For further information and step-by-step guidance on joint programmes/programming, see

- UNDG 2014, Guidance Note on Joint Programmes.

16 Click here for more information on the Global Focal Point for Police, Justice and Corrections
2.2. Enabling unified strategy and delivery by integrating UNCT functionalities into the mission

2.2.1. Integrating agency staff in integrated mission structures

When setting up new PKOs or SPMs, but potentially also at other stages of the mission lifecycle, integrated staffing arrangements that draw on the mission’s assessed budget can be considered to leverage and build on the programming expertise, subject matter expertise and financial resources available to UNCT partners. A concrete example is Somalia, where the “UN Global Focal Point for Rule of Law” arrangement was first operationalized in the field with the creation of a joint rule of law structure in the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) in 2013 to carry out a single rule of law strategy and programme that would, later on, draw on voluntary funding from a newly created multi-donor trust fund.

Two P-5 positions were earmarked in the UNSOM staffing table to be filled with UNDP senior programme managers, with a dual reporting line to UNSOM’s Head of Rule of Law and UNDP’s Head of Programmes. This was to enable UNSOM to exercise substantive control while enabling programme implementation and fund management to take place through UNDP. The structure thus sought to leverage the substantial personnel and political profile of UNSOM in conjunction with the programme management expertise and longer term presence of UNDP to deliver on the applicable part of the mandate. An additional benefit was that this arrangement provided UNDP with immediate capacity to kickstart planning, resource mobilization and recruitment for a larger multi-year Rule of Law programme that may eventually even outlast the mission’s lifespan. Arrangements like this also allow for the implementation of programme activities through mission staff in contexts where agencies struggle to get the requisite funding to create additional posts, even if voluntary resources for programmatic purposes are available. A similar joint justice unit has been established between MINUSCA and UNDP in the Central African Republic (CAR).

Pros and cons at a glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Challenges and drawbacks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Facilitates closer programme alignment between mission and agencies under common strategic objectives, drawing on comparative advantages and capitalizing on synergies.</td>
<td>• Lack of administrative and human resource mechanisms to facilitate such an arrangement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Capacitates the agency to kickstart programme planning and resource mobilization.</td>
<td>• Reporting lines and supervision are often unclear in integrated arrangements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provides integrated structure with “one door to knock on” for national partners and donors.</td>
<td>• Integrated staffing and co-location arrangements may lead to a loss of visibility of UN agencies, impacting on their ability to present achievements and mobilize future voluntary resources.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17 This may be particularly relevant for SPMs, which are funded from the UN’s regular budget and usually have no programmatic budget to implement programmes, as opposed to PKOs which may have modest programmatic funds, e.g. for QIPs or DDR/CVR.

18 Another example for collaborative arrangements during mission start-up was UNSMIL in Libya which benefitted from the availability of particular expertise in the UNCT, when UNCT members provided their personnel to work in elections (UNDP), child protection (UNICEF), rule of law (UNODC) and public administration (UNDP). It should be noted, though, that the UNCT staff were seconded to UNSMIL without reimbursement from assessed funds.

19 Another example of integration of mission and UNCT capacities – though without involving the transfer of assessed funds - is that of BINUB in Burundi. See the lessons learned paper UN integration in Burundi in the context of the peacebuilding office BINUB, Taking stock and lessons learned from June 2006 to November 2007 (publicly available).
As became apparent in the Somalia case, there are a number of challenges associated with such joint structures due to the fact that the required human resources, financial and IT mechanisms to facilitate this collaborative arrangement between the mission and UNDP are currently not in place. This means, for example, that staff contracted by one UN entity do not automatically have access to the administrative procedures and systems of the other, for example with regard to financial signing authority. Furthermore, regular recruitment onto Secretariat field mission posts needs to be carried out through relevant DFS job rosters, but many UN agency staff members are not on these rosters. This is particularly the case during the start-up phase of a mission when staff members are directly selected from rosters (initially for limited periods of time) to expedite the deployment of the mission. It is thus very important to be clear on what administrative and financial functionalities the posts require, in order to have a clearer pathway on how to fill them within the provisions of the internal administrative frameworks that apply.

In the case of Somalia, in order to bridge the problems of incompatible systems and to ensure that UNDP staff with programme experience could be hired, the selected candidates were initially seconded from UNDP to UNSOM through a reimbursable loan agreement (RLA). RLAs, however, are usually limited to one calendar year maximum and carry some other disadvantages (chiefly that a daily subsistence allowance (DSA) is normally payable to the staff member, which may make an RLA very costly). After the expiry of the original RLAs and when the initial start-up phase was ending, UNSOM advertised the posts via Inspira in order to recruit candidates on a Secretariat contract and then enter a non-reimbursable loan agreement (NRLA) with UNDP to grant the candidates access to UNDP’s systems. In the case of CAR, drawing on the example from Somalia of an RLA, the candidate was to be recruited and administered through UNDP, but the option was being explored whether he/she could also receive a DPKO contract in addition to the one with UNDP (initially foreseen to be facilitated under the special measures for expedited recruitments approved for MINUSCA during its initial start-up phase), in order to enable the candidate to have access to both administrative systems.

At the programme management level, differing schedules meant conflicting and duplicative reporting requirements within the integrated team – with UNDP required to report to its donors on a quarterly basis and UNSOM reporting to the Security Council every 120 days as well as annually on its budget performance. Another challenge emerged from the differing approaches between the mission and UNDP in handling matters of staff safety and security, which led to disruptions in the co-location of the integrated team after a security incident.

The above-mentioned inter-operability challenges require sustained attention at UN management level, particularly with regards to financial and human resource management. Internal control frameworks need to be re-examined to address how to ensure accountability while facilitating effective UN partnerships in certain implementation arrangements. That said, a number of practical arrangements can quite easily be worked out at field level to help facilitate more effective mission-agency collaboration, as was the case, for example, in Burundi where agency staff within integrated units in BINUB were accorded the same rights, access and responsibilities as mission staff. In the same spirit, the

---

20 Terms of reference were developed, consulted widely and agreed between the stakeholders. The decision was made to advertise the positions on the UNDP website and to conduct a full UNDP recruitment process, with a mixed UNDP-Secretariat recruitment panel.

21 It should be noted that the entitlement packages also differ between Secretariat and UN agency staff contract. Often, the packages offered by UN agencies are seen as more attractive than mission contracts.
2014 global MoU between UNOPS and the UN Secretariat can also serve as useful guidance with regard to practical solutions to address inter-operability challenges: Its annex 2 lists a variety of services and access rights that the Secretariat should grant UNOPS staff who work in a project with a mission, including access to mission ID cards, email and internet access, and mission transportation. These points should be considered by all missions that seek to enter co-location and collaboration arrangements with UNCT partners.  

Lastly, it should be noted while the above examples (except UNOPS) are specific to a start-up phase, missions can, at various stages of their lifespan, draw on specialised UNCT expertise, for example by bringing in subject matter experts on a temporary basis in areas that require specialised expertise that is not sufficiently covered through the mission’s staffing table (for example to support constitutional reform, or certain tasks within the Civil Affairs component of a mission). The OROLSI Pool of Experts has been created in partnership with the WIDE-platform that also hosts agency rosters, making it possible to search for experts from a wider database in order to allow for a timely deployment of specialized civilian expertise to complement to the work of core UN field mission staff.

---

2.2.2. Capacitating agencies through staffing arrangements

In areas where mission and agency mandates converge, missions also have the option to temporarily place agency personnel on mission posts that are vacant or slated to be abolished, for example to facilitate a transition of tasks. As recommended in recent civilian staffing reviews for missions that are preparing for an eventual withdrawal, existing but vacant mission posts could be temporarily filled with additional agency staff – within applicable staff rules and through existing HR tools – to allow them to jumpstart or scale up UNCT work and support fundraising in these key areas, while drawing on the mission’s institutional knowledge in the substantive area to facilitate the handover to the respective agency. The rationale for this option would thus be to temporarily create an integrated structure for the delivery of the mandate while providing support to agencies in the form of vacant posts. In principle, the same challenges with regard to incompatible administrative and HR systems apply that have been outlined above, though these would arguably weigh less heavy in a context of mission drawdown as this would be a temporary measure. The key advantage for agencies to place staff member on a vacant

---

22 In addition, the UNOPS model of integration within a mission means, that technical lead will clearly remain within the mission as required, while administrative requirements are dealt with by UNOPS directly. The effectiveness of the UNOPS-UNMAS implementation arrangement has been demonstrated by awards. For reference, see http://www.mineaction.org/sites/default/files/documents/UNMAS_Donor_newsletter_December_2014.pdf

23 Responding to the growing need for the timely deployment of specialized civilian expertise to complement the work of core UN field mission staff, OROLSI has created a Pool of Experts in partnership with the WIDE-platform, which also hosts rosters of UN agencies, funds and programmes, thus making it possible to search for experts from a wider database. This project is currently in a preliminary phase.

24 It should be noted, though, that there are various interoperability problems which may render collaboration difficult. For example, UN missions and certain protection-mandated UN agencies have adopted different, often incompatible systems to collect data on rights violations (such as the MARA mechanism on violence against women).
mission post would be to receive the often much-needed additional capacity on the ground to start planning for a follow-up programme after the mission has withdrawn.

The opposite option – to second mission staff to the UNCT – was also raised several times during conversations for this paper, for example with a view to helping prepare agencies for a transition of certain tasks upon the mission’s withdrawal, or during a consolidation of mission tasks. This issue was also taken up by the 2015 UN peacebuilding review which recommends that “offices of Resident Coordinators should be appropriately strengthened to absorb the relevant political and peacebuilding capacity of the mission” (...) and are “reinforced with standardised expertise in human rights, peace and conflict analysis, strategic planning, and public information.”

For detailed information and step-by-step guidance on different staffing and recruitment options, see

- Peacekeeping Practice Note 2015, Flexible Deployment of Civilian Expertise to United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and Special Political Missions. OROLSI/CLJAS. (Link to the UN-internal Policy and Practice Database – PPDB)

The current arrangements and rules for staff transfer are consolidated here:

- Inter-Organization Agreement concerning Transfer, Secondment or Loan of Staff among the Organizations applying the United Nations Common System of Salaries and Allowances, 2012.

The global MoU between UNOPS and the Secretariat contains many relevant rules and guidelines for collaboration between missions and UN agencies:

- 2014 MoU between the UN Secretariat and UNOPS, and supplementary guidance issued by the UN Secretariat. (Attached to this document)

---

25 This was done recently in MONUSCO, where the mission seconded a P5 post on (Conflict-Related Sexual Violence) to UN Women in the context of transfer of tasks.


27 It should be noted that there are additional capacities to provide temporary surge support to field presences. For example, the UN Standing Police Capacity and the Standing Justice and Corrections Capacity, based in Brindisi (Italy) can be drawn upon to help jumpstart rule of law programmes, chiefly through the temporary in-country deployment of expertise as well as through the provision of advice and assistance, including to UNCTs.
3. The “how-to” guide for mission and UNCT practitioners

The below is based on a survey of practices of what integrated resourcing arrangements using assessed funds have worked – or not worked – in different field settings (both PKOs and SPMs). This section focuses in particular on

a) The implementation of mission-mandated tasks through another UN entity, funded through a transfer of resources from the mission’s assessed budget (the “Timor-Leste model”); and

b) Integrated staffing arrangements, i.e. recruiting agency staff against mission posts (the “Somalia model”).

The focus of this section is on these two options as they require a degree of integrated planning at field level as well as consultation with different HQ entities, as will be described below. That being said, the other options of drawing on assessed funding such as CVR programmes or QIPs are nevertheless very relevant avenues for missions and agencies to maximise synergies and create greater UN-wide coherence.

The following list of prerequisites and success factors build on existing experience from the field and on lessons learned from the implementation of integrated approaches. The conceptual basis is the UN Policy on Integrated Assessments and Planning (IAP).

3.1. Success factors for mission-UNCT collaboration arrangements

UN missions considering deploying some of their assessed resources through a UN agency will need to be able to make a case that this will ensure an effective and efficient delivery of the mission’s mandate. Mission budgets are subjected to close scrutiny by the legislative bodies regarding the core mandated functions to be financed, and no diversion of funding from these core functions – perceived or real – would be permitted. Integrated planning processes, comparative advantage assessments and other review exercises can provide the necessary frame to build the argument that UNCT partners may be well, or even better placed, to implement certain mission-mandated tasks, or that UNCT expertise should be integrated into the mission utilizing assessed funding. The following factors may help missions to demonstrate that the envisaged implementation arrangements are not duplicative of existing capacities in the mission, based on comparative advantage considerations, and serve to effectively and efficiently implement the mission’s mandate, as per the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

3.1.1. In support of the mission mandate

Any activity carried out by other UN entities drawing on the mission’s assessed budget must be directly and unambiguously linked to the implementation of the mission mandate, as established in relevant UN Security Council resolutions. The mission’s results-based budget (RBB) establishes a clear accountability from the mission to the UN’s budgetary bodies to deliver against its stated objectives, measured annually based on pre-defined results. In areas where joint approaches backed by mission funds are considered, the mandate of the mission and programmatic priorities of relevant UN agencies must be consistent with, and linked to, joint strategic priorities (though the actual delivery of programmes does
Joint programmatic activities should be clearly identified in RBBs and should be agreed upon prior to its submission.

A congruence of mandates between missions and agencies in certain areas is not unusual, but also not a given. In addition, accountability lines clearly differ, with UN mission reporting to the UN Security Council and receiving their budget from the General Assembly (GA), while UN agencies have several parallel accountability lines – with the host government, their beneficiaries, their donors, and their Executive Boards which in turn are answerable to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the GA. UN agencies operate normally under multi-year country programmes that have been signed off by the host government. Nevertheless, missions and agencies usually have sufficient flexibility to align and harmonize their programming with a view to maximizing their collective impact while keeping within their various accountability arrangements. Thorough integrated planning between missions and agencies can serve to identify those areas of commonality between missions and UNCT agencies that would allow them to implement certain tasks jointly.

Guiding Questions:

- Does the mission have mandated tasks that can or should draw on the specific expertise and programming capabilities of UN agencies for optimal implementation? For example, does the mandate include capacity-building functions for which the expertise of UN agencies could be useful?
- Are the activities that are foreseen to be implemented through a UNCT partner covered by the agency’s country programme agreement with the host government?

3.1.2. Integrated planning and strategic framework

Early and consistent integrated assessment and planning between missions and UN agencies is critical, and any proposal that entails the transfer of assessed funds to another UN entity should be rooted in a strategic framework. Such frameworks – usually a UN-internal Integrated Strategic Framework (ISF), but possibly also a joint transition plan or a UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) – are useful and necessary tools at all stages of a mission’s lifespan. Though not a requirement for ISFs, UN strategic frameworks should ideally be in line with longer-term objectives enshrined in national plans to ensure sustainability of interventions. Recent experience from ‘transfer of tasks’ exercises such as in the DR Congo show that a full engagement of all sides – and due consultation with the government – in a joint planning process is a key success factor. On the mission side, the annual budget process and the development or revision of the mission concept can be useful occasions to make provisions for a potential mandate delivery through UNCT partners.

---

28 It should be noted that this same principle does not apply to humanitarian work, which is guided solely by the humanitarian principles.

29 Integrated field-level planning processes can be perceived as onerous and time-consuming. However, there are several examples, such as Burundi and Somalia, where such integrated planning, started at the onset of a new UN country presence, yielded positive results in terms of UN coherence and coordination, and a greater impact in the delivery of mandates and programmes.
Leveraging comparative advantages is a core principle of the UN's approach to integration, and member states are increasingly urging the UN to clearly identify comparative advantages in functional areas. An analysis of comparative advantages should be the starting point for joint initiatives, and would be helpful to strengthen the case for the use of assessed contributions through UNCT partners. While certain core functions are unique to UN missions, such as good offices, political analysis, and reporting obligations to the Security Council, in other areas other UN entities may be best placed to support the implementation of certain mission-mandated tasks. According to the IAP Handbook, a comparative advantage is context- and country-specific, and is defined by three basic principles: 1. A legal mandate; 2. A demonstrated capacity, and 3. The ability to make a unique contribution in the selected areas of intervention. Where feasible, a CAA should be built into existing planning frameworks and exercises, such as an ISF or UNDAF+, as well as a mission’s results-based budget (RBB).

**Guiding questions:**
- Is there sufficient planning capacity in both mission and UNCT partners to arrive at a meaningful, jointly owned strategic framework?
- Is meaningful integrated planning taking place? Has it led to adjustments in programmes in the mission or agencies that allows for complementarity of objectives on all sides?
- Are proposals at the programme and project level clearly linked to strategic priorities?
- Could, or does, the mission concept include provisions that would allow for mandate delivery through the UNCT?

**Guiding questions and issues to consider:**
- Is the mission able to make the case that another actor within the UN system is well or better placed to implement a certain mandated task on its behalf?
- A CAA can also help to support a case where an integrated staffing mechanism is envisaged, for example by bringing specialised agency expertise into the mission on regular posts funded by assessed contributions.
- The comparative advantage analysis should be carefully framed, particularly if it is to be embedded in the mission’s budget submission and performance reports, in order avoid the impression that the mission previously failed to implement certain mandated tasks by itself (see the next chapter on this issue).

Building on the IAP Handbook, a comprehensive methodology on Comparative Advantage Assessments (CAA) has been proposed and was circulated to peacekeeping missions in February 2014.
- Identifying Comparative Advantage: Proposed Methodology. (Link to the UN-internal Policy and Practice Database – PPDB)
3.1.4. Active backing and advocacy by senior leadership

The involvement and full backing of senior managers in the mission and in the UNCT is a critical success factor when planning for joint implementation arrangements, in particular when this carries budgetary implications. As stipulated in the IAP Policy, at field level a senior leadership forum (usually a Senior/Strategic Policy Group – SPG) is one of the required mechanisms in integrated field presences, to facilitate joint information sharing, analysis, planning, decision-making, coordination and monitoring. For any proposal for a creative, non-conventional use of mission resources to succeed, active senior leadership backing is critical, and a senior leadership forum is the appropriate mechanism to generate this. As there are only few precedents of using assessed funds through UN agencies, the mission’s top management must be ready to advocate for this vis-à-vis UN Headquarters, namely DFS, DPKO or DPA and the Controller’s Office (OPPBA) (see also chapter 3.2 on the key entry points in the budget process for such advocacy). A mission’s Chief of Staff should play a leading role in such interactions, along with the subject matter experts and planners in both mission and agency. If the proposal is to be part of a regular budget submission, senior mission leaders would need to be prepared to argue their case vis-à-vis the budgetary oversight bodies. The advocacy for such funding arrangements should be thought out well, also to pre-empt any claims that the mission failed to implement its mandate with its own means.30

The role of the mission’s Director or Chief of Mission Support (DMS/CMS) is equally critical. The accountability for the use of a mission’s assessed budget is delegated from the UN Controller to DMS/CMS, and she or he is faced with close scrutiny over the cost-effective use of the mission’s assessed budget, in accordance with the financial regulations and rules. For an arrangement that entails the transfer of assessed funds to an agency to come to fruition the support of the DMS/CMS will be needed. Therefore, it is key for Chiefs of Staff, mission planners and subject matter experts to involve their DMS/CMS and the mission’s Chief of Budget/Finance early and consistently in the discussions about any such arrangement, and to explain to her/him the utility of the proposed arrangement based on comparative advantage and strategic considerations. At the same time, the onus is on the respective UN agency to assure the DMS/CMS that all funds received can be fully accounted for and regularly reported against, both in terms of financial and substantive reports. While the reporting and accounting requirements would be spelled out in a memorandum of understanding, an established and trustful relationship between the mission and agency management – such as between the DMS/CMS and the agency’s Operations Manager – would provide additional assurance to the mission that the UNCT partner can meet its reporting and accounting obligations.31

Guiding questions:

✓ Is there a functioning senior leadership forum in your mission, and has it actively supported and overseen the planning and formulation of joint approaches?
✓ If integrated approaches are envisaged that would entail the channelling of assessed funds to an agency, is the senior leadership forum backing this?
✓ Have you involved your Director/Chief of Mission Support (DMS/CMS), and agreed with her/him on the feasibility and modalities of using assessed funds through an agency?
✓ Is senior management in your mission prepared to actively advocate at UN headquarters and with member states for the use of assessed funding to implement certain mission tasks through UN agencies?

30 Several interviewees for this practice noted their concern that missions would seemingly have “to admit failure” if it wanted to propose the channeling of assessed funds through agencies. A thorough CAA can be a critical element to alleviate this.

31 In this context, it should also be considered that the number of finance staff in field missions who could oversee such arrangements is generally diminishing amid a consolidation of services in DFS’s Global and Regional Service Centres.
3.1.5. Continuous consultation with HQ

Both missions and UN agencies should involve their respective headquarters early to discuss the feasibility of any proposed mechanisms to use assessed funds through agencies. On the mission side and at the strategic level, senior leadership in DPKO and DFS should be engaged at an early stage to garner buy-in and support. At the technical experts’ level, the Integrated Operational Team (IOT) in DPKO or the respective country desk in DPA should be brought on board early on\(^{32}\) to lead and support the necessary consultations at HQ level on the proposed arrangement. In DFS, the Field Budget and Finance Division (FBFD) should be involved in discussions at an early stage. FBFD will advise on the viability of potential funding arrangements, and will engage with the relevant entities in the Department of Management, notably the Office of the Controller to test the viability of the proposal. If an integrated staffing modality is considered, the DFS Field Personnel Division (FPD) should be consulted, which in turn may wish to involve the Office of Human Resource Management (OHRM), depending on the mechanism that is proposed. Later on in the process, the Office for Central Support Services (OCSS) may also be required to certify that the proposed arrangement is not a procurement process.

The relevant UN agencies should also engage with their relevant internal structures to ascertain early on that any proposed mechanism that entails the receipt of assessed funds can be administered within existing processes and according to its rules and regulations, that the strict accountability measures applied by the UN Secretariat can be complied with (in terms of regular financial and substantive reporting), and that direct and indirect support costs charged against the assessed funds remain within the limits accepted by the UN Secretariat (see also point 3.1.7. below).\(^{33}\)

**Guiding questions for missions:**
- Have you sought the advice of DFS/FBFD when planning for integrated programmes that might involve the transfer of assessed funding to agencies? Has DFS/FBFD, at the appropriate time, consulted with the Office of the Controller/OPPBA?
- If an integrated staffing arrangement is considered, have you consulted with DFS/FPD?
- What does your IOT and senior management in DPKO or DPA say? Will it support you to make your case at HQ, and can it possibly muster additional support from senior management in DPKO or DPA and DFS?

**Guiding questions for UN agencies:**
- Would the proposed mechanism to receive funds from the mission, and the relevant accountability mechanisms (financial & substantive certification and reporting) conform to your usual reporting and accounting procedures, and rules & regulations? If not, can you adjust them to comply with reporting and accounting requirements?

---

32 To define what “early on” means exactly, please see chapter 3.2 b) that depicts the budget preparation process for field missions.
33 Generally, country offices of most UN agencies have a fair degree of autonomy under the authority of the Resident Representative and Country Directors (in the case of UNDP) or Representatives in entering joint arrangements or in receiving external donor funds without requiring specific approval from their headquarters, as long as this conforms with their financial rules. It would be prudent, however, for agencies to consistently consult their regional offices or HQ, particular when considering ‘untested’ staffing or implementation arrangements, or in cases where an overhead charge needs to be negotiated. Rules on overhead charges vary depending on the entity and the context. For initial guidance, see the UN Controller’s memo of 8 June 2012 on cost recovery through programme support costs, appended to this practice note.
3.1.6. Contextualized within larger funding gap and risk analysis

The larger funding picture in the relevant country can be an important part of the justification for a mechanism that seeks to utilize assessed funding through UN agencies. If the use of assessed contributions is considered to incubate country team programming during a phase of mission transition, framing such a proposal within the bigger funding picture in the relevant sector would help make the case for such an arrangement (in police, justice and corrections, this could be framed and facilitated in the context of the Global Focal Point arrangement). Member states are paying increasing attention to the overall funding context. Thus, putting a specific proposal within the context of a financial gap can serve to underscore the need for catalytic money. Likewise, such a proposal should be linked to a risk analysis that presents potential negative consequences on the progress made by the mission should its drawdown (or scale up) not be accompanied by funding arrangements for agencies that are expected to take on certain critical mission tasks. A useful basis for this would be some form of ‘donor mapping’ in country that provides a comprehensive picture of the mix of financial resources available beyond the mission’s assessed funding, such as bilateral funds, international financial institutions (IFIs), funds committed through multilateral channels (e.g. UNCT programmes and MPTFs), and trust funds such as the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). Such a comprehensive donor mapping was undertaken in Somalia in 2013 and informed the subsequent development of the “New Deal” Compact for Somalia. Building on this, the UN developed a costed Integrated Strategic Framework (ISF) that highlights the financial needs across all sectors relevant to peace consolidation and recovery, and serves as a joint resource mobilization tool (see link to the ISF below). For all this to happen, a close coordination and regular coordination between the mission, the Resident Coordinator’s Office and aid coordination entities in the country is important. The Resident Coordinator’s convening and coordination function between the mission, UNCT and donors is critical.

Guiding questions:

✓ Has the funding situation been mapped out in areas where the work of the mission, UNCT, and other actors overlap? Is there a basis to undertake predictive assessments on the likely funding situation in the near future (taking the “donor temperature”)?
✓ Is the UN presence considering a fully costed Integrated Strategic Framework to underpin the broader peacebuilding strategy?
✓ If the mission is preparing for its withdrawal, can you undertake a risk analysis on the consequences of the anticipated funding drop after the mission’s departure?

The ISF for Somalia is one example of a costed strategic plan that is, at least in principle, informed by financial gaps and requirements under its five pillars (the “New Deal” Peace and Statebuilding Goals):

The UNDP Multipartner Trust Fund Office (MPTFO) prepared the following relevant reports:


34 The mapping was undertaken by the Aid Coordination Unit of the Federal Government of Somalia, supported by the World Bank. It formed a basis for the development of the Somalia Aid Compact based on the “New Deal on Engagement in Fragile States”. It should also be noted, however, previous efforts by the Resident Coordinator’s Office to collect donor funding information in a Development Assistance Database (DAD) did not achieve the expected results given a hesitance on the part of donors and agencies to provide information. The political momentum created through the New Deal Compact seems to have been an important factor to compel partners to provide information later.
3.1.7. Avoid potential “double-dipping” and ratcheting up of programme support costs

Arrangements that involve the implementation of mission-mandated tasks through UN agencies should serve to maximize the collective impact of the UN presence, address evident capacity gaps of the mission (for example due to vacant posts), and/or serve to capacitate UN agencies which are expected to increase their own programmes and take over mission functions. A number of previous proposals for such arrangements in different missions were rejected by the UN Secretariat management as they appeared duplicative of mission capacities, rather than substituting them. Equally, the UN Secretariat and ACABQ are likely to reject any use of assessed funds where it is known that voluntary contributions exist to support this.

Secondly, any proposal for the use of assessed funding through a UN agency must give evidence for a cost-effective use of the mission’s resources. This is a critical issue and potential stumbling block: UN agencies need to charge indirect programme support costs (PSC) in addition to the direct costs incurred by a project to recover their administrative expenses. However, budget oversight bodies may again consider the payment of indirect PSC as ‘double dipping’ as a mission is also resourced to provide administrative services. At the onset of the proposal development, the mission will have to consult with DFS/FBFD and the Controller’s Office to ascertain what level of support costs charged by a UN agency would be acceptable – this may differ depending on the country context and financial volume. The MoU that was agreed in Timor-Leste based on which UN agencies received funds from the mission limited the indirect PSC at 7 per cent. Furthermore, if the UN agency subcontracts parts of the project to implementing partners, it will nevertheless have to ensure that the cumulative PSC against the overall assessed funding portion does not exceed the approved percentage amount.

Guiding questions for missions:

✓ Can you provide sufficient justification that the proposed arrangement will not be duplicative of existing mission capacities?
✓ Can you provide sufficient evidence that the proposed funding arrangement will not incur unjustifiable overhead costs to the assessed budget, and will not fund tasks that can be, or are already, covered by other funding?

Guiding questions for agencies:

✓ Can you ensure that you can deliver the mandated task within the approved limit of indirect Programme Support Costs?

For an example on the application of indirect PSC see:

➢ MoU UNMIT – UNDP and chapeau document on UNMIT Cooperative Agreements. Specifies the approved indirect Programme Support Costs against the overall amount for the respective projects. (attached to this document)

---

35 Framing a proposal in the context of standing arrangements such as the Global Focal Point on Rule of Law, Justice and Corrections build on the comparative advantages of its partners and can thus be effective in avoiding perceptions of double-dipping when putting in place joint programmes or integrated structures.
3.2. Practical steps: Preparing a proposal for the use of assessed funding

Based on the seven success factors outlined above, a number of procedural steps are suggested that can guide the preparation of a proposal for the use of assessed funds through UN agencies. These draw largely on the experience made in Timor-Leste. It therefore focuses mostly on the MOU-based options of a) asking UN agencies to implement mission tasks, or b) to provide seed funding to agencies to incubate programming (e.g. parallel to a mission start-up or after a mission’s departure). For both options, a strategic decision needs to be made at the onset as to whether the proposed modality is to be included in the mission’s annual results-based budget (RBB) process, or not. The planning for integrated staffing arrangements or for CVR and QIPs projects is not covered here.

3.2.1. Foundational planning steps

Below are the key procedural steps that need to be taken to develop a proposal to utilize assessed funding through a UN agency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Actors involved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. COMMENCE JOINT PLANNING BETWEEN MISSION AND UN AGENCY FOR THE MODALITY THAT UTILIZES ASSESSED FUNDING</td>
<td>Subject matter experts in mission &amp; agency, Mission Chief of Staff, Strategic Planning Officer &amp; UN Agency Programme Planner, DMS/CMS and Chief Budget/Finance Officer; Agency Chief of Operations, Senior mission leadership &amp; relevant heads of UN agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Based on an agreed strategic framework or transition plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Try to ensure that the afore-mentioned 7 success factors are broadly met, including by ensuring the buy-in and support from senior management for the proposed modality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Subject matter experts in mission &amp; agency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. GET NECESSARY SUPPORT AT UN HEADQUARTERS

➢ Involve DPKO IOT or DPA country desk in the proposal
➢ Consult with DFS/FBFD on the feasibility of the proposal
➢ (if required) seek preliminary clearance from the UN Controllers Office (based on DFS/FBFD’s advice)
➢ (if required) request the ASG of the Office for Central Support Services to attest that the proposed modality is not a procurement activity

Subject matter experts in mission & agency, Mission Chief of Staff, Strategic Planning Officer, Chief Budget & Finance Officer, DMS/CMS, DPKO IOT or DPA country desk, DFS/FBFD, DM Controller’s Office

3. DEVELOP MOU BETWEEN MISSION AND UN AGENCY

➢ MoU may include a chapeau part that recalls the relevant strategic objective jointly agreed upon in the ISF or other strategic framework
➢ MoU must take into account the respective financial accountability & reporting requirements of both mission & UN agency as well as the agreed overhead costs of the proposal.
➢ MoU to be reviewed by DFS/FBFD and approved by Controller

Subject matter experts in mission & agency, Mission & Agency Legal Advisor (in situ or at HQ), Mission Chief of Staff, Mission & Agency Planning Officer, Chief Budget & Finance Officer, DMS/CMS and Agency Chief of Operations

36 The points suggested here do not apply to arrangements with UNOPS, given that the global MoU and Guidance Note (attached to this document) already outline specific steps.
3.2.2. Steps to take prior to and during a mission budget submission

The planning process for the annual RBB is more than just the consolidation of the mission’s financial needs. It is a recurring review and planning process that, working backwards from the expected results of the mission’s delivery, establishes what implementation mechanisms need to be in place to generate the necessary outputs for this. As such, the RBB process is the ideal locus to develop collaborative implementation arrangements with UN agencies.

The annual budget cycle in peacekeeping is July 1st till June 30th and in SPMs it is based on the calendar year; however, the main procedural steps are similar for both types of missions. Therefore, they are combined in the below depiction. The mission budget preparation begins around one full year before the start of the actual budget cycle.
4. Remaining questions and issues: Recommendations for policy-makers

A key takeaway from this paper is that the rule book of the UN is sometimes more flexible than it would seem. It takes personal commitment, creativity and flexibility on the part of a mission’s management and support pillar to devise the best, most efficient and sustainable ways to implement the mandate given to the mission by the UN Security Council, including by working together with the UN country team.

The recent major reviews of both UN peace operations and of the peacebuilding architecture contain strong recommendations on the need to leverage the UN’s capacities and resources in smarter ways towards more effective mandate implementation and peacebuilding, including with regard to making UN administrative policies more responsive to the field and to take measures to improve interoperability between missions and agencies. The report of the High-Level Panel on UN Peace Operations recommends that:

“The Secretary-General should include within proposed mission budgets programmatic resources when these are necessary for the effective implementation of mandated tasks (...) by the entity capable of most effectively delivering results, whether the mission directly, the UN Country Team or other implementing partners.”

The report of the Advisory Group of Experts on the UN Peacebuilding Architecture reaffirms that recommendation. It suggests that:

“Where a peace operation mandate implies a central UN role (...) to core peacebuilding sectors (...), the General Assembly, in close cooperation with the Security Council, should consider steps to ensure that mandate implementation is accompanied by appropriate apportionment from assessed UN budgets for programme support, and such support should continue to UN Country Teams for a transitional period after mission drawdown.”

On the operational side, a number of existing challenges have been mentioned in this paper that currently hamper, slow down, or prevent a more effective collaboration between UN missions and agencies, and which would warrant a closer consideration at the policy level. These include:

- **Need for a standard MoU between missions and agencies to cover substantive functions:** A global standard Memorandum of Understanding between the Secretariat and UN agencies, similar to the one existing with UNOPS, would help to address many of the difficulties of operational cooperation at the country level and would smoothen collaboration in future mission contexts. Such an umbrella arrangement should serve to further clarify the accountability and reporting requirements of agencies that would receive assessed funds. The implementation of the Community Violence Reduction (CVR) programme in Haiti as well as of QIPs programmes across peacekeeping offer plenty of experience on mission-agency collaboration, and of the challenges that arise from differing systems and processes. A template for MoUs between UN entities already exists in the UNDG context, and has in some cases been applied by missions and agencies.

- **Need for resumption of interoperability discussions, and harmonization of administrative and human resources procedures:** As evidenced in the operationalisation of the Global Focal Point on Rule of Law arrangement in Somalia, the administrative and human resources systems and

---


procedures are not designed to support those integrated mechanisms between missions and agencies that have been agreed upon at the policy level. The review of UN peace operations has reaffirmed the need for administrative policies to be harmonised and geared towards the field.

- **Mission planning and resourcing:** The planning of the results-based budget of a field mission hinges almost entirely upon its staffing table. However, the approach to associate staffing numbers with an effective delivery of substantive mandates should be reconsidered and made more flexible, with a view to promoting and applying alternative mandate implementation modalities, including by drawing on UN agencies. The fact that missions are adequately resourced to sustain large numbers of international staff in the field, but often have little or no operational resources to implement programmes, is not always cost-effective and warrants reconsideration, as affirmed by the review report on UN peace operations.

- **Need for guidance on the permissibility of pooling assessed funding:** During the research on joint programmes between missions and agencies it has emerged that there is a lack of clarity on whether and how assessed funds can be contributed to pooled funding arrangements at country level, for example as part of joint programmes between missions and agencies, and/or in multi-partner trust funds. These mechanisms can increase the UN’s collective impact and deliver more effectively on the mission’s mandate, particularly in the context of current considerations to increase programmatic resources for field operations where appropriate.

**Acronyms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACABQ</td>
<td>Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVR</td>
<td>Community Violence Reduction programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DDR</td>
<td>Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DFS</td>
<td>Department of Field Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DM</td>
<td>Department of Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPA</td>
<td>Department of Political Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DPKO</td>
<td>Department of Peacekeeping Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISF</td>
<td>Integrated Strategic Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISG</td>
<td>Integration Steering Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoU</td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPTF</td>
<td>Multi-Partner Trust Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPPBA</td>
<td>Office for Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts (Controller’s Office, Department of Management)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PKO</td>
<td>Peacekeeping Operation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSC</td>
<td>Programme Support Costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RBB</td>
<td>Results-based Budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPM</td>
<td>Special Political Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDG</td>
<td>UN Development Group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reference Documents

DPKO-DFS 2014, Guidelines on Reinsertion Programmes. (Link to the UN-internal Policy and Practice Database – PPDB)

DPKO-DFS 2013, Policy on Quick Impact Projects.


Jeremiah Kramer 2015, Deployment of Mission Budgets through UNCT Members for Mandated Tasks in Transition Settings. (Link to the UN-internal Policy and Practice Database – PPDB)

Megan Price and Lina Titulaer 2013, Beyond Transitions: UNDP’s role before, during and after UN mission withdrawal. Clingendael Institute.


UNDG 2014, Guidance Note on Joint Programmes.

UNDG 2012, Inter-Organization Agreement concerning Transfer, Secondment or Loan of Staff among the Organizations applying the United Nations Common System of Salaries and Allowances.


UNMIT 2013, Memoranda of Understanding and chapeau document on UNMIT-UNCT Cooperative Agreements (attached to this document).


United Nations Secretariat, UNOPS 2014, Global Memorandum of Understanding (attached to this document).