

Joint External Evaluation

EVALUATION OF THE UNHCR JOINT ORGANISATION STRATEGY 2007-2009



**Evaluation of the UNHCR
Joint Organisation Strategy 2007-2009
with Canada, Denmark and UK**



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Acronyms

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| <i>AAP</i> | Annual Action Plan |
| <i>AHCU</i> | Africa Humanitarian Conflict Unit |
| <i>AGD</i> | Age, Gender, and Diversity |
| <i>AGDM</i> | Age, Gender, and Diversity Mainstreaming |
| <i>CIDA</i> | Canadian International Development Agency |
| <i>DAC-OECD</i> | Development Assistance Committee – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| <i>Danida</i> | Danish International Development Assistance |
| <i>DfID</i> | Department for International Development |
| <i>DPSM</i> | Division for Programme Support and Management |
| <i>GSO</i> | Global Strategic Objective |
| <i>GSP</i> | Global Strategic Priority |
| <i>HQ</i> | Headquarter |
| <i>HR</i> | Human Resources |
| <i>IDP</i> | Internally Displaced Persons |
| <i>JIA</i> | Joint Institutional Approach |
| <i>JOS</i> | Joint Organisation Strategy |
| <i>JSF</i> | Joint Strategic Framework |
| <i>KPI</i> | Key Performance Indicators |
| <i>MOPAN</i> | Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network |
| <i>OCHA</i> | Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs |
| <i>ODM</i> | Office of Organisational Development and Management |
| <i>ODSG</i> | Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Donor Support Group |
| <i>RBM</i> | Results-Based Management |
| <i>ToR</i> | Terms of Reference |
| <i>UK</i> | United Kingdom |
| <i>UN</i> | United Nations |
| <i>UNAIDS</i> | United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS |
| <i>UNDP</i> | United Nations Development Programme |
| <i>UNFPA</i> | United Nations Population Fund |
| <i>UNHCR</i> | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees |
| <i>UNICEF</i> | United Nations Children’s Fund |
| <i>UNIFEM</i> | United Nations Development Fund for Women |
| <i>US</i> | United States of America |
| <i>WHO</i> | World Health Organisation |
| <i>WTO</i> | World Trade Organisation |

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Executive Summary

Background

The Joint Organisation Strategy (JOS) is a collaborative framework between the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Canada, Denmark, and the United Kingdom (UK) that aimed at increasing the efficiency of their working relationship and strengthening UNHCR's capacity for operational delivery. The strategy was conceived in 2006 and put in place in mid 2007. The JOS was aligned with UNHCR's Global Strategic Objectives developed in 2006 and was guided by the priorities of the Executive Committee and its Standing Committee.

The JOS works at two levels: the strategic level which focuses on the overall relationship between the four partners, and the operational level which is concerned with the development and implementation of Annual Action Plans and annual reporting. The three JOS donors have been consistently among the strongest individual supporters of UNHCR. They contributed approximately 10% of the overall funding to UNHCR during the period 2007-08, and the proportion of unrestricted (un-earmarked) contributions from the three donors is relatively high compared to most other donors (29% in 2007 and 24% in 2008).

As the JOS was a new approach, the four partners committed to undertake an evaluation of the JOS in 2009 at the end of the first trial period. The two overall objectives of the evaluation are to: determine the extent to which the JOS has delivered the objectives and desired impact outlined in the strategy, and review the harmonised approach and share lessons-learned about the strengths and weaknesses of the approach. The evaluation focuses on two levels: the strategic and organisational level, and the operational level. It is intended that the key findings of the evaluation will inform the planning of the next JOS.

This evaluation assesses the relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness of the JOS based on key issues identified in the Terms of Reference (ToR) and refined in an Evaluation Matrix, compares the JOS with other relevant organisational frameworks, and identifies lessons learned. As the decision has been taken to develop a follow-on collective agreement, the evaluation's conclusions and recommendations have been framed as a starting point for a more detailed examination of options and modalities for an improved framework.

The evaluation began in early April 2009. Data collection included: missions to London, Copenhagen, Geneva, and Ottawa; interviews with UNHCR HQ managers, with staff and with representatives of all three donors at their headquarters and in Geneva, as well as with representatives from three comparator nations – the US, Sweden, and Germany. In addition it draws on desk reviews of four targeted UNHCR country operations and telephone interviews with country staff in Kenya, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Afghanistan, and Syria/Jordan. The Final report was presented to the Management Committee, subject experts and decision makers from the four JOS partners on October 2, 2009, and was followed by discussion among the partners on how to incorporate the recommendations in the development of the next JOS.

Key Findings

The primary motivations of the donor partners for the establishment of the JOS related to a balance between the collective and contributory goals of the advancement of the principles of good humanitarian donorship, adherence to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, and the desire to exert a higher degree of collective and individual influence with UNHCR.

The Relevance of JOS

From the outset and in light of broad principles of aid effectiveness, the multi-year JOS adopted the priorities of UNHCR and agreed to work to their attainment. To that end, there is a natural alignment. However, the JOS priorities as laid out in the agreement and as taken forward in the Annual Action Plans (AAPs) are re-articulations of UNHCR's then Global Strategic Objectives (GSOs), and in some cases, a single JOS priority amalgamates several UNHCR GSOs.

The only variance between UNHCR's own GSOs (now called Global Strategic Priorities [GSPs]) and JOS priorities comes at the level of the AAP where UNHCR and the three donor parties have agreed to identify some target countries in relation to a number of JOS programmatic priorities.

In embracing UNHCR's own priorities, the JOS is in accord with the Paris Declaration. As time has progressed, because UNHCR's own Global Strategic Priorities and accompanying performance indicators have evolved, a higher level of concurrence between the JOS overarching priorities and the current JOS annual action plan/targets, and UNHCR's own tools is likely to come about.

The JOS, to some degree, also has enhanced coherence among the three donor partners in the areas identified as JOS priorities, recognising however that donors have different views of priorities (i.e. some donors are taking a lead on priorities that their country feels are the most important).

This being said, it was found that although a robust multilateral planning and reporting system can reduce the need for separate donor mechanisms, donors' domestic accountability requirements can in some instances result in overlap and duplication of such mechanisms. This is the case for the UK as its accountability paradigm requires a higher degree of specificity both in terms of initial targeting and subsequent reporting.

The Efficiency of the JOS

The costs associated with JOS

The JOS was based on an assumption that the framework would result in cost efficiencies, primarily for UNHCR, and that it would contribute to strengthening UNHCR's capacity for operational delivery. However, the evaluation concludes that there is no clear picture of the cost implications of the JOS – either in terms of the level of interaction between the donors and UNHCR before and after the JOS, or when compared to other similar arrangements at UNHCR with other donors (due to the fact that the only other donor frameworks, both bilateral in nature use very different planning and reporting paradigms).

Interviews with respondents from UNHCR and from the three JOS donor agencies suggest that there are no indications of reduction of transaction costs neither for the donors nor for UNHCR. This is due to the time consuming process of setting up a new agreement and of joint negotiation processes, and the reporting requirements in place now compared to before the JOS. This is also due to the fact that, since the JOS does not cover all the interests of the three donors, it has not replaced bilateral engagements and meetings amongst the JOS donors and UNHCR.

With regard to the JOS planning and reporting system, stakeholders felt the stand-alone reporting system was necessary but time-consuming and they valued the process. (The JOS process required an annual stand-alone plan and performance report as UNHCR's standard reporting systems at the time were not considered fully capable of reporting on the range of agreed-upon targets.) However, the JOS stand-alone system may become a barrier to increased efficiency as the UNHCR adopts new priorities, indicators, and management information tools. FOCUS, UNHCR's new management information system, may be able to address this issue in the future as it will potentially provide all the data required for UNHCR's planning and reporting process as well as for future JOS planning and reporting requirements. From this perspective, it is likely that a new combined JOS framework for UNHCR would base any programmatic performance targeting and subsequent reporting on data derived from FOCUS. In relation to current reporting, the evaluation has found that the JOS donors have not used the annual reports to inform the development of a donor workplan or action plan. To this end, the evaluation shows that while there is formal review of the annual report with feedback, this review is not translated into an action plan to better harness donor support and maximise donor contributions.

The Nature of Coordination

A central tool for coordination in the JOS is the concept of the lead relationship – a *porte parole* for each of the five priority areas. However, this remains an ambiguous element of JOS that has yet to be fully developed and that does not appear to have reduced transaction costs and the degree of interface for the three JOS donor partners or for UNHCR. In addition, the JOS donors have maintained bilateral relationships with other donors and with UNHCR in areas that fall outside of the JOS as well as in some areas that fall inside the JOS (i.e. in some cases the JOS may be adding another layer to bilateral negotiations). Finally, the decentralisation of decision making amongst the three donor partners adds to transaction costs as each partner has different internal consultative processes in order to address JOS related and other issues.

Overall assessment of efficiency

UNHCR does not have baseline data that would allow a comparison of costs before and after JOS, and does not have systems to track operating costs. Consequently, the evaluation team had to rely on the perceptions of respondents who overall do not see any cost reductions as a result of the JOS.

The root cause for the absence of *major* transaction cost savings for UNHCR may lie in the fact that the 2007 JOS framework was largely silent about how it would be rolled out on a day-to-day basis and did not clarify its scope – in that it did not cover all aspects of relations between donors and UNHCR.

Equally, the founders of JOS, the donor partners, and UNHCR alike, may have underestimated the inherent complexity for UNHCR in four-part negotiations as op-

posed to a bilateral model, even one which might include performance targets and subsequent reporting. However, all four JOS partners recognise the potential of the JOS and its importance, but at the same time they are seeking to clarify the operating modalities of an arrangement that is proving to be more complex than working in a bilateral fashion.

The Effectiveness of the JOS

The evaluation found that the JOS has played a contributory role, largely as a challenge function in support of the evolution of UNHCR's planning and performance measurement system. This is one of the major benefits of the JOS and demonstrates how the JOS donors have made a positive contribution to the attainment of some UNHCR goals, clearly an affirmation of the Paris Declaration.

At the outset, JOS annual plans and performance indicators, while linked to what UNHCR could provide from its standard reporting systems of the day, showed some of the inadequacies of UNHCR's systems. UNHCR stakeholders confirmed that the JOS process challenged the ability of the UNHCR systems to provide standard data. The articulation of JOS annual priorities helped UNHCR recognise that its planning and performance measurement systems needed to be updated and, as such, had a positive influence in the early stage of the design of follow-on and more sophisticated instruments like the results framework and FOCUS. In more recent meetings between JOS partners and UNHCR personnel involved in rolling out FOCUS, the JOS partners contributed to the development of more sensitive planning and reporting systems by playing a challenge role to reinforce UNHCR's own commitment to renewal.

The JOS donors have also made modest contributions in the priority areas of Age, Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming and internally displaced persons (IDPs) which speaks to the ability of the JOS to influence UNHCR in areas other than those related to managerial systems and practices. This being said, donors and UNHCR respondents acknowledged that there is not a great deal of evidence of direct influence, but a strong perception among all stakeholders that the JOS partners contributed to priorities through their collective engagement, moral suasion, and some positive support, and that this contributed to UNHCR's goal attainment.

JOS and the Field

The JOS was conceived as an institutional level strategy and was never intended to be taken to the field level. Senior donor spokespersons and UNHCR managers in the field confirmed that the JOS was and is considered a high level strategy to promote donor harmonisation, collective contributions to UNHCR goals, and donor influence.

For UNHCR staff, the attainment of GSOs is the primary consideration. They have little or no knowledge of other frameworks, and whether donors are interested in specific GSOs is of little consequence. Representatives of JOS donors in the field cooperate and collaborate, but not necessarily in the context of JOS. This absence of JOS being communicated or even known at the field level may have resulted in lost opportunities for donors to contribute to the attainment of UNHCR goals and also to strengthen UNHCR operational capacity at the field level. While no specific instances of lost oppor-

tunities were identified, some stakeholders argued that there may have been lost opportunities in relation to donor harmonisation at the field level.

Donor and UNHCR stakeholders agreed there may be some benefit in considering how to operationalise a joint framework to add some degree of field level collaboration in the future.

Other Frameworks and the JOS

Two of the JOS donor partners, Canada and the UK, had performance-based frameworks prior to the JOS that mirror parts of the current JOS but that were less precise in annual performance targets. The only current performance-based frameworks at UNHCR are those of the US and Ireland, both of which are bilateral.

To enable the development of the successor to JOS, the evaluation examined six other performance-based frameworks between other multilateral bodies (UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, WHO, UNIFEM, UNAIDS) and donors (Canada, Denmark, Sweden, and the UK). These frameworks were a mix of joint arrangements and bilateral frameworks.

Among the frameworks reviewed, some common patterns emerged:

- While priorities included a mix of programmatic areas (e.g. IDPs, resettlement) and managerial areas (e.g. evaluation, audit, HR improvements, UN system co-ordination), goals and indicators were primarily managerial rather than programmatic;
- In most of the sampled frameworks, planning was multi-year and reporting was based on the multilateral organisation's reporting system (i.e. do not require a specifically generated report).

The UNICEF framework appears to address many of the shortcomings and ambiguities of the JOS. The Joint Institutional Approach (JIA) was established in 2007 between UNICEF and Canada, Sweden, and the UK. It identifies key performance indicators that are within the span of control of UNICEF, and provides for performance ratings based on UNICEF's standard reporting mechanism and a new feedback mechanism.

Conclusions

The JOS is a high-level collective accord that has provided a stage on which several donors can collectively and strategically relate to improve harmonisation, strengthen their ability to contribute to goal attainment, promote their collective and individual influence, and strengthen UNHCR's own performance. The following three conclusions reflect a synthesis of the evaluation findings:

- 1) Notwithstanding some limitations noted in the evaluation, the JOS has contributed to strengthening UNHCR's overall performance in the attainment of its strategic goals, most notably in the evolution of its management systems.
- 2) By specifying key priority areas, but not presuming to cover the full range of interests of its donors, the JOS has been a valuable tool for promoting enhanced donor

harmonisation and the exercise of collective and individual influence over and above purely bilateral approaches.

- 3) The JOS is a work in progress; some ambiguities about its scope and direction need to be addressed during the negotiation of the follow-on joint framework.

Lessons Learned

The following lessons from the evaluation are intended to inform key decision-makers at UNHCR and among the current JOS donors (and other interested parties) as they seek to strengthen the effectiveness of future arrangements.

- Joint arrangements such as the JOS have a greater chance of strengthening the capacity of a multilateral body like UNHCR if in their structure they define the roles and responsibilities of all parties and allow sufficient time for establishing and managing joint processes.
- In a joint framework like the JOS, the ability to measure contributions to goal attainment is increased when the priorities identified are managerial rather than programmatic.
- There is a greater likelihood of reducing the transaction costs of a joint agreement like the JOS when donors adopt the priorities and standard reporting mechanisms of the multilateral body.
- Performance-based frameworks like the JOS are more useful for donor harmonisation if the supporting management information systems can aggregate and disaggregate organisational goals and corresponding performance data through standardised means.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: That the three JOS donors and UNHCR undertake a process to craft a new framework agreement between like-minded donors and UNHCR and a new Joint Strategic Framework (JSF).

The following might be some primary assumptions about a new framework, namely that it:

- be strategic and synergistic in nature;
- be a means to strengthen UNHCR's delivery capacity while promoting greater donor harmonisation and the exercise of collective influence;
- not require recasting existing priorities;
- articulate a set of priorities/areas of interest that can be measured and for which some degree of direct or even indirect evidence can be mustered; and

- promote increased cooperation/synergies in the field.

These strategic assumptions can be translated into the following suggested general model for a new Joint Strategic Framework:

- A multi-biennium framework that would have annual or biennial reporting;
- A set of up to six managerial priorities drawn from UNHCR's new GSPs that would focus on biennial targets to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of UNHCR's overall delivery capacity (HR, budgeting, planning, data accuracy, monitoring and evaluation, UN systems collaboration, etc.);
- A reporting mechanism whereby the donors use UNHCR standard reports to provide a critical analysis in relation to the specific targets, and if individual donors so wish, also to provide UNHCR with their individual analysis of the areas of prime mutual interest;
- An agreement that within two to three years UNHCR would in turn provide a biennial analysis of donor performance based on a set of indicators that would be developed during the life of the framework;
- Clarification of the lead relationship for each priority area and the opportunity for non-lead partners to provide their views on all priorities if need be;
- A communications effort to increase awareness of the framework among all partners and an agreement to develop a means to enhance synergy in the field.

Recommendation 2: That UNHCR and the JOS donor partners agree to a year-long renewal of the current JOS process and a timetable for the creation of the new framework.

The following steps are suggested to develop a new Joint Strategic Framework:

- Step 1. Getting Ready to Envisage the Future (October-December 2009)
- Step 2. Clarifying the Key Issues (January-February 2010)
- Step 3. The First Draft (March-June 2010)
- Step 4. Validation with the Existing JOS (June 2010)
- Step 5. Refining the New Joint Strategic Framework (July-September 2010)
- Step 6. Finalising the New Joint Strategic Framework (September/October 2010)

1. Introduction

Background

This evaluation assesses the efficiency, effectiveness, and relevance of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Joint Organisation Strategy (JOS), which is a four-way agreement between UNHCR and Canada, Denmark, and the United Kingdom (UK).

The JOS marked a first for UNHCR and the three donors in that it was the first multi-partite framework agreement. Prior to JOS, the three donors engaged with the UNHCR on a more classical bilateral level and played an important role in relation to the provision of unrestricted funding. The JOS, conceived in early 2006 and put in place by mid 2007, contained a commitment to undertake an evaluation in the final year, 2009, and thus, this report fulfils that commitment.

Evaluation Objectives

The two overall objectives of the evaluation as outlined in the JOS 2007-09 are to:

- determine the extent to which the JOS has delivered the objectives and desired impact outlined in this strategy and;
- review the harmonised approach taken to this strategy and share lessons-learned about the strengths and weaknesses of the approach”¹.

It is intended that the key findings of the evaluation will inform the planning of the next JOS. The evaluation is intended to inform three key audiences: 1) the management and governing bodies of the three donors and UNHCR; 2) other key donors to UNHCR; 3) the international community.

The evaluation focuses on two levels.

First, it focuses on the strategic and organisational level to assess and document the extent to which the JOS has a) enhanced coherence of the three donors’ approach, and b) increased the efficiency and effectiveness of the working relationship between UNHCR and the three donors.

Specifically the key evaluation questions at the strategic and organisational level are as follows:

- How well is JOS in line with UNHCR’s own priorities?
- Has JOS enhanced coherence in the donors’ approach? Are the donors well aligned on all positions?

1) Joint Organisation Strategy: UNHCR 2007-09, Canada, Denmark and UK (<http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/CIDAWEB/acdicida.nsf/En/NAT-8693640-HYG>), p. 11.

- Are the modalities for influencing UNHCR's performance different in JOS than through individual strategies?
- How is the coordination between the three JOS donors and other donors supporting UNHCR?
- How effective has the division of labour been? How has the lead agency and relationship with co-donors worked in the different priority areas? What is the level of donor satisfaction with the internal cooperation?
- To what extent has the JOS been successful in reducing management demands and associated transaction costs among the donors and within UNHCR?
- To what extent has the JOS had an impact on donors' funding support to UNHCR?

Second, the evaluation focuses on the operational level which aims to assess whether the JOS has enhanced UNHCR's capacity for operational delivery within the five specific areas identified in JOS, namely Emergency responses and preparedness, durable solutions, internally displaced persons (IDP), age, gender and diversity mainstreaming (AGDM) and, finally, results-based management (RBM) and evaluation.

The evaluation includes five cross-cutting evaluation questions:

- The extent to which the support to the five priority areas has had an impact on policy, strategy, priority setting, planning and monitoring at UNHCR Headquarters (HQ);
- The existence of mechanisms to communicate and translate HQ decisions into practice at the field level;
- The degree and effects on JOS of decentralisation both within UNHCR and within each of the three donor agencies;
- The extent to which UNHCR at field level is pursuing the five priority objectives;
- The degree of awareness of JOS among the three donor agencies at the field level.

The complete Terms of Reference (ToR) are presented in Annex 1.

Further to the Inception Mission, these questions were refined in an Evaluation Matrix that organised the questions in a three-part framework on JOS relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness (Annex 4). However, the evaluation was much more than a retrospective. Central to this assignment has been the development of recommendations and options for the future. Accordingly, a major element of this report is forward looking.

2. Methodology

Evaluation Process

The evaluation took place between April and September 2009 with data collection conducted at Headquarters of each of the three donor agencies and Geneva levels in June and at the field level in late June and early July. The evaluation was undertaken by a team of five consultants from Universal Management Group – one team leader and four core team members.

Data Collection

The evaluation was based on an Evaluation Matrix, approved by the Evaluation Management Committee (see Annex 4), which outlined the evaluation questions and included data collection methodologies, data sources, and key respondents. The data collected were primarily qualitative and were triangulated to validate data from more than one source. The methodology for data collection consisted of document review, interviews, and virtual field missions.

- **Document review** of: a) background documentation, b) correspondence and meetings, c) donor-specific documents, and d) external reports and assessments.
- **Semi-structured interviews and small group meetings:** Interviews were conducted with personnel of the three donors at their headquarters (HQ), with their representatives located in Geneva, with comparator nations (the US, Sweden, and Germany), and with UNHCR HQ managers and staff. Respondents were selected in collaboration with the Evaluation Management Committee (see Annex 2 for a full list of people interviewed).
- **Virtual field missions:** In addition to interviews of HQ personnel, desk reviews and telephone interviews with country staff were conducted in four targeted UNHCR country operations in Kenya, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Afghanistan, and Syria/Jordan (in relation to Iraq).² In selecting these countries the evaluation sought to cover a combination of emergencies.

Interview guides were developed based on the evaluation questions and addressed the strategic, organisational and operational evaluation questions. Interview guides were tailored to obtain data from the broad categories of informants (UNHCR, donor partners at HQ, donor partners in the field, etc. – see Annex 5).

Availability of Data

It became apparent early in the evaluation that the bulk of the documents available concentrated on either the negotiations that transpired during the creation of JOS in

2) The countries were selected on the basis of the following criteria: a) “Delivering as One” environment; b) “Consolidated Appeal” nation; c) IDP situation; d) Protracted Situation/Durable Solution considerations; e) Recent emergency/rapid response environment; g) Focus on Africa; h) Presence of at least two (sometimes three) JOS donors.

2006/2007, or the negotiations that surround the formulation of the annual JOS action plans and the subsequent annual JOS report. Very little documentation was provided about how the JOS may or may not have been rolled out within UNHCR, or about donor interactions other than in relation to the annual planning reporting cycle, with the notable exception of material from DfID that chronicled how it worked with UNHCR at the field level. From the perspective of UNHCR, most of its documentary data related to JOS focused on JOS negotiations. This documentary set required the evaluation to rely heavily on interview data and triangulation.

A significant amount of information was collected from interviews at the Headquarters of the three donor partners and UNHCR. These informants had a good knowledge of the JOS and were able to provide good insights on its effectiveness, efficiency and relevance. Data obtained from respondents in the field was often more general and less insightful. Many field respondents commented on their interactions with UNHCR but often had a limited knowledge of the JOS. Finally, interviews with comparator nations provided the team with factual data on their specific issues and approaches to engaging in mechanisms comparable to JOS.

Limitations

The assignment was undertaken in a very tight timeframe. Because all four JOS parties had already decided to develop a follow-on collective agreement, it was essential that interim findings be made available to them at the earliest possible moment so as to inform time sensitive and complex negotiations.

Only two weeks ensued from the inception mission (to all national HQs and UNHCR) and the delivery of the Inception Report. Following the approval of the Inception Report and Evaluation Matrix by the Management Committee, the major data collection and interview activities occurred between June 1 and July 14 with the delivery of the Interim Report. It was thus less than eleven weeks from the start of the Inception Mission in early May to the first presentation of findings on July 14, a very tight time-frame which limited the amount of time that could be dedicated to the methodological development and design of the study.

Another limitation was the absence of solid benchmarks on which to assess the *ex ante* and the *ex post* conditions of UNHCR and the three donors as they relate to the existence of the JOS. Moreover, there have been several turnovers of personnel within all four JOS partners, making it virtually impossible to garner qualitative data about the *ex ante* condition.

There was also no clear understanding of what type of conditions cost efficiency should be compared against. For example, should the assessment of cost efficiency assume a comparison against three hypothetical bilateral agreements of equal rigour to the current JOS, or to the conditions that existed prior to the JOS?

Finally, because the JOS was not well known in the field, the team obtained relatively little information on the second, fourth, and fifth cross-cutting evaluation questions.

How to Assess what Difference the JOS has Made

Even though much of the work of the evaluation was formative in nature, the key evaluation question points to the need to assess the contribution that the JOS has made to

UNHCR – did JOS make a difference? To address this challenge some factors need to be taken into account.

First, the priorities of JOS (both at the macro level in the overarching three year JOS, and at the annual level in the annual action plans) are in fact re-articulations of UNHCR's own priorities, as they should be in line with the commitments to alignment. The overarching 2007 JOS document itself specified that JOS priorities would not include activities that were not part of the set that UNHCR itself had established. The five JOS priorities (emergency response and preparedness; durable solutions; internally displaced persons; age, gender, and diversity; and results-based management and evaluation) were acknowledged by UNHCR and the three JOS partners as issues that were of paramount concern to UNHCR.

This leads to the perception of an attribution gap in that it is not possible to attribute to JOS, in any traditional way, changes in the actions or practices of UNHCR beyond the most general of observations.

Second, the key evaluation questions noted above, which were amplified in the approved Evaluation Matrix, focus on how to assess not so much what has changed at UNHCR but on the effect of donor practices and behaviours on changes in UNHCR. As well, the centrality of the principles of aid effectiveness and humanitarian donorship leads the evaluation away from a traditional performance metric of cause and effect to a more dynamic one of how the actions of one set of stakeholders (donors) impacted on or contributed to supporting the recipient of their support (UNHCR). Thus, the core question of “What difference has the JOS made?” needs to be cast not so much in a traditional sense of the measurement of outcome performance (UNHCR's), but in how the donor parties contributed to or supported UNHCR in the attainment of its own goals, how their actions supported the strengthening of UNHCR's delivery capacity, and what blockages there might have been to optimal donor performance.

The evaluation therefore did not look through the lens of attribution, but rather contribution.

Organisation of the Report

This report presents the evaluation findings and recommendations and is organised as follows:

- Chapter 1 introduces the assignment, its purpose and goals;
- Chapter 2 provides a description of the evaluation methodology;
- Chapter 3 presents a discussion of the fundamental nature of the JOS;
- Chapters 4, 5, and 6 present the findings of the evaluation in relation to relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness respectively;
- Chapter 7 provides a discussion of the JOS at the field level;

- Chapter 8 provides a comparison of the JOS in relation to other organisational frameworks (both within UNHCR and among other multilateral organisations);
- Chapters 9 presents the conclusions and lessons learned;
- Chapter 10 presents the recommendations and options for the future of collaborative relationships with UNHCR. Three broad approaches are presented and discussed.

The following annexes to this report are provided in this document:

- Annex 1: Terms of Reference
- Annex 2: Stakeholders Consulted
- Annex 3: Documents Reviewed

Additional annexes to the Evaluation Report can be viewed on the website www.evaluation.dk.

- Annex 4: Evaluation Matrix
- Annex 5: Interviews Protocols
- Annex 6: Inception Report and Workplan

3. The Nature of the JOS

3.1 Description of the JOS

The Joint Organisation Strategy (JOS) is a collaborative framework between Canada, Denmark, UK, and the UNHCR that aims at increasing the efficiency of their working relationship and strengthening UNHCR's capacity for operational delivery. The strategy, which is consistent with the Paris Declaration and the Principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship, was decided upon in 2006 and developed through a collaborative process between the four partners during the latter part of 2006 and early 2007. The JOS is aligned with UNHCR's Global Strategic Objectives (GSOs) developed in 2006 and has also been guided by the priorities of the Executive Committee and its Standing Committee.³

The JOS works at two levels: the strategic level which focuses on the overall relationship between the four partners, and the operational level which is concerned with the development and implementation of Annual Action Plans (AAP) and annual reporting.

- At the strategic level, the JOS aims to create a more efficient, coherent, and predictable relationship among the partners in accordance with the Paris Declaration and the Principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship on harmonisation and alignment.
- At the operational level, the JOS works towards five priority objectives based on the GSOs of UNHCR. Each donor takes a lead in developing, monitoring, and evaluating a set of mutually agreed indicators and targets against two of the following five priority objectives: a) emergency response and preparedness [UK]; b) durable solutions [Canada: resettlement; Denmark all other aspects of durable solutions]; c) internally displaced persons [UK]; d) age, gender, and diversity [Canada]; e) results-based management and evaluation [Denmark].

The Annual Action Plans, prepared in a collaborative process between the JOS donors and UNHCR, constitute a significant part of the collective work related to the JOS. Through this process the donors collectively agree on a number of areas and indicators that they consider to be particularly important. The Annual Action Plans thereby become instruments for influencing and measuring the effectiveness of UNHCR's interventions in areas of strategic importance for the donors.

Funding

During the period 2007-08 the total amount of contributions to UNHCR amounted to almost US\$ 2.9 billion.⁴ As shown in the table below, the three JOS donors contributed approximately 10% of the overall funding to UNHCR during the period.⁵

3) Joint Organisation Strategy: UNHCR, 2007-09, Canada, Denmark and UK.
4) UNHCR Global Report 2007 & 2008.
5) Ibid.

Table 3.1 Total Contributions from JOS Donors to UNHCR, 2007-08 (US\$)

| Country | 2007 | 2008 | % of overall funding |
|---------|-------------|-------------|----------------------|
| Canada | 35,662,770 | 42,792,868 | 2.7% |
| Denmark | 57,945,675 | 55,779,338 | 4.0% |
| UK | 56,212,879 | 57,422,861 | 4.0% |
| Total | 149,823,331 | 155,997,075 | 10.7% |

Although their contributions may seem relatively modest compared to the total amount, the three donors have been consistently among the strongest individual supporters – particularly in the provision of unrestricted (un-earmarked) funds. The table below shows the level of unrestricted funding from the three donors.

Table 3.2 Unrestricted Contributions from JOS Donors to UNHCR, 2007-08 (US\$)

| Donor | 2007 | Share | Rank | 2008 | Share | Rank |
|---------|------------|-------|------|------------|-------|------|
| Canada | 12,068,966 | 5% | 8 | 14,314,928 | 5% | 8 |
| Denmark | 22,927,690 | 9% | 4 | 25,440,313 | 8% | 4 |
| UK | 38,539,554 | 15% | 2 | 34,926,471 | 11% | 3 |
| Total | 73,538,217 | 29% | | 74,683,720 | 24% | |

It is also interesting to note each donor's unrestricted contributions as a percentage of their overall contributions: In 2007-08, almost 70% of UK contributions were unrestricted; 40% of Denmark's, and 30% of Canada's. The proportion of unrestricted contributions from the three donors is relatively high compared to most other donors. This demonstrates the degree to which they are willing to use un-earmarked funding to support UNHCR and thus adhere to the global goal of good donorship by moving away from earmarking and towards the potential strengthening of the delivery capacity of an organisation like UNHCR. The three JOS donors provided 29% of UNHCR's unrestricted funding in 2007 and 24% in 2008.

One of the objectives of the JOS is to increase the overall amount of funding from the three donors and ensure a more predictable funding regime. While Canada's contributions increased nearly US\$ 7 million (a 19% increase), funding from the other two donors remained relatively stable throughout the period under review.

The causes for the relative stability of funding for UNHCR go well beyond the JOS. Key donor spokespersons identified strongly competing pressures for support from a number of multilateral and humanitarian bodies along with overall budget levels for development cooperation as a whole. As well, while the JOS itself committed the donor partners to increased funding support as a general principle, the annual plans remain silent on actual funding levels, unlike the US's annual performance accord with UNHCR which sets a funding target for each year.

3.2 The Origins of the JOS

Finding 1: The primary motivations of the donor partners for the establishment of the JOS related to a balance between the collective and contributory goals of the advancement of the principles of good humanitarian donorship, adherence to the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, and the desire to exert a higher degree of collective and individual influence with UNHCR.

All donor stakeholders affirmed that their prime goals for working together lay in the promotion of increased aid effectiveness (the Paris Declaration), and support for the principles of good humanitarian donorship. At the same time, all three donors, including representatives who were involved in the 2006/07 negotiations, stated that they also had compelling and mutually supporting national reasons for doing so:

- A long-standing and generally like-minded relationship among the three donors;
- A recognition that at a strategic level there was a somewhat greater chance that three mid-level donors acting collectively rather than individually could have a higher degree of influence, a sort of *gestalt* of influence.

The second of these compelling and mutually supporting reasons – the exercise of collective and individual interest – warrants more examination given that it seems to contradict the support for global commitments to harmonisation and alignment.

First, documentary evidence from 2006 shows patterns of internal and collective discussions that clearly indicate that the exercise of influence, and the notion of “three being stronger than one,” was and remains a reason for the existence of JOS. This early documentary evidence also includes references to exercising policy influence up to and including efforts to shift/expand UNHCR’s mandate. Second, interviewed donor representatives, past and present, affirmed that the exercise of influence was an objective.

In citing some of the other reasons for collaboration, these respondents noted UNHCR-related contributing factors that are more in the spirit of global commitments. Some of these were time sensitive to UNHCR’s conditions at that moment and include:

- A collective recognition among the three donors that UNHCR was at a major turning point and that there was a unique opportunity to encourage UNHCR towards its own goals;
- A mutual and long-standing interest on the part of the three donors in improving the quality of the management paradigm at UNHCR – specifically in its approach to needs identification and subsequent planning and reporting on the basis of articulated results – and a mutual parallel view that UNHCR could benefit from a more intensive approach to accountability and stewardship via the evaluation function;
- An assumption by the donors that a collective framework would reduce costs to UNHCR and potentially improve their own efficiencies by collaborating, but not to the extent of giving up national interests.

Thus what is apparent from the donor perspective is that while global commitments played a major role in the genesis of JOS, there was, and is, a clear balance with na-

tional interests. Which was more important? Neither. It was understood that the JOS, while shaped around five priority areas that the three donors recognised as of ultimate importance to them, did not constitute the entirety of their relationship with UNHCR. Donors had interests beyond the scope of the JOS and continued to engage UNHCR independently through their bilateral commitments to the principles of aid effectiveness. Bilateral engagement is (or should be) consistent with the JOS, and therefore both processes mutually reinforce the same objectives.

UNHCR's reasons for entering into a collective framework such as the JOS are somewhat more common or unified and do not have as much of the "tug and pull" as those of the donors. They include:

- Reducing transaction costs in cyclical negotiations – reducing the number of bilateral engagements;
- Reducing the possibility of multiple donor reporting requirements;
- Promoting a more stable, common, and predictable platform on which to base relations;
- Strengthening the possibility of increased funding;
- Harnessing increased support for UNHCR's renewal and for its policy directions.

It also should be noted that notwithstanding the global adherence to the Paris Declaration and the principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship, other donors to UNHCR have not come together, either to join the JOS or to associate themselves collectively in JOS-like arrangements.

At the inception of the JOS in 2006 some other countries were approached. Documentary data and interview testimony shows that some chose not to participate because they wished to maintain what was called "a lighter touch," namely, that they did not see any compelling national interests in entering into a performance-based collective agreement. Interview testimony also uncovered that there was some concern about being subsumed in a collective framework.

This does not mean that donors who decided not to participate in some way were ignoring global commitments to aid effectiveness. Rather, it underscores that some potential participants concluded that they could meet their international commitments through bilateral engagement and that it was not, at that time, in their national interest to enter into collective arrangements.

4. The Relevance of the JOS

“Relevance: The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries’ requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners’ and donors’ policies. Retrospectively, the question of relevance often becomes a question as to whether the objectives of an intervention or its design are still appropriate given changed circumstances.”

Source: OECD Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management

Finding 2: In line with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Principle of Good Humanitarian Donorship, priorities set out in the JOS were and are aligned with those of UNHCR.

As was noted in the basic description of JOS presented in Chapter 3, from the outset and in light of broad principles of aid effectiveness, the multi-year JOS adopted the priorities of UNHCR and agreed to work to their attainment. To that end, there is a natural alignment. However, the JOS priorities as laid out in the overarching three-year agreement and as taken forward in the Annual Action Plans (AAPs) are recapitulations or re-articulations of UNHCR’s then Global Strategic Objectives (GSOs), and not the direct ratification of them.

In several cases, a single JOS priority amalgamates several UNHCR GSOs, for example, the JOS priority afforded to Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) condenses/amalgamates two UNHCR GSOs, 4.1 and 5.1.

The only variance between UNHCR’s own GSOs (now called Global Strategic Priorities [GSPs]) and JOS priorities comes at the level of the AAP where UNHCR and the three donor parties have agreed to identify some target countries in relation to a number of JOS programmatic priorities. However, all stakeholders agree that even here, the selection of target countries was in large part a function of UNHCR’s own planning and not the independent choices of the JOS donor partners.

The JOS re-articulation of the GSOs was in large part due to the state of UNHCR’s annual planning systems at the time and the recognition by the founders of JOS that the GSOs and accompanying performance indicators were not sufficiently clear to meet the requirements of a new combined framework. It should be emphasised that this re-articulation did not add to UNHCR’s own priorities. Rather, as all major stakeholders of UNHCR and the three donors have reported, the JOS process played a contributing role, a positive challenge function, in assisting UNHCR in the evolution of its managerial systems that subsequently led to the introduction of FOCUS, its management information system (see Chapter 6, Finding 16).

The implication of this initial finding is that the JOS, in embracing UNHCR’s own priorities, is in accord with the Paris Declaration. Subsequent findings related to relevance address the degree to which this concordance has resulted in a coherent approach.

Finding 3: UNHCR’s draft Global Strategic Priorities (GSPs) for 2010 and 2011 and their proposed performance indicators should result in a higher level of concurrence with JOS priorities and annual action plans/targets.

One of the most significant changes that has occurred since the JOS inception in 2007 is the degree to which UNHCR's own planning and reporting systems have evolved and increased in their specificity and their capacity to articulate organisational goals in a results-based fashion, linking goals with measurable performance indicators. This marks a significant transformation and is in large part due to managerial leadership at UNHCR and new planning and reporting tools like FOCUS.

For example, the new GSPs (finalised on August 24, 2009) provide a much more detailed and cross-cutting performance framework than was possible using UNHCR's prior annual planning systems and GSOs (e.g. Section 6 addressing durable solutions, and the new FOCUS-based results framework, which contains seven sub-categorisations and more than 60 performance indicators).

Thus, the need for separate re-articulations combined with separate reporting, which characterises the current JOS, may be receding in importance. Nevertheless, the possibility of an overall increase in transaction costs on UNHCR resulting from both separate action plans and subsequent special reporting should not be discounted even over the immediate short term (one to two years hence).

Finding 4: The JOS has enhanced coherence among the three donor partners to some degree in the areas identified as JOS priorities.

Stakeholders among the three donor partners of JOS report that to some degree, JOS has resulted in their working together more closely and in a more common approach in some of the priority areas such as Durable Solutions; Age, Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming (AGDM); and to some extent, IDPs. In the area of AGDM, for example, Canada and the UK collaborated, with Canada promoting greater mainstreaming and the UK providing a consultant to better shape AGDM action plans and reporting frameworks. In the area of RBM and evaluation, all three donors provided feedback to UNHCR on several occasions during the shaping of FOCUS.

There is some evidence that the three donors came together to advance changes or enhancements in how UNHCR might address an issue, especially in relation to management practices. This higher degree of concordance and harmonisation of both goals and effects may be more possible in areas of managerial renewal than in areas that have larger global policy implications. For example, in the areas of IDPs and Durable Solutions, donors and UNHCR stakeholders alike noted that there are conceptual and strategic level policy differences. As well, it was noted that one of the three donors reserved the right to independently engage UNHCR on any policy matter contained in the JOS.

Finding 5: Unlike the JOS, the two other performance-based frameworks between UNHCR and other agencies (US and Ireland) cover all UNHCR priorities.

The US's current annual framework identifies the same priorities as the JOS, with the proviso that the US prefaces its identification of these areas of prime concern with a categorical statement that it supports the full range of UNHCR goals (GSOs at the time), something which the current JOS does not do. US respondents stated that while they identified the five subject areas as of prime importance, their primary approach was based on ratifying the importance of all UNHCR priorities and not imposing formal reiterations and not demanding separate results reporting (as does JOS) to meet what may be internal compliance considerations by a donor. As a point of clarification, the US's agree-

ment also has a very short annex of six specific issue areas wherein specific targets are set, but which also stipulates that reporting will be based on standard UNHCR reports. Ireland's accord is somewhat different in that it is partially a transactional accord and partly results-based. It shares, in a broad fashion, the JOS goals of durable solutions, emergency response, IDP, much of AGDM-related issues, and managerial renewal. It adds, however, ensured visibility for Irish Aid activities and UN system integration. Irish Aid specifies that it will utilise the reports of UNHCR and will work through a bilateral process to address issues of concern or to seek additional data.

Other key donors like Sweden and Germany advised that, for the most part, they saw the five areas encapsulated in the JOS as the most salient of UNHCR's areas of activity.

Finding 6: Although a robust multilateral planning and reporting system can reduce the need for separate donor mechanisms, donors' domestic accountability requirements can result in overlap and duplication of such mechanisms.

In examining six such frameworks with other multilateral bodies,⁶ and in discussions with stakeholders who are intending to establish such with other multilateral bodies, it became obvious that the nature of the multilateral agency's planning and reporting system could play a major role in shaping parameters in relation to reporting. Simply put, the more robust, transparent, and inclusive the planning and reporting system of the multilateral agency, the less the donors seemed to require specific special action plans and stand-alone reporting.

As well, it should be noted that different countries may have different performance measurement expectations for their domestic accountability requirements. For example, the US, with one of the world's most rigorous legislated performance reporting regimes as set down by the Government Performance Review Act of 1993, relies on and will continue to rely on UNHCR's standardised performance reporting that is common to all donors, while the UK will not as its accountability paradigm requires a higher degree of specificity both in terms of initial targeting and subsequent reporting.

This leads to a tentative conclusion that in some instances domestic reporting requirements may result in overlap and duplication and, in theory, may run against the drive for alignment and the reduction of internal transaction costs. The current JOS requires the negotiation of a stand-alone annual action plan (largely because UNHCR's own systems were annualised at that time) and, more importantly, a synthesised and stand-alone annual report rather than the UNHCR Global Report. Subsequent findings related to efficiency address the implications of the stand-alone planning and reporting format in more detail.

6) Canada, Sweden, the UK with UNICEF (2007); Denmark and the UK with UNFPA (2009); Denmark and the UK with UNDP (2008); the UK with the WHO (2008); the UK with UNIFEM (2005); the UK with UNAIDS (2008).

5. The Efficiency of the JOS

“Efficiency: A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results.”

Source: OECD Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management

5.1 The Costs Associated with the JOS (Transaction and Division of Labour)

One of the prime assumptions on which the 2007 JOS was based was that there would be cost efficiencies, primarily for UNHCR, in developing a common framework and that this would contribute to strengthening UNHCR’s capacity for operational delivery. As noted in the limitations in Chapter 2, this has proven to be methodologically difficult to address. Thus, in working with these issues, the evaluation came to the conclusion that the issue of cost efficiency might be best addressed by reviewing the practices of JOS to identify blockages/barriers, overlaps, and ambiguities within the existing model.

Finding 7: There is no clear picture of the cost implications of the JOS compared to other similar arrangements at UNHCR; the only other donor frameworks, both bilateral in nature, have performance considerations built in and use very different planning and reporting paradigms.

As noted earlier, only the US and Ireland have performance-based frameworks with UNHCR and both are bilateral; several other donors rely largely on funding transfer mechanisms.

The nature of the relationship between the US and UNHCR is at a totally different level than the JOS – UNHCR relationship. The US provides about 25% of the UNHCR budget and is by far the largest donor. While its framework may appear to be less complex, the day-to-day nature of the relationship is recognised by both UNHCR and the US as quite labour intensive on both sides. Thus, attempting to benchmark the cost efficiency of the JOS against the US framework does not lead to any relevant conclusions other than the obvious, that the relationship between UNHCR and the US is complex and multifaceted.

Ireland’s agreement with UNHCR is cast in terms of results and performance indicators, but relies on a traditional annual bilateral framework with no formalised reporting and utilises one set of targets for a two-year duration. It is not comparable to the JOS.

Finding 8: While the JOS planning and reporting system was time consuming, stakeholders felt it was necessary and valued the process. However, as the UNHCR adopts new priorities, indicators, and management information tools, the JOS stand-alone system may become a barrier to increased efficiency.

The current JOS is driven by its overall three-year framework and the three annual cycles of AAPs and subsequent stand-alone annual reports.

Turning first to the cost associated with the development of the JOS framework in 2006 and 2007: While all stakeholders present at the time and documentary evidence indicate that the process was time consuming, it should be noted that the development of a “first ever” collective performance-based framework could not be expected to have been accomplished in a short time span. Key donor stakeholders involved in that process reported that while time consuming, especially in relation to seeking the agreement of all four parties, positive lessons were learned about cooperation and the degree to which UNHCR’s systems at the time were capable of responding to performance-based requests.

As well, the time and effort required to negotiate the overarching JOS framework accord also enabled the four parties to better explore issues about aid effectiveness as a whole. Several donor spokespersons were candid in remarking that it probably would have been a great deal less onerous to have negotiated three bilateral agreements with three separate bodies than to have worked in a four-way partnership, but that the added benefit of donor harmonisation and collective contributions to goal attainment outweighed the transaction costs to donors.

Turning now to the annual planning and reporting cycle. The JOS process requires the articulation of an annual stand-alone plan that recapitulates or synthesises UNHCR goals and an annual stand-alone performance report. Stakeholder testimony and documentary review indicate that the annual cycle was chosen in large part because UNHCR at the time was planning and reporting on an annual basis. As well, the decision to develop a stand-alone JOS report and not use a standard reporting vehicle was seen to reflect the situation with UNHCR’s own reporting systems at the time, which were not considered fully capable of reporting on the range of agreed-upon targets. Data for annual JOS reports were drawn from a variety of sources, including the now superseded Standards and Indicators Data Base as well as the database used for the standardised Global Report.

The annual JOS planning process involves a number of months of negotiations that affect all four parties. Interviews with CIDA and Danida staff indicated that the collaboration necessary to convene, engage, and coordinate with the other JOS partners has required additional time and effort. An examination of the records of all parties shows the extent to which JOS annual negotiations can consume time and resources. In 2008, for example, the AAP was not ratified until nearly the last quarter of the year. Donor spokespersons noted, however, that in 2008 there was a large replacement of their Geneva and HQ personnel working with UNHCR and that it took time for the new teams to become familiar with the workings of UNHCR and the JOS. While this is a natural phenomena caused in large part by diplomatic rotation combined with the relatively small number of donor personnel involved in UNHCR relations, it has the potential of resulting in both a loss of institutional memory as well as slowing the ability of the donors individually and collectively to work together to strengthen UNHCR and contribute to its goal attainment through the JOS.

There is general agreement that the annual JOS negotiations have been time consuming for all parties. The AAP negotiations (which affect the donors and UNHCR alike) in effect are processes to recapitulate/synthesise UNHCR’s own goals, although the time also was used to play a challenge function and thus served to strengthen UNHCR’s own capacities (as shown in findings related to effectiveness).

Donor staff also indicated that similar time and effort have had to be deployed in trying to achieve other forms of multiparty agreements. Thus, it would seem that from a donor

perspective, multiparty arrangements are inherently more time consuming. Indeed, one donor remarked that the time-consuming nature of negotiations was a deterrent to bringing others into JOS – adding additional partners could result in even more protracted negotiations. Yet, this is not to advocate a return to purely bilateral arrangements. The overarching goal of promoting donor harmonisation and collective alignment, and the balancing of these commitments with the need to also exercise a higher degree of collective contribution would be impossible in a bilateral paradigm.

UNHCR reports that there are some time savings in having a common approach instead of three annual negotiations, each of which might be as detailed as the JOS itself. They also report that JOS negotiations over the AAPs are very time consuming, but that there was probably very little else that could have been done given the state of its planning and reporting systems. It bears repeating that UNHCR has acknowledged that the JOS process played an important challenge function and was a contributing factor in the development of a more comprehensive approach to UNHCR planning and reporting at the institutional level.

This situation however, has changed with the adoption of new GSPs and accompanying set of performance indicators and the introduction of the FOCUS management information system. These new approaches to more precise planning, accompanied by a comprehensive and results-based management information system, lead to a new situation in which it is likely that the JOS stand-alone planning and reporting may constitute a barrier if not an overlap of UNHCR's modernised and standardised planning and reporting mechanisms.

The next finding addresses the capacity of FOCUS to streamline cost efficiencies in the future.

Finding 9: FOCUS, UNHCR's new management information system, can potentially provide all the data required for UNHCR's planning and reporting processes as well as for future JOS planning and reporting requirements.

This finding is crucial in the assessment of the long-term cost implications of joint frameworks and whether there is any possibility to reduce overlap or duplication of effort. In short, in any future JOS-like agreement, is there a need to continue special reporting requirements and synthesised priorities, or can FOCUS and UNHCR's own systems provide sufficient detail to meet the expectations of the JOS donors?

Over the past three to five years, UNHCR has undergone profound changes in its management and planning paradigms, with FOCUS being one of the most visible manifestations. Virtually all donors have encouraged UNHCR to develop more comprehensive management information systems and accompanying practices.

Moving to a needs-based approach, articulating priorities, and linking these to much more measurable indicators via FOCUS, result in both top-down and bottom-up approaches to planning and resource allocation. Clearer and better defined linkages between corporate goals (formerly called GSO and now GSP) have increased the results concentration of the central planning systems. The move to a biennial budgeting system provides a somewhat greater and more realistic time frame in which to achieve goals and also allows for the articulation of goals that are more outcome-oriented.

On balance, the GSPs and accompanying indicators of performance would appear to provide a qualitatively superior level of planning and reporting of performance management data than was possible before, and thus a much higher degree of precision in planning and accuracy in reporting.

Specifically, FOCUS has the ability to aggregate and disaggregate baseline and subsequent performance data including country level disaggregation. It has a similar capacity with respect to future targeting, and by implication, to future reporting. However, this is not to say that FOCUS is presently perfect, far from it. In addition, it is not clear whether FOCUS will be directly accessible by donors.

As with any new comprehensive planning and reporting system, there will be roll-out difficulties. One of the chief problems that affect any data system like FOCUS is the accuracy and timeliness of its information. UNHCR relies on various partners for reporting of data, and the problems of timeliness, comparability, and quality assurance of that data will not be resolved by FOCUS. This challenge is common to other UNHCR systems, including the Standards and Indicators Data Base,⁷ and to virtually any management information system of any organisation that relies on data provided by networks and third party delivery agents.

Therefore, the phase-in challenges should not deter the use of FOCUS or promote the assumption that FOCUS will not be fully reliable for a period of time. In this light, the attitude of the US towards FOCUS and managerial reforms as a whole is relevant to this evaluation. The US confirmed that while it recognises that FOCUS may have some phase-in challenges, it is vital that it be supported and as such the US will use the primary data derived from FOCUS and amalgamated in standard UNHCR reports as the basis for its review of UNHCR's overall performance. It will not seek separate management reports.

This positive affirmation of the viability of the use of FOCUS leads to a conclusion that, in the immediate future, a new combined JOS framework for UNHCR would probably base any programmatic performance targeting and subsequent reporting on data derived from FOCUS. To do otherwise could be interpreted as a lack of confidence in the management renewal process at UNHCR and could be seen as somewhat at variance with donor commitments to alignment and harmonisation.

The new FOCUS system will include both HQ and administrative priorities as well as those associated with directed beneficiary programming (e.g. durable solutions or IDPs), and will gather field level data with a degree of precision not previously possible. While new performance data will be available that might make it easier to measure UNHCR processes and outputs at all levels, it will be important to decide what to measure.

5.2 The Nature of Coordination

This set of findings addresses one of the key hypotheses of the JOS – that a higher level of coordination among donor partners would in some ways reduce the interface between the donor partners and UNHCR and result in reduced transaction costs.

7) The Standards and Indicators Data Base, UNHCR's current major data source, is scheduled to be phased out. Since this should take place only when FOCUS is fully operational, it may be necessary to continue using it for another year.

Finding 10: The lead relationship concept remains an ambiguous element of JOS that has yet to be fully explored and that has not reduced transaction costs or the degree of interface between the three JOS donor partners and UNHCR.

The lead relationship concept – whereby one donor assumes the role of primary contact point between the donor partners and UNHCR on a specific priority area – is one of the unfulfilled elements of the JOS. Several donors made it clear that, regardless of which donor was the designated lead in a given area, they would not give up the right to interact directly with UNHCR on any subject area deemed important to their national interests. UNHCR reports that all three donors have interacted directly with UNHCR in areas which are not their “lead” areas, including scheduling separate meetings with UNHCR within the space of only a few weeks on topics such as AGDM and IDP.

The lead relationship could result in reduced costs to UNHCR and increase impact if one donor could fully represent an issue area. This, however, would remove the room of manoeuvre of a country to represent its own interests and require an agreement for consensus, not only about the action plan, but more importantly, about the policy matters that relate to the totality of the priority area.

What is absent in the current JOS in relation to the longer-term role for a “lead” is a collective and high level agreement to set out a mechanism to balance national interests with the desire to promote harmonisation and greater collective impact. The two commitments may not be mutually exclusive. As a matter of principle, a donor may wish to promote great alignment within broad subject areas, as has been done with the overall JOS priorities and thus promote a more collective approach to these areas with all donor partners. However, that does not necessarily bar a donor from putting greater emphasis on some aspects of the subject area than others. At an informal level, the JOS donor partners tend to recognise that individual partners may have a stronger level of interest in one area or another, and that this level of specialisation/expertise has had a positive benefit for JOS as a whole. The lead relationship concept could be a valuable tool, but may need to be clarified in any future follow-on to the current JOS.

Turning to the subordinate issue of whether the lead relationship has reduced the transaction costs of donors and UNHCR alike, all report that from the outset – from the negotiation of the JOS framework itself, through the AAP negotiations, to the day-to-day discussions surrounding the implementation of the JOS priorities – there have not been any cost or time savings related to the lead relationship to date. While this objective has not been met in the current JOS, it might be met in the future JOS if the reporting process is aligned and the lead concept designed in a way that would reduce the number of bilateral meetings on specific issues.

The additional transaction costs and time and effort are due primarily to the fact that the initial JOS framework of 2007 did not set out a clear partnership agreement regarding the modus operandi of the three donor partners and the lead relationship, i.e. how decisions should be taken, how the three would work together, what would happen if one partner needed more consultative time prior to responding, etc.

There is, however, a track record of collaboration. UNHCR and JOS partners and stakeholders all noted examples of effective collaboration – such as a number of joint letters and a number of instances of covering for each other at various meetings – as collective means of working together to support UNHCR. These kinds of collaborative efforts

serve UNHCR's interests and by extension, continue harmonisation and alignment, and promote inter-donor collaboration.

Finding 11: The JOS donors have maintained bilateral relationships with other donors and with UNHCR in areas that fall outside of the JOS.

Among the three donors, the JOS and JOS-related activities represent only a part of their on-going relationships with UNHCR and other donors. Donor partners at their respective HQs reported that they frequently deal with other partners before their JOS partners. For example, several respondents indicated that they did not view their participation in the JOS as in any way requiring them to address a situation, a policy issue, or an emergency funding request within the structure of the JOS in the first instance. These donor respondents also made it clear that the JOS represented part of their countries' engagement with UNHCR, in areas where they see benefits to a common approach and where their collective efforts can carry more weight, but that it is not considered an exclusive framework.

One of the assumptions that underpinned the JOS, or that may have evolved over the past three years, is that in some ways the JOS might be a "one stop" window between the three donor partners and UNHCR. UNHCR reports that the nature of coordination and collaboration after the passage of the JOS has remained, in some ways, the same as before. CIDA and Danida have maintained bilateral relationships with UNHCR, and the UK, which refrained from a bilateral relationship during the lifespan of the JOS, appears to have decided to engage UNHCR on a bilateral basis. The JOS therefore, would appear to be an additional relationship laid over top of on-going bilateral dealings.

A more salient issue may lie in the fact that JOS-based negotiations and on-going relations have not replaced donors' bilateral relations. This would appear to be a duplication of effort and imposed additional costs on UNHCR. However, that conclusion could be sustained only if the JOS had been designed as the sole vehicle for donor engagement with UNHCR and if JOS encompassed all the interests of the donor parties. Such is clearly not the case.

For example, JOS does not address key protection-related issues such as refoulement, statelessness, migration policy, adherence to international instruments, to name only four of the many elements that make up the international protection regime. The same kind of picture can be developed for virtually every other major theme of UNHCR overall responsibilities, with the JOS priorities (the overarching ones set down in the 2007 accord as well as the annual priorities) representing only a portion of the range of interests that donors may have. One donor stated that the full range of UNHCR-related issues was a major factor in their maintaining a bilateral relationship outside of the JOS.

However, there also is clear recognition that among the three JOS donors, their long-standing traditions of being largely like-minded about many key issues has resulted in long-standing patterns of collaboration, formal and informal at various levels, which pre-date the JOS and which may be equally valuable.

Finding 12: The level of decentralisation of internal decision-making of each of the three donor partners adds to transaction time, which affects the overall efficiency of the JOS.

This finding addresses two characteristics of the donor partners, the nature of their overall decision-making paradigms and their level of decentralisation. The following briefly summarises the level of donor decentralisation as well as the degree to which other government bodies are involved in relations with UNHCR over and above the JOS lead relationship.

- Canada maintains a centralised approach with CIDA HQ having ultimate responsibility for JOS, granting however, that the Canadian representative in Geneva has a considerable degree of autonomy. Several other domestic ministries have to be consulted before a Canadian stance on JOS can be articulated. CIDA HQ and staff in Geneva both participate in the annual transactional negotiations of the AAPs and subsequent reports. Canada has not decentralised its decision-making to the field level in terms of individual requests for assistance or the ability to make individual contributions at the country level. However, some CIDA representatives contacted in the target countries of this evaluation reported that they actively participate in field level collective discussions/briefings with subsequent upwards reporting to both CIDA HQ and staff in Geneva.
- In the case of Denmark, the responsibility and decision-making on JOS and UNHCR rests with the Geneva-based mission. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is consulted, but no other domestic ministries are involved. In terms of decision-making at the field level and in response to individual requests for assistance, Denmark has a select number of “program countries” where field representatives have a degree of local autonomy/direct involvement.
- The UK has the most decentralised system; field offices of DfID have a considerable degree of local decision-making, up to and including the ability to negotiate specific local agreements that now are beginning to include performance measures. DfID HQ retains the authority to negotiate the JOS itself and the AAPs and subsequent reports, but has to consult with other domestic ministries about both the JOS and non-JOS related issues.

Turning to the nature of overall national decision-making, as noted above, it is evident that JOS only addresses part of each donor’s relationship with UNHCR. Each of the three JOS donors also have internal consultative processes, some involving other domestic ministries, in order to address some JOS-related issues as well as other subjects that are not embodied in JOS. One donor respondent indicated that it is more time consuming for parties to interact within a joint framework than in a bilateral relationship due to the need to mount internal consultations with other domestic ministries, then seek consensus with the other JOS donors on subject areas that fall outside the direct mandate of the JOS lead. Staff working in the three donors agencies reported an increase in transactions as they have to maintain their bilateral relationships and then harmonise with the other two JOS donor agencies when dealing with the five priorities.

This reinforces the conclusion that the JOS (with only five priority areas) cannot be the sole vehicle for the three donors due to their interests that go beyond the JOS. This implies that the commitment to harmonisation and alignment should be seen in relation to the JOS priorities and not in an all encompassing sense. This necessarily results in an overall relationship between UNHCR and a given donor that embodies trade-offs and multiple layers, and not a monolithic or universal approach.

As will be shown in the findings related to the JOS and the field, the JOS does not have a field presence per se in that neither UNHCR nor the donors have taken any action to give it one, of any nature. There is however, an emerging field-related issue that may have impact on future transaction costs for UNHCR. The evaluation uncovered instances where one partner is now beginning to engage in individual project level negotiations with UNHCR HQ wherein specific accountabilities/indicators are being developed for specific projects, some within the realm of the JOS and some outside of it. The possibility therefore exists that another level of project-level reporting will be developed over and above the JOS reporting frameworks.

At this time, because the new set of FOCUS-based performance indicators has yet to be approved, it is not possible to assess whether there are any variances between these local agreements and the new set of indicators. Necessarily however, it would seem that if the JOS donor partners are generally seeking to promote alignment and harmonisation with UNHCR's own goals and thus its new planning and reporting framework, any performance measure in such local agreements should be based on local disaggregation of common indicators.

5.3 Overall Assessment of Efficiency

Finding 13: On balance, the JOS has not resulted in a reduction of overall management and transaction costs for UNHCR or for the JOS donors.

Overall, there are no indications that the current JOS has reduced transaction costs for either the donors or for UNHCR. This is due to a range of factors noted above, including: a) the time-consuming process of setting up a new agreement; b) the time-consuming process of joint negotiation processes; c) the JOS reporting requirements; d) the continuing bilateral engagement of the JOS donors with UNHCR on areas not covered by the JOS; and e) an additional layer of engagement with UNHCR on issues covered by the JOS.

For UNHCR, there may have been some limited reductions in transaction and managerial costs in working with the three donors through the JOS rather than conducting three sets of independent bilateral negotiations and subsequent relations. This conclusion, however, depends on whether the three donors would have established individual frameworks of the same or greater complexity as JOS.

The root cause for the absence of major transaction cost savings for UNHCR may lie in the fact that the 2007 JOS framework was largely silent about how it would be rolled out on a day-to-day basis and did not clarify its scope – in that it did not cover all aspects of relations between donors and UNHCR. Equally, the founders of JOS, the donor partners, and UNHCR alike, may have underestimated the inherent complexity for UNHCR in four-part negotiations as opposed to a bilateral model, even one which might include performance targets and subsequent reporting.

This reinforces one of the general conclusions of the evaluation – namely that the current JOS is a work in progress and that as time has passed, some of the gaps in its structure have become ambiguities that may have detracted from its overall utility.

Finding 14: While all four JOS partners recognise the potential of the JOS and its importance to them, they are seeking to clarify the operating modalities of an arrangement that is proving to be more complex than working in a bilateral fashion.

This finding speaks to the general conclusion that JOS remains a work in progress. It speaks to the somewhat obvious conclusion that four-party negotiations for annual action plans can be a time consuming activity as is witnessed by the pace of the negotiations and approval of all three AAPs. It speaks to the ambiguities about the lead relationship and the scope of the JOS versus the totality of donor relationships with UNHCR.

For its part, UNHCR is seeking clarification of key operational elements like the lead relationship, the scope of the JOS, the issue of new planning and reporting tools as part of future planning and reporting mechanisms, and seeking to better understand the extent to which each JOS donor partner intends to retain independent authority.

The JOS does not, nor was it designed to encompass the entirety of the relationship between UNHCR and a particular donor. This issue requires explicit clarification in any future joint relationship.

6. The Effectiveness of the JOS

“Effectiveness: The extent to which the development intervention’s objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance. Also used as an aggregate measure of (or judgment about) the merit or worth of an activity, i.e. the extent to which an intervention has attained, or is expected to attain, its major relevant objectives efficiently in a sustainable fashion and with a positive institutional development impact.”

Source: OECD Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management

The collective worth of the JOS is the central focus of these findings. In light of the Paris Declaration, the key issue is the extent to which the work of the three JOS donors has strengthened UNHCR’s overall delivery capacity. Key to this analysis will be the assessment of the nature and impact of the contribution that the JOS donor partners made to UNHCR, and the analysis of the areas where their contributions may have had more effect.

Finding 15: The JOS has played a contributory role, largely as a challenge function in support of the evolution of UNHCR’s planning and performance measurement systems.

This finding encapsulates some of the major benefits of the current JOS and demonstrates how the JOS donors have made a positive contribution to the attainment of some UNHCR goals, clearly an affirmation of the Paris Declaration. The JOS donors played a challenge role with UNHCR in some key areas to support and encourage a direction already laid out by UNHCR, and provided additional resources in the form of technical assistance. The donors and UNHCR alike recognise that the challenge function went beyond UNHCR’s immediate objectives and as such pushed the organisation to strive to do better, raising the bar so to speak – an exercise in the selective use of strategic influence within the broad parameter of supporting overall management improvement.

At the outset of the JOS, its annual plans and performance indicators, while linked to what UNHCR could provide from its standard reporting systems of the day, showed some of the inadequacies of these systems and UNHCR stakeholders confirmed that the JOS process challenged the ability of the UNHCR systems to provide standard data. Thus, the articulation of JOS annual priorities made a contribution to UNHCR in recognising that its planning and performance measurement systems needed to be updated and as such, had a positive influence in the early stage of the design of follow-on and more sophisticated instruments like the results framework and FOCUS. In more recent meetings between JOS partners and UNHCR personnel involved in rolling out FOCUS, the JOS partners contributed to the development of more sensitive planning and reporting systems by playing a challenge role to reinforce UNHCR’s own commitment to renewal.

Turning to the issue of programme evaluation, which is cited in the JOS overall framework and AAPs, senior UNHCR spokespersons indicated that the fact that JOS specifically identified evaluation as an area of concentration made it easier to secure some additional resources from JOS donors and also to raise the profile of the evaluation function

within UNHCR as a whole. The JOS process contributed in two complementary ways, first by raising awareness of the importance of the evaluation function, and second, by providing a degree of practical support. On September 14th, 2009 the High Commissioner of UNHCR announced the integration of the programme management, analysis and support functions provided by the Office of Organisational Development and Management (ODM) and the Division of Operational Support (DOS) into a new Division for Programme Support and Management (DPSM).⁸

Other major donors have had engagement with UNHCR over managerial and performance planning renewal and have also articulated that improvements in the performance, planning, and management systems of UNHCR are of prime interest to them as well. Thus, the contributory role of the JOS partners and the JOS itself is but one of a number of positive influences seeking to support UNHCR's renewal objectives.

As time has progressed, UNHCR's planning and reporting systems related to performance measurement have become more sophisticated. This leads to a future challenge for the follow-on to the current JOS, namely how to continue to encourage UNHCR's managerial renewal processes, especially those related to performance planning and reporting, within the spirit of contributing, as opposed to simply challenging. The introduction of FOCUS may provide the space in which the JOS donors can replicate their past practices of contributing by providing positive feedback and advice on areas for improvement. Doing so would reinforce UNHCR's own commitments. Conversely, however, the continuation of the JOS stand-alone planning and reporting could be seen as a deterrent to FOCUS by implying that the JOS donors do not have full confidence in it, an implication that could be seen as moving away from harmonisation and alignment.

Finding 16: The JOS donors have made some modest contributions in the priority areas of AGDM and IDPs. Contributions to other priorities, such as emergency response and durable solutions, are less apparent.

This finding speaks to the ability of the JOS to influence UNHCR in areas other than those related to managerial systems and practices (i.e. AGDM, IDPs, durable solutions, emergency response).

UNHCR stakeholders readily acknowledge the contributory role that the UK has played in relation to IDP matters and Canada in relation to AGDM. They characterise this role however, as one of active moral suasion, encouraging and challenging UNHCR.

Some practical examples of contributions underscore that opportunities may exist in the future for targeted collaboration and support. For example, in the area of AGDM and IDPs, UNHCR managers pointed to the specific contribution of a consultant to develop a new accountability framework for AGDM and to the financing of training in the area of IDPs. In addition, DfID has been active in supporting pooled funding at the country level administered by the Humanitarian Coordinator.

In the areas of emergency response and durable solutions, two other programmatic areas that are identified as JOS priorities, the degree of JOS contribution was fairly subtle. UNHCR personnel working in these areas were somewhat more restrained in their affirmation of JOS playing a contributing role or challenge function and were not able to point to any particular change in behaviours and practices.

8) UNHCR memo from the High Commissioner to All HQ and Field Staff, September 14th, 2009.

In evaluation interviews, donors and UNHCR respondents acknowledged that there is not a great deal of evidence of direct influence, but a strong perception among all stakeholders that the JOS partners contributed to priorities through their collective engagement, moral suasion, and some positive support, and that this contributed to UNHCR's goal attainment.

In the areas of management practices/RBM/evaluation, the testimony shows that the JOS not only contributed to UNHCR's reform efforts, it was influential in doing so. It is true that in areas of internal management, UNHCR has a far greater degree of control over the evolution of its behaviours, policies, and practices than it may have in areas like IDPs or durable solutions. In these largely outward-looking subject areas, UNHCR's performance is in large part dependent on external variables such as inter-agency coordination and the decisions of national governments.

This leads to the observation that the contributions of the JOS donors may have been more effective in areas of management and planning than in other more programmatic activities.

Finding 17: The JOS donors have not used their annual reports to inform the development of a donor workplan or action plan.

This finding speaks directly to the way the three donors have addressed the AAPs and subsequent annual reports which, on the basis of documentary evidence, appear to be the largest single set of specifically JOS-related activities.

An examination of donor records shows a preponderance of activity around the negotiation of the AAP and much less activity around the analysis of the subsequent annual report. In many respects, the process of the review of the annual report does not appear to be proactive, in that while there is a formal review of the annual report with feedback, this review is not translated into an action plan to better harness donor support and maximise donor contributions.

It is clear that the JOS donors maintain on-going collective relationships. However, what appears to be absent is any formalised process that takes data from the annual report and links it to any kind of on-going donor workplan wherein the lead relationship could come into play. In short, an opportunity to strengthen both donor harmonisation and the collective ability to contribute to the attainment of UNHCR's own goals may have been overlooked in the design of JOS.

A more active approach also might strengthen the organisational memory of the donors, giving them an internal framework on which to plan more coordinated efforts and also on which to base longer-term policy considerations. In short, the quality of the overall dialogue would be enhanced.

7. JOS and the Field

This chapter addresses the questions in the ToR and the approved Evaluation Matrix about the impact of the JOS on the field and the level of coordination.

Finding 18: The JOS was conceived as an institutional level strategy and was never intended to be taken to the field level. As such it is little known in the field.

To date the JOS has had little if any impact or made any direct contribution at the field level because it was not intended to be taken to the field level by either UNHCR or the three donor partners. This was confirmed by the JOS founders, HQ personnel in each of the three donors, and field level staff of donors including some at the management level. There is also no documentary evidence to show the desire to do so by any of the parties.

All UNHCR managers including the representatives in the five locales contacted (Afghanistan, Congo, Syria/Jordan, and Kenya) were candid in saying that they had either never heard of the JOS or had only a passing awareness of it. They also reported that they had no knowledge of the content of any other framework including that of the US.

UNHCR managers at HQ and in the field said that they considered the JOS as an HQ-related activity. In their view, the JOS priorities are re-statements of existing UNHCR GSOs (as are the priorities of either the Irish or US performance agreements), and there was a general perception at UNHCR HQ that there was no need to communicate to the field that some of UNHCR's priorities had been identified as of primary interest to several donors. From a UNHCR field level perspective, the attainment of the GSOs is of prime importance and whether donors are interested in specific GSO subject areas is of little consequence.

Senior donor spokespersons in the field had the same response and remarked that when they engaged UNHCR in their locale, they did so as representatives of their countries, and not as JOS members.

There also is no documentary evidence to show donor partner field staff referring to JOS, even in instances where the local staff was engaging UNHCR HQ personnel who were involved in fund raising and contribution agreements. DfID reported that it had taken formal measures to raise awareness of its Institutional Strategies with agencies. However, Danida and CIDA reported that they had taken no formal measures collectively or separately to raise awareness of JOS among their field staff, to direct field staff to cooperate with JOS partners, or to advise UNHCR of the existence of the JOS.

The most important question however, is why did all parties seem to overlook the field? The most evident reason lies in the testimony of the founders of JOS which was confirmed by present day management personnel – JOS was and is seen at a higher more institutional or strategic level, with its primary focus being to promote harmonisation and contribute at a more collective level to the attainment of UNHCR's own goals, as well as the ever present donor goal of the strategic exercise of influence.

Finding 19: Representatives of the JOS donors in the field cooperate and collaborate, but not necessarily in the context of the JOS.

This finding speaks to how the JOS partners collaborate at the field level. There is strong evidence that the three JOS donors work together in the field and meet together with other donors on a regular basis, but not in the context of JOS. Their normal patterns of donor collaboration in the field or related to the field (e.g. donors' meetings/briefings, special committees, OCHA engagement, etc.) do not include considerations of the JOS. Donor spokespersons also indicated that, if they knew of the JOS, it had little impact on how they worked with UNHCR and other humanitarian entities at the field level. The JOS was characterised by these stakeholders as a HQ phenomenon. They also stated that in taking local decisions (either centralised or at a field level) they have varying circles of other stakeholders with whom they might first engage.

While some HQ personnel (among both donor partners and UNHCR) assume that one of the reasons for the lack of field presence may be varying levels of decentralisation, there is some evidence that the level of decentralisation may mean different things to different stakeholders. For example, in Kenya, while Canada does not have an on-site representative with decision-making power about humanitarian issues, there is a clear pattern of upward communication to CIDA HQ and Canadian staff in Geneva, showing subsequent decisions. Therefore, differing approaches to decentralisation and the nature of decision-making do not necessarily preclude the development of ways of harnessing collective efforts.

Finding 20: The absence of JOS being communicated or even known at the field level may have resulted in lost opportunities for donors to contribute to the attainment of UNHCR goals and also to strengthen UNHCR operational capacity at the field level.

What has been the impact of these realities – that the JOS per se was not communicated to the field by either UNHCR or the three donor partners?

In the estimation of field donor representatives from all three donors and echoed by some donor managers at HQ, some opportunities for cooperation and synergy may have been missed. Specific instances of lost opportunities were not cited; rather there was a broad agreement that greater collaboration of some nature might result in collective efforts. Several UNHCR representatives echoed these remarks and also noted that in some instances, there was overlap between UNHCR actions and those of at least two of the donors at the field level in areas related to durable solutions. Opportunities therefore may have been lost in relation to donor harmonisation.

Finding 21: Stakeholders see possible benefits to UNHCR in field level collaboration of the JOS donors in the future.

This finding is occasioned by comments from two UNHCR representatives who remarked that there could be benefits to UNHCR if the three major JOS donors collaborated in the field.

These stakeholders noted that in at least two instances in the four locales selected for field review, they had become aware that one of the JOS donors was engaging the national government and providing technical assistance, while UNHCR was also engaged in a similar dialogue with the same governmental bodies. The possibility of overlap was raised, although no data was provided to confirm this. Another UNHCR senior representative who conducts monthly briefings where all three JOS donors are present and

who also engages all three independently, stated that there might be instances in that locale where collaborative action by the JOS donors would be of benefit.

Canadian and UK field representatives indicated that had they known of the JOS, they might have had opportunities to work together. In discussions with some donor stakeholders at their HQs, there was some sympathy for seeking to shape a mechanism that might better link partners within a new joint framework. Discussions at Danida HQ also suggested opportunities for having more leverage in negotiations with local governments.

What was common among all these stakeholders was the theme of promoting better collaboration, but doing so in a somewhat informal “give and take” manner. None of these stakeholders envisaged a scenario of field level performance assessment, or any kind of transposition of the equally ambiguous lead relationship concept. What was being sought were means to share information and seek possible synergies and general collaboration.

These observations are somewhat puzzling in that all three JOS donors are members of the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) which is a network of like-minded donor countries that jointly conduct an annual in-house survey of multilateral partnership behaviour in developing countries (partnerships with national governments, civil society, and other bilateral and multilateral development agencies). The survey is based on the perceptions of MOPAN member embassies or country offices, arising from their day-to-day contacts with multilateral organisations. The objectives of the survey may be summarised as follows:

- 1) better information and understanding of multilateral organisations and their roles, performance by decision-makers, parliamentarians, and the general public in the MOPAN member countries;
- 2) better informed dialogue with multilateral organisations, both at headquarters and the country level; and
- 3) improved overall performance of multilateral organisations at the country level.

Thus in the context of MOPAN, there is a clear recognition of the importance of the field level. For example, in the 2008 MOPAN Survey of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) considerable emphasis was placed on how UNFPA functions at the field level.

8. Other Frameworks and the JOS

8.1 Introduction

As noted earlier, the only other performance-based frameworks at UNHCR are those of the US and Ireland, both of which are bilateral. To better situate the current JOS and enable the development of the successor to JOS, this chapter provides a brief overview of some other performance-based frameworks of other multilateral bodies.

8.2 Past Performance Based Frameworks

Two of the current JOS donor partners, Canada and the UK, had performance-based frameworks prior to the JOS. In many respects the UK's Institutional Strategy Paper of 2002 and Canada's 2001 and subsequent 2004 agreement mirror parts of the current JOS. All have preambles that are somewhat similar to the 2007 JOS agreement and all lay out multi-year goals and priorities and set some performance indicators. However, a few differences were noted: The UK agreement clearly promoted alignment by the explicit acceptance of UNHCR's own goals as those of the UK. Canada's agreement was more a narrative of mutual intentions but less specific in targeting, and was initially more managerial than programmatic in nature (e.g. two of the three priorities of the 2001 framework were related to RBM and evaluation, but the subsequent 2004 accord added two other areas – resettlement and emergency preparedness).

8.3 Current Performance Frameworks

Given that the decision to move forward with the renewal of a collective framework with UNHCR was taken before the commencement of this evaluation, it is important to survey some other models so as to provide factually based recommendations.

Canada, Denmark, the UK, and are among the most active countries in the development of performance frameworks with multilateral bodies, either joint or bilateral. The UK has had the greatest experience with such frameworks, stemming from its 1997 policy decision to move to more formalised Institutional Strategies.

The following agreements were reviewed:⁹

- Canada, Sweden, the UK with UNICEF (2007, and now renewed to 2013)
- Denmark and the UK with UNFPA (2009)
- Denmark and the UK with UNDP (2008)
- The UK with the WHO (2008)
- The UK with UNIFEM (2005)
- The UK with UNAIDS (2008)

9) While this list includes all the joint strategies in place among the three donors at present, it is not an exhaustive list of the 'national' or 'bilateral' organisational strategies in place between one donor and a multilateral agency but simply a selection of those reviewed for this exercise. For example Denmark also has a number of national organisational strategies in place with key UN partner organisations such as UNICEF, WHO, WFP and others.

In addition to these accords which are in place, Canada, Ireland, and the UK are in the process of developing a joint accord with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

All these agreements are in accord with global commitments towards donor harmonisation, donor alignment, and contribution to the attainment of the goals that the multilateral body has established. The differences in the performance frameworks, either joint or bilateral, lie in the length of the cycle, the nature of the priorities, the extent of annual or cyclical performance planning, and the nature of reporting to donor(s).

Finding 22: In most of the sampled performance frameworks, planning is multi-year, reporting is based on the multilateral organisation's reporting system, and the goals and indicators are primarily managerial rather than programmatic.

Multi-year Planning

The major difference between the JOS and some of the other frameworks in the agreements reviewed is that the notion of a specific annual action plan/report as part of the framework is not as prevalent. Many of the agreements reviewed (WHO, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA) utilise a multi-year framework of priorities with specific annual targets, which would be like rolling up the AAPs of the JOS into one accord.

For the JOS donors and UNHCR, setting targets and indicators on a multi-year basis would considerably reduce annual transaction costs for all parties. It would also give donors a longer term in which to adapt their work to UNHCR, thus strengthening their ability to make a contribution and promote a higher degree of harmonisation over the longer term.

Reporting Mechanisms

The performance frameworks noted above vary considerably in how the multilateral reports to the donor(s). However, there is broad acceptance that the general reporting vehicles of the multilateral partner are used as the basis for annual reporting. In short, unlike the JOS, most of the frameworks do not require a specifically generated report. There appears to be several reasons for this difference:

- The planning and management systems of some of the multilateral bodies are somewhat more comprehensive and timely than those of UNHCR in the pre-FOCUS era;
- The multi-year goals and indicators of some of these frameworks better lend themselves to the use of existing management information systems and their standardised reporting vehicles;
- Most of the multilateral bodies utilise a biennium or longer planning cycle for the articulation of priorities and accompanying indicators, while until the present biennium, UNHCR operated on an annual basis.

For the most part, these frameworks entail an annual review of the performance reports of the multilateral body against the targets set in the frameworks. Some also involve mid-year consultations.

Goals and Indicators

Although the sampled frameworks contain many types of priorities and areas of interest,

the majority are managerial or institutional in nature. They address issues such as planning systems, audit capacity, HR systems, UN systems integration, RBM, evaluation, etc. The suggested performance indicators for these managerial and/or institutional goals can be more precise than for programmatic activities where external and uncontrollable factors may play a large role in overall performance. By contrast, a majority of the JOS priorities are programmatic – IDPs, emergency preparedness, durable solutions, and to some degree, AGDM, with only the RBM/evaluation priority of JOS being formally managerial or institutional.

The driving factor for this tendency towards managerial as opposed to programmatic priorities lies in the realisation that improvement to managerial systems is essential to the overall global goal of increasing aid effectiveness and that improvement in managerial systems may be more measurable and less dependent on outside circumstances. For example, in the case of UNHCR and the current JOS priorities, many have targets whose attainment is dependent on factors outside of UNHCR's control such as multi-agency or government decisions and processes. Yet, it should be noted that UNHCR has mandated responsibilities to influence such external factors.

Finding 23: The UNICEF Joint Institutional Approach appears to address many of the shortcomings and ambiguities of the JOS.

One joint framework stands out as being somewhat different and somewhat more interactive than the others reviewed. The framework of Canada, Sweden, the UK, and UNICEF, the Joint Institutional Approach (JIA) was established in 2007 and is linked to UNICEF's new Medium Term Strategic Plan. The JIA has seven priority areas, all managerial in nature:

- Human Rights Based Approach
- Gender Equality
- Humanitarian Capacity
- Results Based Management
- Evaluation
- UN and Organisational Reform
- Human Resources.

For each priority, a set of two-year Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) was agreed to and these reflect UNICEF's own plans. Most of the KPIs speak to how UNICEF addresses key issues. For example, in relation to Humanitarian Capacity, managerially-related KPIs include:

- Number of field offices with emergency preparedness plans,
- Number of requests for surge support responded to within 56 days,
- Proportion of emergencies with a rapid assessment within two weeks,
- Number of country programs implementing gender mainstream,
- Proportion of declared emergencies where sector coordination is met,
- Number of core programs affected by emergencies with HIV risk included in total number of rapid assessments.

As well, several somewhat programmatic KPIs have been set for this priority, thus demonstrating the balance within the JIA model:

- Number of countries that have incorporated child protection in emergency situations into national planning mechanisms;

- Number of countries affected by emergencies that have implemented programs to prevent and respond to sexual abuse and exploitation.

The implications of such a model for priorities and indicators are significant. Most of the KPIs are within the span of control of UNICEF and thus lend themselves to greater measurability. The largely managerial priorities cut across a larger span of UNICEF's activities than those of the current JOS. Therefore, there is a greater possibility that the identification of such a cross-cutting priority will have a broader impact across the whole organisation.

In terms of reporting, the JIA utilises the standard reporting vehicle of UNICEF and does not require specialised annual reporting as does the JOS. What is different is that each donor conducts its own assessment of the progress made and feeds back on an annual basis to UNICEF. This annual report takes each of the priority areas and assigns it a general rating (red, amber, green) to indicate a general level of acceptance of the work done by UNICEF. Combined with multi-year targets, such an approach results in a more qualitative assessment of progress and does not require a time-consuming annual planning exercise. As well, based on testimony from the Canadian managers and corroborated by a note on lessons learned from DfID of January 2009, the reporting approach appears to be useful as a vehicle for the harmonisation of donor efforts and demonstrates to UNICEF the donors' collective commitment to progress. Equally, because the donors have to develop, analyse, and submit the report to UNICEF, they have the opportunity to strengthen their institutional memory.

Finally, the JIA model contains a new feedback mechanism to donors: For the final year of JIA's first cycle, UNICEF prepared a parallel report to the three donors that assessed their performance with UNICEF on the basis of principles of good donorship. The first iteration focussed largely on levels of contribution, but it is anticipated that this feedback mechanism may expand to other issue areas over the next four years.

Like any collective framework, the UNICEF framework has some limitations. Canadian and British evidence points to cost implications and the fact that anticipated cost savings may not have arisen, but are counterbalanced, as is the case with JOS, in the degree of collective impact. Likewise, the speed at which managerial and process renewal can be implemented seems to have been slower than originally anticipated, again in large part due to the inherent complexity of implementing change in any large organisation.

Interestingly, the UNICEF model has field level implications that are not as ambiguous as in the current JOS. Many of the KPIs speak to how country programmes have implemented these policy and process changes. Thus, the JIA explicitly recognises that the attainment of priorities is a balance between HQ and field level activities.

9. Conclusions and Lessons Learned

9.1 What Difference has the JOS Made?

The natural first question about the JOS is whether it has made any difference and by implication, whether the positive contributions were worth the costs. As the decision has been taken to develop a follow-on collective agreement, the evaluation has framed the answer not as a summative conclusion but as a starting point for a more detailed examination of options and modalities for an improved framework.

The JOS today can be characterised as a relatively high-level collective accord that has provided a stage on which several donors can collectively and strategically relate to improve harmonisation and alignment, strengthen their ability to contribute to goal attainment, promote their collective and individual influence, and strengthen UNHCR's own performance.

In this light, four general conclusions or observations can be made. They reflect a synthesis of all the above findings:

- 1) Notwithstanding the limitations noted in the evaluation, the JOS has contributed to strengthening UNHCR's overall performance in the attainment of its strategic goals, most notably in the evolution of UNHCR management systems.
- 2) By specifying key priority areas, but not presuming to cover the full range of interests of its donors, the JOS has been a valuable tool for promoting enhanced donor harmonisation and the exercise of collective and individual influence over and above purely bilateral approaches.
- 3) The current JOS at UNHCR is a work in progress; some ambiguities about its scope and direction need to be addressed during the negotiation of the follow-on joint framework.

9.2 Strengths and Challenges

These four general conclusions lead to the synthesis of strengths and challenges that can inform the development of the follow-on joint framework.

Table 9.1 Strengths and Challenges of JOS

| Strengths | Challenges |
|--|--|
| JOS has played a modest yet notable challenge function in relation to improved management practices at UNHCR. | Ambiguities about the concept of the lead relationship are irritants to UNHCR and the JOS donors alike. |
| Specifically, JOS targets and indicators are seen as having been influential in the way FOCUS has evolved. | There are inherent transaction costs in implementing a joint framework like the JOS that cannot be avoided. These costs lie in the processes required for negotiations, planning, and reporting – some of which could be reduced by harmonising a new framework with UNHCR planning and reporting systems. |
| The JOS framework provided donors with a mechanism to promote greater alignment of their goals with those of UNHCR. However, the implementation was difficult and needs to be clarified. | Conceptually, the added costs are offset to some degree by the added value of a collective relationship. |
| The JOS framework has provided a platform from which donors can exercise strategic influence, and raise priority issues with UNHCR both collectively and individually. | If the framework is intended to measure performance, targets need to be set in areas that are largely within UNHCR’s span of control and need to be measurable. |
| The JOS may have resulted in minor cost reductions for UNHCR (on the assumption that each of the three donors would have required a separate performance-based accord). | There is a need to streamline the paperwork inherent in the current framework. |
| The JOS has resulted in a predictable funding framework for UNHCR, although this has not resulted in an increase in core contributions. | There is a need to conceptualise how to involve donor and UNHCR staff at the field level in the JOS and build cooperation. |
| The JOS has provided a platform for on-going discussions between UNHCR and the donors. | |

9.3 Lessons Learned

With the overarching objective of a new accord in mind, the lessons learned from this evaluation are forward-looking and intended to inform key decision-makers at UNHCR and among the current JOS donors (and other interested parties); they speak to ways of strengthening the effectiveness of future arrangements.

1. Joint arrangements such as the JOS have a greater chance of strengthening the capacity of a multilateral body like UNHCR if in their structure they define the roles and responsibilities of all parties and allow sufficient time for establishing and managing joint processes.

The evaluation found that a key limitation to the effectiveness and efficiency of the current JOS was the absence of clearly defined roles and responsibilities for the lead relationship and for mechanisms to strengthen cooperation and alignment at headquarters and in the field.

2. In a joint framework like the JOS, the ability to measure contributions to goal attainment is increased when priorities identified are managerial rather than programmatic.

The current JOS contains a mix of programmatic and managerial priorities. The evaluation found that there was a greater ability to assess donor contributions to priorities of a managerial nature.

3. There is a greater likelihood of reducing the transaction costs of a joint agreement like the JOS when donors adopt the priorities and standard reporting mechanisms of the multilateral body.

The current JOS model rearticulated UNHCR's priorities and produced stand-alone AAPs and reports. While this seemed necessary at the outset, due to the state of UNHCR planning and reporting systems at the time, all parties underestimated the time and effort required. Today, with the new GSPs and the advent of biennial planning and FOCUS, the possibility of increased savings on transaction costs may be more achievable.

4. Performance-based frameworks like the JOS are more useful for donor harmonisation and alignment if the supporting management information systems can aggregate and disaggregate organisational goals and corresponding performance data through standardised means.

The FOCUS system will provide UNHCR and its donor partners with more accurate and timely information on which to base their actions. The enhanced specificity may enable donors to better target their support.

10. Recommendations

10.1 Options

As the JOS partners contemplate a collective approach to the future, there are two options:

- To renew the existing JOS framework with minor amendments and agree to renew the current paradigm of specific action plans and subsequent reports;
- To take a longer course of action to address current ambiguities and identify new ways of both maximising the impact of the framework from the donor perspective and increasing its utility to UNHCR.

Option 1 – Renew the Existing JOS with minor changes

This first option would entail revisiting the current JOS framework agreement to make a limited number of updates. This option would be possible to execute within a few months, as the priorities and basic modalities of the JOS would not be altered, and would reduce up-front transaction costs, such as those that ensued when JOS was created in 2006/2007.

This option, however, ignores many of the findings of this evaluation. It would not address the current ambiguities that have been identified. It would perpetuate separate JOS action plans and reports. It does not promote increased alignment. It would not clarify the lead relationship or address joint relationships in the field. Finally, it would deprive the parties of the opportunity of shaping a new framework based on the range of lessons learned and changing conditions at UNHCR.

Note: In this option, the practice of stand-alone action plans and reports would continue. If the partners want to consider moving to biennial planning and reporting to match the new UNHCR planning cycle, this would not be considered a minor change and the option is likely not viable.

Option 2 – Craft a New Framework Agreement between Like-minded Donors and UNHCR

This second option's key elements are the following:

- An agreement to renew the existing JOS with no changes for one year (2010);
- An agreement among UNHCR and like-minded donors (which may include more than the current three) to set up a Task Force of executive level personnel to shape a new collective framework;
- A target of having a new framework in place by September/October 2010.

This option is more complex as it requires a range of choices and a commitment by the parties to revisit the framework, the nature of their collaboration, and the nature of cooperative relationships with UNHCR.

Taking the time to shape a lasting agreement, one that might be capable of being repli-

cated by other multilateral partners, cannot be done in the waning months of 2009, or even the first quarter of 2010. Therefore, it would seem advisable to renew the current JOS effectively unchanged for the upcoming year.

Several key issues raised in this evaluation would have to be addressed at a conceptual level before a new framework could be developed. These include the measurability of its priorities, transaction costs for all parties, the nature (if any) of joint collaboration at the field level, ambiguities surrounding the lead relationship concept, and the development of a model for prioritisation and harmonisation that would better support UNHCR's own efforts.

One of the benefits of this option is the possibility of cross-harmonisation with other frameworks being developed/renewed by other humanitarian multilateral bodies, UNICEF and OCHA in particular. This renewal might also lead to other countries being more interested in participation, including some donors who decided not to join the original JOS. During data collection, the evaluation learned that Sweden, a significant donor to UNHCR, may be interested in a collective framework agreement. (Sweden is participating with current JOS donors in the UNICEF collective framework.)

The principle limitation of this option is that it is time consuming and requires an interim step – the one-year prolongation of the current JOS.

10.2 Recommendations

Recommendation 1: That the three JOS donors and UNHCR undertake a process to craft a new framework agreement between like-minded donors and UNHCR and a new Joint Strategic Framework (JSF).

The following might be some primary assumptions about a new framework; namely that it:

- be strategic and synergistic in nature,
- be a means to strengthen UNHCR's delivery capacity while promoting greater donor harmonisation and the exercise of collective influence,
- not require recasting existing priorities,
- articulate a set of priorities/areas of interest that can be measured and for which some degree of direct or even indirect evidence can be mustered, and
- promote increased cooperation/synergies in the field.

The above strategic assumptions can be translated into the following suggested general model for a new Joint Strategic Framework (see also Section 10.3 below on shaping a new framework):

- A multi-biennium framework that would have biennial reporting;
- A set of up to six managerial priorities drawn from UNHCR's new GSPs that would focus on biennial targets to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of

UNHCR's overall delivery capacity (HR, budgeting, planning, data accuracy, monitoring and evaluation, UN systems collaboration, etc.);

- A reporting mechanism whereby the donors use UNHCR standard reports to provide a critical analysis in relation to the specific targets, and if individual donors so wish, also to provide UNHCR their individual analysis of the areas of prime mutual interest;
- An agreement that within two to three years UNHCR would in turn provide a biennial analysis of donor performance based on a set of indicators that would be developed during the life of the framework;
- Clarification of the lead relationship to be limited to the analysis of the specific priority areas with donor partners explicitly having the right to submit their own views if need be;
- A communications effort to increase awareness of the framework among all partners and an agreement to develop a means to potentially harness synergies at the field level.

Recommendation 2: That UNHCR and the JOS donor partners agree to a year-long renewal of the current JOS process and a timetable for the creation of the new framework.

In recommending the creation of a Joint Strategic Framework, which will not be finalised until the end of 2010, the evaluation suggests the following medium-term critical path.

Step 1. Getting Ready to Envisage the Future (October-December 2009)

- October 2, 2009 workshop at UNHCR HQ to review this report;
- The development of a simplified 2010 JOS AAP, the short-term continuation of the current regime;
- The 2010 AAP could experiment with a new partnering approach whereby the donors would begin to use UNHCR data to conduct their own analyses, and also the use of UNHCR's GSPs and accompanying performance indicators, in order to test basic assumptions for the future; and provide a direct challenge function for UNHCR in the evolution of FOCUS;
- Participating donors and UNHCR may wish to reach out to other countries who may be interested in participating in a new joint framework;
- Renewal leadership – A high level task force should be established to lead the renewal. UNHCR may wish to consider one of its senior executives to be its lead representative. Donors may wish to nominate their national senior executives responsible for humanitarian programming as well as one staff member, and also ensure the active participation of their representatives in Geneva.

Step 2. Clarifying the Key Issues (January-February 2010)

- Preparation of background notes on each of the key elements of a new framework. This is largely a staff assignment;

- Research on cross-harmonisation with other frameworks being developed;
- Shaping of the overall direction for the new framework by the task force, perhaps in a workshop hosted by one of the donor partners. In this step, the task force will make its greatest contribution to the design of a new Joint Strategic Framework.

Step 3. The First Draft (March-June 2010)

- The strategic direction provided by the task force in Step 2 is translated into a draft of a new Joint Strategic Framework;
- It may be desirable to assign various parts to various partners so as to speed the process and thus to promote a new approach to the lead relationship;
- A virtual or actual working group based in Geneva could oversee day-to-day progress;
- A monthly meeting/teleconference might be needed to ensure continuity and progress.

Step 4. Validation with the Existing JOS (June 2010)

- The 2009 JOS AAP and report can be used to validate the renewal process. The bilateral discussions surrounding its renewal enables all the participants to come together to not only review the current JOS, but also to review progress on the new Joint Strategic Framework.

Step 5. Refining the New Joint Strategic Framework (July-September 2010)

- Refinement of the new Joint Strategic Framework in preparation for its ratification by national decision-makers and those of UNHCR;
- Any participants who have public consultation obligations can use the draft of the new framework as their consultative vehicle.

Step 6. Finalising the New Joint Strategic Framework (September/ October 2010)

- The new Joint Strategic Framework is finalised.

10.3 Shaping a New Framework

The Options Matrix

Shaping a new joint framework is not simply a choice between one or two modalities. Rather, given the complexity of the relationship between major donors and UNHCR, the range of issues to be addressed and factors related to short-term timing and longer-term duration, a matrix approach may best capture the range of possibilities and choices. The Options Matrix, presented in Table 10.1 at the end of this section, is described below.

Planning Cycle

There are three possible time horizons to be considered: an annual cycle, a biennial cycle, or a cycle that encompasses at least two biennia. The Options Matrix largely reflects a biennial option. UNHCR is now moving towards a biennial budgeting cycle and its new GSPs are being articulated on the basis of a two-year cycle with an annual update/review. In light of commitments of the Paris Declaration to strengthen delivery capacity and promote alignment and harmonisation, and mindful of the crucial objective that any joint agreement should be as transaction neutral as possible, a two-year cycle of planning and reporting would best coincide with that of UNHCR. This is not to say that a new framework could not be cast to run over two biennia. A second two-year cycle could follow the first, resulting in a longer and more predictable framework.

The Nature of Priorities

In terms of identifying priorities for the new framework, there are two options:

- UNHCR priorities restated/amalgamated by donors (as in the current JOS);
- The adoption of UNHCR priorities and indicators drawn from the new GSPs.

Adopting UNHCR's new set of GSPs and accompanying performance indicators would be a clear affirmation of the objective of supporting UNHCR to achieve its own goals. It would also reduce transaction costs involved in negotiation of stand-alone action plans, and enable the use of standardised reporting, again reducing transaction costs.

The Type of Priorities

Of the current JOS priority areas, three are arguably programmatic (durable solutions, emergency responsiveness, and IDPs), one is purely managerial (RBM), and one combines programmatic and managerial considerations (AGDM). The evaluation found that it was in the area of the largely managerial RBM-related priorities that there was the greatest evidence of JOS donors playing an identifiable contributory role. As well, DfID's 2007 practice note for its Institutional Strategies indicated that in beginning to link contributions and performance, the use of a set of managerial functions (HR, audit, evaluation, etc) should be considered as areas to be measured.

Given the new FOCUS system and the new GSPs, which contain HQ and administrative/management functions, it is possible to construct a set of priorities for a new framework that would be largely managerial in nature, akin in many ways to those of the UNICEF framework. The continuation of RBM and evaluation as a managerial priority would seem to be self-evident, and this could be expanded upon to include other areas of interest related to improved management practices – HR systems, budgeting renewal considerations, UN systems integration, improving data capture and accuracy, etc.

The selection of largely managerial priorities would enable a higher degree of accountability and increase the likelihood of more sensitive and timely performance measurement. However, the selection of priorities or areas of interest need not be one dimensional. For example, donors might agree to a largely managerial set of priorities drawn from the new GSPs, while at the same time, identifying some broad program areas of prime interest to them, but without performance plans for these areas. This sort of mixed approach may be a way to signal areas of collective strategic interest and support, while also permitting each country to exercise its own policy decisions – one of the current ambiguities of the lead relationship.

Reporting

In most of the other joint frameworks reviewed in the evaluation, donors rely on the standardised reports of the multilateral agency as the reporting vehicle for the framework. The current JOS model of stand-alone reporting by donors was deemed necessary in 2006/07 when the JOS was established. In the current environment, however, continuing this model would imply that there may be data transparency and/or accuracy issues with standard UNHCR reports.

There is a third way to report that is embodied in the joint UNICEF framework. In this model, the multilateral agency generates standard reports on agreed two-year targets and the donors use the agency's reports to craft their own collective annual reports on priorities. In this way, the donors provide a more qualitative assessment of the performance of the multilateral agency. (It should be noted that each of the donor partners to the UNICEF agreement also provide their own individual assessments.) This model embodies more of a collective partnership approach and less of a donor/recipient approach. As a result of the donors' analysis, the subsequent policy dialogue can be more issues-oriented. This form of reporting also may give donors a better opportunity to assess the degree of their own harmonisation with the goals and work of UNHCR.

In terms of limitations, aside from the time and resources donors invest to conduct their own analyses, a donor-driven model of reporting and analysis is highly dependent on transparent, timely, and accurate data in standard reports. One of the advantages of the suggested one-year renewal of JOS is that it will allow FOCUS to mature throughout 2010.

The Options Matrix outlines two options for reporting, one in which UNHCR reports to donors on priorities and pre-set targets through its standard report, and a second in which donors respond to UNHCR standard reports with their own analysis.

Feedback Loop

The current JOS, like most of the other joint frameworks reviewed for the evaluation, does not contain a feedback mechanism whereby the multilateral body provides feedback to the donors on the partnership. The UNICEF framework differs. It has set out some indicators by which UNICEF assesses the "good donorship" of participating donors (e.g. level of harmonisation, evidence of collaboration within decision-making bodies, joint support in field level activities). This system of mutual feedback would require a degree of trust and understanding among all the partners, and UNHCR would need sufficient internal capacity (and willingness) to provide feedback not only on monetary matters but to address largely qualitative issues. There may be a way to evolve toward this goal over time. The UNICEF framework, put in place at about the same time as the JOS, evolved toward this mutual feedback approach and 2009 was the first year the agency provided feedback on "good donorship" to the donor partners.

Cross-Cutting Issues

The Options Matrix does not address two ambiguities of the current JOS, the desirability of a framework that includes a field level presence, and the future of a lead relationship. The evaluation concluded that any future framework should clarify these ambiguities.

A field presence for the framework

If the prime goal of any future framework is to both assist UNHCR in the attainment of its own goals, to promote broader donor harmonisation, and also to exercise a higher degree of strategic influence, it would follow that some mechanism be developed that

would enable the partners to better collaborate at the field level. This, however, does not imply specific measurement at the field level.

Senior managers among the participating donors and UNHCR may wish to explore how to communicate a new framework and indicate that they have agreed to collaborate more closely at all levels. At a minimum, a field presence for a new framework would imply that the donor partners all agree to better inform each other of the humanitarian work/ UNHCR related activities they are undertaking at the field level so as to promote the possibility of synergies and collaborative efforts. UNHCR, for its part, needs to find a mechanism of consultation with the partners in the field that will be a tangible expression of the framework.

The lead relationship

The concept of a lead relationship is one which can lend itself to reductions in transaction costs, improved timeliness, and increased collective donor harmonisation. However, while donors may share broad common values or goals, they are equally likely to have differences of opinion about strategic policy orientations.

The future of the concept of a lead relationship in a UNHCR framework is also influenced by the fact that two of the three current donors have had a long and continuing history of direct bilateral discussions with UNHCR, while the third, the UK, is now moving in a similar direction establishing a bilateral relationship over and above JOS.

A binding lead relationship would be time-saving for UNHCR, by eliminating multiple points of donor access, but would also potentially compromise donors' specific national interests. There may be, however, a more flexible approach to the lead relationship – one that is linked to the nature of the priorities that are embodied in a new framework. A set of largely managerial priorities drawn from UNHCR's GSPs, combined with a UNICEF-like model in which donors provide analysis of standardised reports, could lend itself to a flexible lead relationship. Donors could assign a lead for each priority area, thus reducing some of their direct transaction costs with respect to the framework, but with the knowledge that they could still express their interests through their own annual analysis of reports.

Table 10.1 A Matrix of Options

| Time Horizon | 1) Overall Priorities | | | 2) Reporting | | 3) Feedback Loop | |
|---|--|---|--|---|---|---|---|
| | a) The Type of Priority | | b) The Nature of The Priorities | | Who Reports to Whom? | | UNHCR Feedback |
| | Programmatic | Managerial | Use of UNHCR's GSPs | Donor Rearticulations | UNHCR to Donors | Donors to UNHCR | None |
| Biennial | | | | | | | |
| The donors and UNHCR agree to a framework that matches the duration of the UNHCR biennium and which would involve biennial reporting. | A set of largely program-based priorities are agreed to over a two year span. | A set of largely managerial and process targets agreed to by all parties, related to the quality of UNHCR management. May include some mutually agreed upon program areas of particular interest. | Strengths A clear affirmation of the Paris Declaration regarding harmonisation. Enables donors to better concentrate their efforts to support UNHCR. | Strengths If managerial priorities are selected, donors have an opportunity to be more specific but not to exceed the intent of UNHCR's own goals. | UNHCR reports to donors against pre-set targets (either type) | Donors take UNHCR standard reports and analyse them against the priorities. | UNHCR does not formally provide feedback to the donor partners on a pre-determined set of factors over a longer-term horizon – probably at the end of the biennium. |
| The general framework might be more than one biennium in length, but its planning and reporting cycle would coincide with UNHCR's biennium. | Two year targets may allow for more progress to occur and may better reflect actual delivery realities. Possible to have biennial measurable targets that are specific to the framework. | Emphasis on long-term managerial improvements that can be measured. | Strengths Supports and affirms UNHCR's internal reforms. | Limitations Involves more transaction costs in negotiations (a weakness of JOS). The possibility exists that donors might exceed the ability of UNHCR to perform if they rearticulate goals in too precise a fashion. | Strengths Highly accurate if using UNHCR standard reports. More cost effective on a biennial basis. | Strengths Reduces possibility of overlap with stand alone reporting. | Strengths Reduction in work for UNHCR. |
| | | | Limitations UNHCR's data systems have to be accurate. Some donors, for domestic reasons, may need to emphasise programmatic issues. | Limitations Does not affirm donor commitment to harmonisation and acceptance of UNHCR's own goals. | Limitations Potential overlap with donor framework and planning systems, if the decision is made to continue with donor rearticulations of UNHCR's own goals. | Limitations Not a partnership approach. Promotes greater donor harmonisation. | Strengths Promotes partnership. Gives feedback to donors on harmonisation and adherence to Principles of Good Donorship. |
| | | | | | | | Limitations Time consuming. |

Annex 1 Terms of Reference

1. Background

UNHCR (United Nations High Commission for Refugees) is the primary inter-governmental organisation with responsibility to provide humanitarian assistance, protection and find durable solutions for refugees as well as for an increasing number of internally displaced persons (IDPs).

Canada, Denmark and the UK are strong supporters of UNHCR between them contributing roughly 13% of the overall contributions and one third of the unrestricted (un-earmarked) funds to UNHCR. The three donors have in the spirit of the Paris Declaration and the Principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship, agreed to a Joint Organisation Strategy (JOS) with UNHCR covering the period of 2007-09.

The overall aim of the JOS is ‘*to strengthen UNHCR’s capacity for operational delivery*’. JOS pursues this through two types of strategies.

- On one hand is the pursuit of a more efficient, coherent and less demanding working relationship in accordance with the Paris Declaration and the Principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship on harmonisation and alignment. As stated in the JOS document ‘*the donors and UNHCR aim to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of their working relationship by reducing management demands and associated transaction costs, enhancing coherence in their approach, and providing greater predictability and flexibility in funding*’.¹⁰
- On the other hand is the pursuit of progress in the five priority objectives¹¹. Each donor takes a lead in developing and monitoring and evaluating mutually agreed (with UNHCR and the donors), indicators and targets against two of the five priority objectives:
 - Emergency response & preparedness (UK)
 - Durable solutions (Canada: resettlement; Denmark all other aspects of durable solutions)
 - Internally displaced persons (UK)
 - Age, gender & diversity (Canada)
 - Results-based management & evaluation (Denmark)

The JOS is the result of a consultative process with UNHCR and is aligned with the organisation’s Global Strategic Objectives (GSOs) (developed in 2006 for the period 2007-2009 and later updated for the period 2008-2009). The GSOs reflect key objectives for the organisation across its mandate – protection, assistance, search for durable solutions, and emergency response – as well as in relation to management priorities for improving the organisation’s capacity - including partnerships, age, gender and diversity perspective, external relations and management.

10) Joint Organisation Strategy: UNHCR 2007-09, Canada, Denmark and UK (<http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/CIDAWEB/acdicida.nsf/En/NAT-8693640-HYG>), p. 1.

11) Annual Action Plans are agreed for each calendar year of the JOS

Performance against the aims of the JOS is reviewed during annual review meetings and assessed against the objectives and jointly agreed performance indicators and targets.

2. Objectives of the evaluation

The JOS 2007-09 includes a commitment to evaluate the strategy:

“At the end of the JOS period, the donors and UNHCR will jointly evaluate the performance of UNHCR to:

- 1) *determine the extent to which it has delivered the objectives and desired impact outlined in this strategy and;*
- 2) *review the harmonised approach taken to this strategy and share lessons-learned about the strengths and weaknesses of the approach.”¹²*

In the evaluation most emphasis will be placed on the second objective: “to review the harmonised approach taken to the strategy and share lessons-learned about the strengths and weaknesses of the approach”. This objective will be dealt with both from the perspective of harmonisation between donors and collaboration between donors and UNHCR and will assess the efficiency and effectiveness of this working relationship.

The first objective: “to determine the extent to which it has delivered the objectives and desired impact outlined in this strategy” will refer both to UNHCR and its ability to deliver in the five priority areas as well as to the donors and their ability to use the JOS (and the Annual Action Plans) as an effective tool in their collaboration with each other and in their cooperation with UNHCR, both at headquarters and field level.

A considerable amount of data already exists on UNHCR’s progress, achievements and constraints in relation to the five priority areas and is reported: i) in the general reporting taking place through the annual Global Report and in ExCom and Standing Committee meetings; ii) in internal UNHCR reporting of discussions in Informal Consultative meetings; and iii) through the JOS-specific reporting taking place during annual review meetings. When evaluating UNHCR, the focus will therefore be more on how the JOS has contributed to UNHCR’s progress in the priority areas, i.e. to what extent JOS has had an impact at headquarters, policy and strategy level and to what extent those policies and strategies have been implemented by field offices.

The evaluation will serve several purposes and audiences. The primary audience is the management and governing bodies of the three donors and UNHCR, where the findings and recommendations will feed into the design of the next JOS phase due for renewal in 2010. However, the evaluation will also benefit other key donors to UNHCR informing them of the working modalities, achievements and challenges involved. This is particularly relevant to donors who are key supporters of UNHCR and are aware of the JOS. Finally the evaluation will benefit the international community by contributing lessons about putting joint donor strategies into practice and by providing information on the implementation of Paris Declaration principles on harmonisation and alignment.

12) Joint Organisation Strategy: UNHCR 2007-09, Canada, Denmark and UK (<http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/CIDAWEB/acdicida.nsf/En/NAT-8693640-HYG>), p. 11.

3. Focus and Scope of Evaluation

a. Levels of the evaluation

As indicated the evaluation will focus on two levels:

- The strategic and organisational level which aims to assess and document to which extent the JOS has (i) enhanced coherence of the three donors' approaches and (ii) increased the efficiency and effectiveness of the working relationship between UNHCR and the three donors at headquarters level and draw lessons and recommendations on how this can be further pursued.
- The operational level which aims to assess whether the JOS has enhanced UNHCR capacity for operational delivery in the five specific areas identified in the JOS. This level of the evaluation will also consider whether the JOS has impacted on the working relationship between the three donors and UNHCR at field level.

b. Evaluation questions

The evaluation will address the following evaluation questions, inter alia:

Strategic and organisational level

- How well is JOS in line with UNHCR's own priorities?
- Has JOS enhanced coherence in the donors' approach? Are the donors well aligned on all positions?
- Are the modalities for influencing UNHCR's performance different in JOS than through individual strategies?
- How is the coordination between the three JOS donors and other donors supporting UNHCR?
- How effective has the division of labour been? How has the lead agency and relationship with co-donors worked in the different priority areas? What is the level of donor satisfaction with the internal cooperation?
- To which extent has the JOS been successful in reducing management demands and associated transaction costs among the donors and within UNHCR?
- To what extent has the JOS had an impact on donors' funding support to UNHCR?

Operational level

The operational level will assess the extent to which the five priority objectives are being pursued by UNHCR and the donors, partly at headquarters level in policy, strategy and priority setting, and partly at field level.

- 1) Emergency response & preparedness
- 2) Durable solutions
- 3) Internally displaced persons
- 4) Age, gender & diversity (AGD)
- 5) Results-based management & evaluation

A preliminary list of cross-cutting evaluation questions includes:

- To which extent are the five priority objectives having an impact on policy, strategy, priority setting, planning and monitoring at UNHCR headquarters
- What mechanisms are in place to communicate and translate headquarters decisions into practice at the field level and how successfully are HQ policies, strategies and priorities being translated into practice at field level?
- What is the degree of field-level decentralisation both within UNHCR and within each of the three donors, and how does this affect the relationship between headquarters and the field?
- To what extent is UNHCR at field-level pursuing the five priority objectives?
- To what extent are the three donors at field-level aware of JOS, to what extent are they pursuing the five priority objectives, and to what extent do they cooperate with each other at field-level?

In addition to the cross-cutting evaluation questions listed above, specific questions will be identified in the inception phase for each of the five priority objectives. The evaluation team is asked to provide a full set of proposed evaluation questions in the inception report, which will have to be approved by the Evaluation Management Committee.

c. Evaluation criteria

Key evaluation criteria will be based on the standard DAC-OECD evaluation criteria, in particular the efficiency of the harmonised approach compared with a single donor strategy, and the effectiveness of the JOS in achieving its objectives. Criteria developed specifically for evaluation of humanitarian action will be relevant at the operational-level, in particular, appropriateness and effectiveness (timeliness, coordination, coverage and protection) of the priority strategies.

Due to the short time span of the JOS, other DAC-OECD criteria of impact and sustainability, and other humanitarian action criteria of connectedness (taking long term situation into account) and coherence (of policies with humanitarian action) will not be emphasised in the evaluation.

d. Recommendations

Based on its assessments, the evaluation team will make a set of recommendations which can feed into considerations regarding the next round of the JOS.

4. Methodology

a. Approach and management

The evaluation will be conducted jointly by the three donors and UNHCR to ensure that it becomes an efficient learning tool while also avoiding the transaction costs of separate evaluations.

A management committee will be established consisting of one representative from each of the donors and UNHCR. The management committee will select the evaluation

consultant among the received expressions of interest (EOIs) and comment as well as approve evaluation deliverables, including the inception report and the final report. In addition, UNHCR will appoint a contact person in the organisation.

In order to ensure ownership and learning among stakeholders, a reference group will also be established comprising representatives from UNHCR and the three donors (donor missions in Geneva as well as relevant HQ departments). The reference group will be involved at key stages of the evaluation, providing inputs to the TORs and comments on the findings and recommendations, and on draft reports in their entirety.

Triangulation of data collection methods, interlocutors and types of analysis will be pursued to enhance reliability and credibility of findings. Evaluation questions will be assessed from the viewpoint of UNHCR as well as that of the donors and, where relevant, both as a collective group as well as of the individual donors. Stakeholder findings must also be analysed by types of respondents, looking at how JOS has affected administrative staff, programme staff, and management differently.

b. Methods of data collection

The evaluation will be based on a mixed method approach and will include a review of existing background documentation, interviews in Geneva and in donor headquarters and probably telephone interviews/video-conferences with a selected number of field representatives. A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis will be applied.

In terms of collecting data to respond to the evaluation questions at the strategic and organisational level, most of this information will be available in Geneva, at UNHCR HQ level, and at the level of the donor missions to Geneva. To respond to the evaluation questions concerning UNHCR's operational capacity and donors' use of JOS in the field, a combination of interviews, documentation review, telephone interviews/video-conferences will be used. In addition more detailed planning of applied methods will, however, have to be done after the key questions have been identified in the inception phase of the evaluation.

The evaluation will commence with a review of existing background documentation and key documents specifically related to JOS and UNHCR's Global Strategic Objectives. This will include minutes of meetings, background documents, monitoring documents, key e-mail correspondence, and existing similar assessments. A main source will be UNHCR's own monitoring. The evaluation will not only examine the data itself, but also assess the quality and reliability of that data, i.e. reviewing in depth the RBM systems to assess their strengths and weaknesses. Regarding the analysis of transaction costs, information on expenditure and time spent on the administration of joint versus single donor strategies should as far as possible be carried out.

Key informant interviews will be conducted with UNHCR, the three donors (both at HQ level as well as at the missions based in Geneva), as well as with other donors and partners as deemed necessary. As there has been a turnover of staff among all three donors and UNHCR since the JOS was negotiated, it is necessary to interview both current as well as previous staff members (where at all possible) dealing with JOS and with UNHCR / donor cooperation. Interviews will be semi-structured to allow respondents room to identify additional issues of importance, but the form may vary between group and individual interviews as well as face-to-face and phone interviews.

Interviews with field staff in UNHCR and among the three donors will have to be done after a careful selection of countries by the Management Committee. The main purpose will be to triangulate information and findings by providing a field perspective. The selection of countries will be decided during the inception phase of the evaluation, and when the key questions within the five focus areas have been identified.

5. Reporting and workplan

The evaluation is due to start in April and be completed by the end of August. During this period the team will be expected to produce an inception report, a draft report and a final report. In addition the consultant will be expected to make two presentations of the findings in Geneva: firstly a presentation of the preliminary findings, so that these can feed into the donor discussions on JOS 2010 taking place in late June/early July 2009; and secondly, a presentation of the final findings and recommendations after completion of the report in September. The timeframe and deliverables (highlighted in bold) for the evaluation are outlined below.

| Evaluation phases and deliverables | Deadline / timeframe |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Inform selected consultant | Thursday 2 April 2009 |
| Negotiate and sign contract | Friday April 24 2009 |
| Commence assignment | Friday, May 1, 2009 |
| Conduct Inception Mission | May 4-8 , 2009 |
| Submit inception report | Friday May 15, 2009 |
| Comments to inception report | Thursday May 21 2009 |
| Data collection | Mid -May /June/early July 2009 |
| Conduct in-depth mission to Geneva and Copenhagen and subsequently London | June 15- 19 |
| Analysis and report writing | July 2009 |
| Present preliminary findings via PPT briefing deck | Thursday July 30, 2009 |
| Submit draft report | Friday August 14, 2009 |
| Provide comments on draft report | Friday August 28, 2009 |
| Submit final report | Friday September 11, 2009 |
| Present final findings and recommendations | September, final date to be specified |

6. Composition of evaluation team

The evaluation team will consist of a team leader and 1-2 team members who between them have considerable experience with multilateral donor organisations, preferably with UNHCR, with humanitarian action, and with results-based management, including assessment of RBM systems, and evaluation of aid projects and programmes, preferably with evaluation of humanitarian action.

The team leader will have the overall responsibility for the delivery of timely and quality reports.

7. Documentation to be made available

Cooperation between UNHCR and the three donors prior to JOS i.e. 2004-06

Individual framework agreements between the three donors and UNHCR prior to the JOS

Monitoring reports / notes on review meetings between individual donors and UNHCR prior to the JOS

Notes on bilateral consultations with the donors prior to the JOS

JOS specific documents - development, implementation and monitoring of JOS

Development and approval of JOS

- Joint Organisation Strategy: UNHCR 2007-2009, Canada, Denmark and UK
 - (Denmark) Organisation Strategy for UNHCR, Concept Note for Programme Committee, meeting 27 October 2006
 - Key correspondence, meeting and concept notes
-

Implementation and monitoring of JOS

- Annual Action Plan for 2007, 2008 and 2009 (forthcoming)
 - Review of JOS Annual Action Plan for 2007 – Review 27 June 2008
 - Review of JOS Annual Action Plan for 2008 – Review 26 June 2009 (forthcoming)
-

UNHCR reporting on Global Strategic Objectives in general and the five JOS priority areas

GSOs in general

- UNHCR's global strategic objectives 2007-09 (first version valid for 2007) (<http://www.unhcr.org/publ/PUBL/4847b8542.pdf>)
 - UNHCR's Revised global strategic objectives 2008-2009 (<http://www.unhcr.org/publ/PUBL/474ac8c12.pdf> pp. 9-14)
 - Global Report 2007 and 2008 (forthcoming)
-

Governance meetings and updates

- Thematic presentations on the five priority areas at Ex.Com. meetings 2006 - 08 and Standing Committee (35th – 44th meeting)
 - Relevant informal consultative meetings
 - Informal consultative meeting on IDP policy framework (2007)
 - Informal consultative meetings on Results Based Management (2008-09)
 - Informal consultative meeting on Return and reintegration policy framework (2008)
 - Informal consultative meeting on Policy Development and Evaluation Service (2009)
-

Internally displaced Persons

- Policy Framework and Implementation Strategy: UNHCR's role in support of an enhanced inter-agency response to the protection of IDPs, 4 June, 2007
 - The protection of internally displaced persons and the role of UNHCR, Informal Consultative Meeting, 27 February 2007
 - Global Work Plan for IDP Operations, 2 June 2008
-

Cooperation between UNHCR and the three donors prior to JOS i.e. 2004-06

Age, Gender and diversity

- AGDM evaluation is currently underway – consultation with evaluation team as appropriate.
 - AGDM Action Plan
 - AGDM Accountability Framework Report
 - Report on AGDM roll-out self-evaluation, March 2009
-

Results based management and evaluation

- UNHCR Review: Terms of Reference, February 2006.
 - Terms of Reference for Director for Org. Development and Management, January 2007
 - UNHCR Results Framework, end 2008
 - Headquarters Functions, June 2006
-

Emergency preparedness

- UNHCR's response to the Tsunami emergency in Indonesia and Sri Lanka, December 2004 – November 2006: An independent evaluation.
-

Durable solutions

- UNHCR's engagement in the Delivering As One pilots: An informal stocktaking, December 2007
Doc Symbol: PDES/2008/01
 - Protracted refugee situations: A discussion paper prepared for the High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges, December 2008.
 - Protracted refugee situations: Overview and plan of action, December 2008.
<http://www.unhcr.org/protect/PROTECTION/4937de6f2.pdf>
-

Other relevant evaluation reports

- *Cluster Approach* Evaluation, OCHA Evaluation Studies Series, November 2007
-

Annex 2 Stakeholders Consulted

| Location | Organisation | Department/Section | Name | Title/responsibility |
|---------------|--|---|------------------------|---|
| GENEVA | | | | |
| | DfID | Permanent Mission to the United Nations Office at Geneva | Simon Dennison | Second Secretary. |
| | GTZ | Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations Office at Geneva | Herbert Beck | First Counsellor |
| | Irish Aid | Permanent Mission of Ireland to the United Nations Office at Geneva | Martin Gallagher | Second Secretary |
| | Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark | Danish UN and WTO Mission in Geneva | Peter Hertel Rasmussen | Minister Counsellor, Humanitarian Affairs |
| | (Former) Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark | (Former) Danish UN and WTO Mission in Geneva | Jette Michelsen | (Former) Counsellor - now working with IFRC |
| | Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency | Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations Office at Geneva | Fredrik Kirst | Counsellor |
| | UNHCR | Africa Bureau | Marie-Christine Bocoum | Deputy Director |
| | UNHCR | Africa Bureau | Mengesha Kebede | Deputy Director |
| | UNHCR | Africa Bureau | Solange Senaize | Senior Desk Officer DRC |
| | UNHCR | Africa Bureau | Pierrine Aylara | Senior Desk Officer Kenya |
| | UNHCR | Asia Bureau | Yasmin Keith-Krelik | Desk Officer Afghanistan |
| | UNHCR | Division of External Relations | Lloyd Dakin | Director |
| | UNHCR | Division of External Relations | Dag Sigurdson | Deputy Head DRMM |
| | UNHCR | Division of International Protection Services | Naoko Obi | Head |
| | UNHCR | Division of International Protection Services | Luisa Cremonese | Senior Coordinator for Community Development |
| | UNHCR | Division of International Protection Services | Joanina Karugaba | Technical Officer, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence |

ANNEX 2 STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED

| Location | Organisation | Department/Section | Name | Title/responsibility |
|---------------|--------------|---|---------------------|---|
| GENEVA | | | | |
| | UNHCR | Division of International Protection Services | Neil Wright | Special Advisor, IPDs |
| | UNHCR | Division of International Protection Services | George Okoth-Obbo | Director |
| | UNHCR | Division of International Protection Services | Terry Morel | Deputy Director |
| | UNHCR | Division of International Protection Services | Yasmin Keith-Krelik | Desk Officer |
| | UNHCR | Division of International Protection Services | Ruven Menikdiwela | Deputy Director |
| | UNHCR | Division of International Protection Services | Jennifer Ashton | Senior Resettlement Coordinator |
| | UNHCR | Division of Operational Services | Khassoum Diallo | Senior Statistician, Field Information & Coordination support Section |
| | UNHCR | Division of Operational Support | Arnauld Akodjenou | Director |
| | UNHCR | Donor Relations | Anne Dolan | Senior Donor Relations Officer |
| | UNHCR | Donor Relations and Resource Mobilisation Service | Katharina Thote | Donor Relations Officer |
| | UNHCR | Emergency Preparedness and Response Section | Iain Hall | Chief |
| | UNHCR | Emergency/Sec. Serv. | Raouf Mazou | Deputy Director |
| | UNHCR | Executive Office | Erika Feller | Assistant High Commissioner for Protection |
| | UNHCR | Field Safety Section | Paul Stromberg | Chief |
| | UNHCR | IDP Advisory Team | Bellings Sikanda | Senior Administration and Programme Officer |
| | UNHCR | Inspector General's Office | Kofi Asomani | Inspector General |
| | UNHCR | Inter-Agency Unit | Bernie Doyle | Head |
| | UNHCR | Iraq Situation Support Unit | Yuka Hasegawa | Senior Desk Officer |
| | UNHCR | Iraq Support Unit | Andrew Harper | Head |

ANNEX 2 STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED

| Location | Organisation | Department/Section | Name | Title/responsibility |
|---------------|------------------------|---|--------------------|--|
| GENEVA | | | | |
| | UNHCR | Office of Organisational Development and Management | Ninette Kelley | Senior Coordinator, Global Needs Assessment |
| | UNHCR | Office of Organisational Development and Management | Andrew Mayne | FOCUS Project Coordinator |
| | UNHCR | Office of Organisational Development and Management | Volker Türk | Director |
| | UNHCR | Oper. Solutions and Transitions Section (Reintegration, Local Integration) | Yasuko Shimizu | Senior Operations Officer |
| | UNHCR | Operations | Judy Cheng-Hopkins | Assistant High Commissioner |
| | UNHCR | Policy Development and Evaluation Section | Maria Riiskjaer | Associate Evaluation Officer |
| | UNHCR | Programme and Budget Service, Regional Bureaux - MENA | Kai Nielsen | Head |
| | US Department of State | Permanent Mission of the United States of America to the United Nations Office at Geneva, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration | Margaret Pollock | Director, Office of Multilateral Coordination and External Relations |
| | US Department of State | Permanent Mission of the United States of America to the United Nations Office at Geneva, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration | Nicole R. Gaertner | Counsellor |
| | US Department of State | Permanent Mission of the United States of America to the United Nations Office at Geneva, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration | Peter F. Mulrean | Counselor, |

ANNEX 2 STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED

| Location | Organisation | Department/Section | Name | Title/responsibility |
|---------------|------------------------|---|--------------------|----------------------|
| GENEVA | | | | |
| | US Department of State | Permanent Mission of the United States of America to the United Nations Office at Geneva, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration | Melissa R. Pitotti | Attaché |
| | US Department of State | Permanent Mission of the United States of America to the United Nations Office at Geneva, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration | Michelle K. Burdon | Counsellor |
| | US Department of State | Permanent Mission of the United States of America to the United Nations Office at Geneva, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration | Peter Mulrean | Counsellor |
| | US Department of State | Permanent Mission of the United States of America to the United Nations Office at Geneva, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration | Melissa Pitotti | Attaché |

| Location | Organisation | Department | Name | Title/responsibility |
|---------------|--|--|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| LONDON | | | | |
| | Department for International Development (DfID) | | | |
| | DFID | Africa Humanitarian Conflict Unit (ACHU) | Colum Wilson | Head of Unit |
| | DFID | CHASE HIP Team | Rebecca Terzeon | Team Leader (until July 2008) |
| | DFID | CHASE HIP Team | John Webster | Team Leader |
| | DFID | CHASE Humanitarian Teams | Richard Martini | Head |
| | DFID | CHASE Response | Jack Jones | Team Leader |
| | DFID | CHASE Response | Louisa Roberts | Programme Manager |

ANNEX 2 STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED

| Location | Organisation | Department | Name | Title/responsibility |
|----------|---|---|--------------------|--------------------------------------|
| LONDON | Department for International Development (DfID) | | | |
| | DFID | Conflict Humanitarian and Security Department | Mary-Ann Taylor | Deputy Programme Manager |
| | DFID | Humanitarian Affairs | Tak Chow | Second Secretary |
| | DFID | Humanitarian Group | Richard Martini | Head of Humanitarian Group |
| | DFID | Humanitarian Institutions and Policy Team | Patrick Saez | Humanitarian Adviser on Displacement |
| | DFID | Humanitarian Institutions and Policy Team | John Webster | Team Leader |
| | DFID | Humanitarian Institutions and Policy Team | Jane Doogan | Ex Deputy Programme Manager |
| | DFID | Humanitarian Institutions and Policy Team, EU Donor relations | Andrew Nethercotte | Counsellor |
| | DFID | International Directors Office | Matt Gordon | Multilateral Policy Adviser Officer |
| | DFID | Migration Team | Peter Gordon | Policy Analyst |
| | DFID | United Nations Conflict and Humanitarian Division | Moazzam Malik | Director, ex Head of CHASE |
| OTTAWA | Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) | | | |
| | CIDA | Evaluation (YEV) | Goberdhan Singh | Director |
| | CIDA | Evaluation Division, Strategic Policy and Performance Branch | Satianan Debidin | Evaluation Manager |
| | CIDA | Food Aid Unit | Julie MacCormack | Senior Program Officer |
| | CIDA | Humanitarian Affairs Operations Unit | Victor Carvell | Former DG and Counsellor |
| | CIDA | Humanitarian Operations Unit | Christopher Loan | International Development Officer |

ANNEX 2 STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED

| Location | Organisation | Department | Name | Title/responsibility |
|---------------|---|---|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| OTTAWA | Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) | | | |
| | CIDA | International Humanitarian Assistance Division (IHA) | Leslie Norton | Director General |
| | CIDA | International Humanitarian Assistance Division | Stephen Salewicz | A/Director |
| | CIDA | International Humanitarian Assistance Division | Vicky Singmin | International Development Officer |
| | CIDA | Policy and Strategic Planning, Sectors and Global Partnerships Branch | Brigitte Malenfant | Senior Analyst |
| | CIDA | Strategic Analysis and Operations Unit | Anar Mamdani | Manager |
| | CIDA | UN, Commonwealth and Francophonie Division | Barbara Shaw | Manager |

| Location | Organisation | Department | Name | Title/responsibility |
|-------------------|--|---|-------------------------|----------------------|
| COPENHAGEN | | | | |
| | Danish UN Mission in New York | | Tine Blaakær | Counsellor |
| | Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark | Africa | Birger Fredriksson | Minister Counsellor |
| | Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark | Centre for Global Security (previously in Humanitarian Policy and Assistance) | Pernille Hougesen | Technical Advisor |
| | Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark | Evaluation Department | Margrethe Holm Andersen | Deputy Head |
| | Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark | Evaluation Department | Gitte Liebst Robinson | Technical Advisor |
| | Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark | Global Health and HIV/AIDS | Tine Lyngholm | Chief Consultant |
| | Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark | Humanitarian Policy and Assistance and NGO Co-operation | Lotte Mindedal | Head of Section |
| | Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark | Humanitarian Policy and Assistance and NGO Co-operation | Mathias Vaa | Head of Section |

| Location | Organisation | Department | Name | Title/responsibility |
|-------------------|--|---|-----------------------|----------------------|
| COPENHAGEN | | | | |
| | Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark | Humanitarian Policy and Assistance and NGO Co-operation | Jette Lund | Deputy Head |
| | Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark | Humanitarian Policy and Assistance and NGO Co-operation | Mette Strand Gjerløff | Head of Section |
| | Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark | Humanitarian Policy and Assistance and NGO Co-operation | Thomas Thomsen | Chief Advisor |
| | Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark | The Middle East and North Africa | Jakob Rogild Jakobsen | Head of Section |

Virtual field Missions

| Organisation | Location | Name | Title |
|--------------------------------|--|----------------------|--|
| Canada, Embassy | Amman, Jordan | Hong Won Yu | Head of Aid |
| Canada, Embassy | Bogota, Colombia | Joshua Tabah | Head of Aid |
| Canadian High Commission | Dar es Salaam, Tanzania | Monique Bergeron | Counsellor (Cooperation) |
| CIDA | Kabul, Afghanistan | Violette Cassis | Afghanistan Task Force |
| CIDA | Kinshasa, Congo | Sylvie Monette | Deuxième Secrétaire (Coopération) / Second Secretary (Development) |
| CIDA | Nairobi, Kenya | Solomon.Ngari | Counsellor |
| CIDA, Canadian High Commission | Nairobi, Kenya | Stephen Weaver | Counsellor (Head of Aid) / Conseiller (Chef de l'aide) |
| DFID | Kinshasa, Congo | Seb Fouquet | Humanitarian Adviser |
| DFID | Nairobi, Kenya | Simon Mansfield | Humanitarian Adviser |
| GTZ | Permanent Mission of Germany | Herbert Beck | First Counsellor |
| Irish Aid | Department of Foreign Affairs, Ireland | Martin Gallagher | Second Secretary |
| Royal Danish Embassy | Amman, Jordan | Jens Ole Back Hansen | Advisor |
| Royal Danish Embassy | Damascus, Syria | Ole Egberg Mikkelsen | Ambassador |
| Royal Danish Embassy | Kabul, Afganistan | Gorm Petersen | Advisor |
| Royal Danish Embassy | Kenya, Nairobi | Betina Gollander | Advisor |
| SIDA | Foreign Ministry, Sweden | Fredrik Kirst | Counsellor |

ANNEX 2 STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED

| Organisation | Location | Name | Title |
|--------------|------------------------|--------------------|---|
| UNHCR | | Johanna Langenkamp | Coordinator of the development of the JOS, ex-former Head of Donor Relations |
| UNHCR | Amman, Jordan | Imran Riza | Representative, |
| UNHCR | Damascus, Syria | Ayman Gharaibeh | Senior Regional Programme Officer |
| UNHCR | Damascus, Syria | Philippe Leclerc | Deputy Representative |
| UNHCR | Kabul, Afghanistan | Ewen MacLeod | Representative |
| UNHCR | Kenya, Nairobi | Antonio Canhandula | Deputy Representative |
| UNHCR | Kinshasa, Congo | Ndeye Ndour Mbaye | Assistant Regional Representative |
| UNHCR | Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia | Alan Vernon | Representative, Ex-former Head of Organisational Development Management Service and key in the development of FOCUS, RBM and Global Strategic Objectives pre-2009 |

Annex 3 Documents Reviewed

1. Danida

1.1 Creation of JOS

(2006, December 20). *Summary: Programme Committee Meeting (October 27, 2006) / UNHCR Multidonor Organisation Strategy*, UDV, Embassies in Thimphu and in Bamako, and the UN Mission in Geneva.

(2006, November 28 - Updated). *Multidonor Institutional Strategy for UNHCR Workplan for UK Version 3*, Canada and Denmark.

(2006, October 27). *Organisation Strategy for UNHCR- Concept Note for Programme Committee meeting (Draft)*, Permanent Mission of Denmark to the United Nations in Geneva.

1.2 Internal Mechanisms for Communicating

E-mails

FN-mission en Genève. "Styrelsesmøde d. 13. juni 2007, Dagsordenspkt. 13." E-mail to: Styrelsen, 20 May 2007.

Michelsen, Jette. "UNHCR/DK,UK,CAN Fælles Organisationsstrategi: Resultater ift. handlingsplanen for 2007 samt ny handlingsplan for 2008." E-mail to: HUM; KVA; EVAL; FNG; GVAMISU, Archive; CC: Anne-Birgitte Albrechtsen; Jette Lund; Mette Strand Gjerløff; Henrik Jespersen; Jakob Tvede; Nicolai Ruge; Peter Ellehøj; Marie-Louise Overvad; David Mouyal; Peter Hertel Rasmussen; Stine Strandkjær; Anne Charlton Christensen; Aino Askgaard; Stat GVAMISU; Udenrigsministeriet. 8 July 2008.

Michelsen, Jette. "UNHCR/DK,UK,CAN Fælles Organisationsstrategi: Resultater ift. handlingsplanen for 2007 samt ny handlingsplan for 2008." E-mail to: HUM; KVA; EVAL; FNG; GVAMISU, Archive; CC: Anne-Birgitte Albrechtsen; Jette Lund; Mette Strand Gjerløff; Henrik Jespersen; Jakob Tvede; Nicolai Ruge; Peter Ellehøj; Marie-Louise Overvad; David Mouyal; Peter Hertel Rasmussen; Stine Strandkjær; Anne Charlton Christensen; Aino Askgaard; Stat GVAMISU; Udenrigsministeriet. 8 July 2008.

Michelsen, Jette. "UNHCR fælles donorstrategi: Review-møde d. 27. juni." E-mail to: HUM; KVA; GVAMISU, Archive; CC: EVAL; Anne-Birgitte Albrechtsen; Jette Lund; Mette Strand Gjerløff; Henrik Jespersen; Jakob Tvede; Nicolai Ruge; Mikael Hemniti Winther; Peter Ellehøj; Ole Winckler Andersen; Margrethe Holm Andersen; Marie-Louise Overvad; David Mouyal; Stine Strandkjær; Udenrigsministeriet. 18 June 2008.

Michelsen, Jette. "UNHCR/DK,UK,CAN Fælles Organisationsstrategi: Resultater ift. handlingsplanen for 2007 samt ny handlingsplan for 2008." E-mail to: HUM; KVA; EVAL; FNG; GVAMISU, Archive; CC: Anne-Birgitte Albrechtsen; Jette Lund; Mette Strand Gjerløff; Henrik Jespersen; Jakob Tvede; Nicolai Ruge; Peter Ellehøj; Marie-Louise Overvad; David Mouyal; Peter Hertel Rasmussen; Stine Strandkjær; Anne Charlton Christensen; Aino Askgaard; Stat GVAMISU; Udenrigsministeriet. 8 July 2008.

Michelsen, Jette. "UNHCR's foreslåede nye budgetstruktur: Uformelt konsultationsmøde." E-mail to: HUM; GVAMISU, Archive; CC: Anne-Birgitte Albrechtsen; Jette

- Lund; Mette Strand Gjerløff; Henrik Jespersen; Jakob Tvede; David Mouyal; Stine Strandkjær; Udenrigsministeriet, 25 February 2008.
- Michelsen, Jette. "Trilateralt møde CAN-DK-UK vedr. opfølgning på fælles organisationsstrategi for UNHCR - Genève 4 oktober 2007." E-mail to: HUM; KVA; EVAL; GVAMISU, Archive; CC: Anne-Birgitte Albrechtsen; Jette Lund; Mette Strand Gjerløff; Jakob Tvede; Henrik Jespersen; Peter Ellehøj; Marie-Louise Overvad; David Mouyal; Nina Sofie Fuglsang; Udenrigsministeriet. 27 September 2007.
- Michelsen, Jette. "FN-missionen Genève: UNHCR: Multi Donor Strategic Framework - Trilateral in the margin of ExCom." E-mail to HUM; KVA; EVAL; GVAMISU, Archive; CC: Anne-Birgitte Albrechtsen; Mette Strand Gjerløff; Henrik Jespersen; Jakob Tvede; Ole Winckler Andersen; Margrethe Holm Andersen; Lars Elle; Tom Barthel Hansen; Peter Ellehøj; David Mouyal; Marie-Louise Overvad; Nina Sofie Fuglsang; Stat GVAMISU; Udenrigsministeriet. 24 September 2007.
- Michelsen, Jette. "VS: Referat af udviklingsministerens møde den 13/9 med Hans ten Feld, repr. for UNHCR's nordisk/baltiske kontor." E-mail to: GVAMISU, Archive; GVAMISU, Archive; CC: David Mouyal; Marie-Louise Overvad; Udenrigsministeriet. 17 September 2007.
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