Highlights
on the United Nations development system reform

Sustainable development is now at the heart of the UN, with stronger leadership at all levels. The 2030 Agenda has greater emphasis across UN activities.

Resident Coordinators (RCs) convene and mobilize support for the SDGs, leveraging their independence and drawing better on expertise from across the UN system and all partners.

Enhanced coordination has ensured immediate and long-term UN system-wide responses to unprecedented development challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic to climate change and the global impacts of the war in Ukraine to rescue the Sustainable Development Goals.

UN responses in countries are more integrated and effective, focusing on strategic policy advice and integrated programmatic support.

Cooperation Frameworks have become the most important instrument to drive sustainable development, pushing UN country teams (UNCTs) towards strengthened joint planning and programming, beyond sectoral approaches.
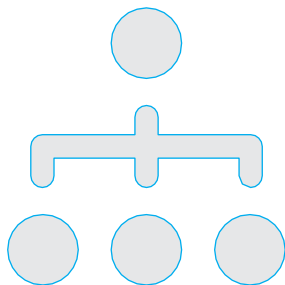
The UN offer is better tailored to the different needs of countries, from Least Developed Countries to Landlocked Developing Countries, Middle Income Countries and Small Island Developing States, including for the latter through significantly stepped up capacities and resources in multi-country offices.

The UN regional architecture transitioned to new Regional Collaborative Platforms, with common knowledge hubs and increased levels of coordination and transparency.

New funding instruments, including a revamped global Joint SDG Fund and new pooled funds in countries, are catalyzing joint action.

Accountability and transparency for results have increased, through better UN Results Reports to Governments and new platforms to harness and manage knowledge, information and data.

UN development system entities share resources and staff more easily in ways that realize tangible business efficiencies, particularly through improvements in business operations strategies, common premises, global shared service centers and common back offices.

Key feedback on the UN development system from host governments in 2022

Country team programming and policy support is increasingly well regarded by host governments, with stronger alignment to national needs and priorities.

94% of host governments agree that **Cooperation Frameworks** enabled them to ensure that UN activities effectively respond to national priorities, an increase from 89% since the inception of the reforms

93% of host governments agree that **UNCTs operate collaboratively**

91% of host governments said **UNCTs have the right mix of capacities** to support national development efforts (from 76% since the reforms)

87% of host governments consider **UNCT configuration adequately tailored** to meet their challenges and needs – an improvement from 81% in 2021

92% of host governments agree that the UN adequately provided **evidence-based policy** advice in 2022, compared to 88% in 2021

90% or more of host governments say that technical support, support for **capacity** and **data,** and support to leverage **partnerships for national priorities** is adequate

89% of host governments say that the UNCTs provide adequate support to **financing for the SDGs**

78% of host governments say that UNCTs are more focused on **common results**

Key feedback on the reinvigorated RC system from host and donor governments and UN country teams in 2022

Resident Coordinators are doing more than simply coordinating. They are utilizing their convening power to bring the development system together to deliver effective, efficient and coherent support to national priorities. Through effective coordination, the work done by the UN system at the country level is greater than the sum of its parts.

90% of host governments agree that RCs have the needed **profile and skillsets**, increase from 88% in 2020

92% say RCs contributed to leveraging **partnerships** in support of national efforts to advance the 2030 Agenda and achieve the SDGs, compared to 85% in 2020

87% of host governments say the RC serves as a strengthened **entry point to the UN offer** – a 35% increase from perceptions pre-reforms

88% of host governments confirm that RCs effectively lead the delivery of **strategic support** for national plans and priorities, as indicated in 2021

85% of host governments note that RCs provide strengthened **leadership** compared to before the reforms – a 30% jump since 2019

84% of host governments point out that RCs have increased focus on **common results**, compared to 60% since the reforms

80% of host governments agreed that RCs displayed strengthened/increased **impartiality** vis-a-vis UN entities than before the reforms

76% of host governments note that RCs contributed to building stronger **synergies across development, humanitarian and peacebuilding** interventions, as in 2020

88% donor governments agree the RC system stepped up **collective and coherent action** and helped leverage the comparative advantages of UN entities

77% donor governments say that the RC system helped **minimize duplication** of efforts and advances efficient use of resources
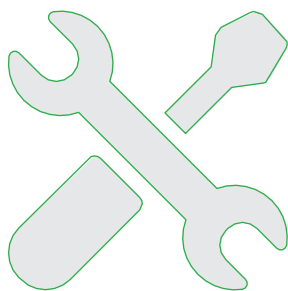
UNCTs value the support received from RCOs:

Strategic planning: **90%** — Economic analysis: **62%** — Partnerships: **77%**

Communication and advocacy: **87%** — Data and results reporting: **86%**

The road ahead in four key areas

UNCTs must be fully equipped to support countries to advance the SDGs, including by aligning individual programme documents with the Cooperation Frameworks and a UN footprint in line with evolving country needs.

The dual accountability model between RCs and UNCTs requires continued attention by UNSDG Principals and governing bodies for full implementation of the Management and Accountability Framework.

Securing **funding for the RC system** and delivering on the **Funding Compact commitments** require a step change, to enable and build incentives for collective UN work.

Culture change and reform ambition must be consolidated, **particularly at regional level** through real-time expertise and support to RCs and UNCTs, as well as excellence and efficiency of **business operations.**