



# Economic and Social Council

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## Substantive session of 2009

Operational activities segment

### Provisional summary record of the 25th meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Thursday, 16 July 2009, at 10 a.m.

*President:* Ms. Gallardo Hernández (Vice-President) . . . . . (El Salvador)

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*In the absence of Ms. Lucas (Luxembourg), Ms. Gallardo Hernández (El Salvador), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.*

# **Operational activities of the United Nations for International Development Cooperation** *(continued)*

- (b) Reports of the executive boards of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Food Programme** (E/2008/34/Rev.1-E/ICEF/2008/7/Rev.1, Supp. No. 14, E/2008/35, Supp. No. 15, DP/2009/9, DP/2009/22, E/2009/5, E/2009/6-E/ICEF/2009/3, E/2009/14, E/2009/34 (Part 1)-E/ICEF/2009/7 (Part 1), E/2009/34 (Part 1)/Add.1-E/ICEF/2009/7 (Part 1)/Add.1, E/2009/36, Supp. No. 16, and E/2009/L.11)

*Dialogue with executive heads of United Nations funds and programmes*

**Ms. Gallardo Hernández** (Vice-President) introduced the four members of the panel, comprising the executive heads of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The dialogue with them was an important mechanism for the Council in exercising its role as the principal body for coordinating the economic, social, humanitarian and related work of the United Nations system, including development cooperation and operational activities for development. Reports to the Council from the executive boards of the four United Nations agencies represented at the meeting, which together accounted for two-thirds of United Nations development system expenditure on operational activities, formed an important basis for the Council's guidance on those activities to the United Nations development system as a whole.

The topics to be addressed by the panellists reflected the core themes of the triennial comprehensive policy review (TCPR). Since the mandate of the United Nations was primarily to assist in the development of national capacities, in the 2007 TCPR the General Assembly had encouraged the United Nations development system to step up its participation, at the request of countries, in the new aid modalities and coordination mechanisms, which

emphasized sector-wide approaches and budget support. Two of the topics to be addressed by the panellists, data for development and technological innovation, related to capacity development. The United Nations had played a significant role over the years in developing national statistical capacities, and had supported many programme countries in generating data and reporting progress on the MDGs. As for technological innovation, much of the success of emerging economies and middle-income countries had been built on the use of technology. The United Nations also had an important role to play in relation to another topic before the meeting, social protection and safety nets for the most vulnerable in a time of crisis.

She invited members of the Council to give thought to the unique role and comparative advantages of the United Nations system in all those areas; collaboration between United Nations organizations in the context of a coherent United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), and the mobilization of wider capacities of the United Nations development system, including non-resident agencies; and efforts to ensure national ownership and national capacity development.

**Ms. Clark** (Administrator, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)), speaking on the topic of development challenges in the new aid environment, said that the economic crisis had added to the pressure faced by many countries, especially the poorest and most vulnerable. Official development assistance (ODA) had risen to about US\$ 120 billion in 2008, its highest level ever. However, aid targets in the developed donor countries were linked to gross national income (GNI), which had shrunk because of the economic downturn, and ODA was now under threat for the foreseeable future. At the same time, more support was needed in developing countries, which had lost trade, investment and remittances, and were struggling to maintain priority spending. In those circumstances, all available financial and other resources should be harnessed for development. It was also necessary to ensure that development interventions were pursued in a holistic manner and were geared towards reducing poverty, meeting the MDGs and promoting sustainable development. The resources available to the United Nations agencies must be utilized in such a way as to maximize their development impact.

Developing countries could themselves take practical measures to increase revenues, by improving tax collection systems and broadening the existing tax base. They could reallocate their budget expenditure to give priority to education, health and reducing hunger, and could enhance their social protection systems to help cushion the impact of the crisis on poor and vulnerable people. However, many countries lacked the fiscal scope or budget flexibility to make such adjustments quickly, and needed extra resources in order to boost their ability to survive the crisis. That made official development assistance more important than ever. More fiscal freedom and help from the international financial institutions would enable them to maintain their budgets for basic services and to sustain their efforts for poverty reduction and human development. For their part, donors must not renege on promises already made, especially the Gleneagles commitments to double ODA to Africa by 2010. Given the right policies and interventions, together with adequate ODA and other support, progress could still be made in achieving the MDGs.

Due recognition must be given to the importance in development cooperation of South-South flows of finance, technology and know-how. UNDP and the other United Nations development system agencies were committed to supporting developing countries in South-South cooperation through sharing experiences and technology.

It was also important to approach development in a more holistic way, by combining strategies to mitigate the effects of climate change with those to promote development and reduce poverty. The forthcoming United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen could act as a spur to development by facilitating a sustainable path out of poverty and helping to achieve the MDGs.

As part of the efforts of the United Nations Development Group to combine the strengths of United Nations agencies on the ground, work was in progress in over 30 countries in Africa, and 90 worldwide, to strengthen the capacity of Governments to manage and coordinate the use of ODA. By working together within and beyond the United Nations system, and in line with national development strategies, United Nations funds and programmes could bring about transformational change, in conformity with international commitments such as the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the Accra Agenda for

Action and the 2007 triennial comprehensive policy review.

**Ms. Obaid** (Executive Director, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)) commented on the role of data in development. Information about a country's population growth and the characteristics, living conditions, physical resources and distribution of its population between rural and urban areas was vital for policy formulation and planning, and also for the purpose of evidence-based advocacy and dialogue. If it was to be used effectively, the data must be reliable, culturally relevant and internationally comparable. The need for such data was increased by the pressure to achieve the MDGs and by the current economic downturn, in which it was crucial to monitor the impact of the crisis, especially on the poorest and most vulnerable, and to redirect public resources to the sectors most in need.

The United Nations system was working together on a Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert System (GIVAS) to collect information on the impact of the crisis. WHO, UNICEF and UNFPA were collaborating on a country-based review to identify vulnerable groups and necessary actions. Through its Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis (CFSVA) the World Food Programme (WFP) helped to identify the root causes of food insecurity and vulnerability, and recommended the most appropriate assistance. All such measures were firmly based on the principles of national leadership, and the United Nations system was committed to supporting one national framework, led and owned by Governments. Several United Nations agencies, such as FAO, UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF and the regional commissions, worked to make data available in their own fields. UNFPA supported national statistical offices by providing technical assistance for national censuses and for demographic and health surveys. UNICEF was working to strengthen civil registration systems, as part of its campaign to guarantee the right of children to a name and a legal identity. Work was also in progress to strengthen health management information systems. In Zimbabwe, several United Nations agencies had been assisting the Government to monitor the HIV status of pregnant women, so helping to identify the factors responsible for the decline in HIV prevalence.

Collecting, using and analysing data at the subnational and community levels posed capacity

challenges. Community-based monitoring systems had proved successful in the areas of food security and child malnutrition. The collection of standardized data in the 1990s on the extent and degrees of female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) in Africa and parts of Asia had proved effective in mobilizing public opinion against those practices. Population and housing censuses provided desperately needed information, of particular value in countries lacking proper administrative records and in post-conflict situations. The United Nations had played a significant role in carrying out censuses in Rwanda in 2002 and in Sierra Leone in 2004. To enhance the capacity of countries to conduct censuses of high quality, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, UNFPA had recently created a special post of Executive Coordinator on Census. A major challenge for censuses was funding, because of the difficulty of providing sufficiently detailed census plans to qualify for donor support. The 2010 Round of Censuses offered an opportunity to strengthen national capacity for data collection and analysis, and to train more statisticians and demographers.

All development partners must work together to ensure that no additional indicators were requested by donors from programme countries, in order to avoid overburdening national institutions while protecting the quality and measurability of ongoing development programmes. To minimize the reporting burden on countries, the monitoring of progress must be considerably improved. The United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination was working to harmonize data collection practices, definitions and time frames, while global initiatives such as DevInfo and UNData met the need for registries of global indicators. Data must be made more widely available and user-friendly, and access to data should be seen as a component of good governance, transparency and accountability.

**Ms. Veneman** (Executive Director, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)), speaking on the topic of capacity-building and innovation in technology, said that technology was developing faster than at any other time in human history, with computer power doubling every 18 months. The fifth annual United Nations Web 4 Dev Conference — hosted by UNICEF in New York in February — had highlighted the innovative uses to which technology could be put for development purposes.

Mobile phones allowed developing countries to overcome the lack of traditional, more expensive communication infrastructure. Africa now had more mobile phone subscribers than in the whole of North America. By 2010, nearly one in three Africans would have access to mobile phones. The devices were used, inter alia, to communicate commodity prices to farmers and transmit data on essential health and food needs in remote communities. In the past, such information might have taken weeks to be communicated, and for a malnourished child, that could mean the difference between life and death. Text messaging was also being used by the system to record food prices in drought-prone areas of East and West Africa; to monitor the distribution of mosquito nets in Nigeria; to provide information on HIV/AIDS prevention in Uganda; to facilitate youth participation on key issues in Madagascar; and to provide critical weather information to farmers in areas of Africa now subject to an increased incidence of floods and cyclones. In Malawi, as part of collaboration with academia on innovative uses of technology for development, community health workers monitored the nutritional status of children by mobile phone. Private-sector technology experts were key to ensuring such technological investments were sustainable. Companies could also help by: providing toll-free lines; offering free text messaging; expanding mobile coverage; and providing technical support.

A non-governmental organization (NGO) in Bangladesh was making affordable solar panels available to poverty-stricken families, to enable them to power a few light bulbs, a mobile phone charger and a television. Solar-powered solutions had also been developed for health care and communication purposes: a further example of the use of innovative technology. Academia helped provide fresh thinking for such applications, while civil society and the private sector turned the ideas into reality. Professional associations were also increasingly identifying ways their highly skilled members could address humanitarian challenges. International development agencies had a role to play in creating local capacity and ownership by supporting locally-developed sustainable technological solutions, which were often more appropriate than imported alternatives.

**Mr. de Mistura** (Deputy Executive Director, United Nations World Food Programme, (WFP)), endorsing the previous speaker's recommendation of

innovative technology for humanitarian purposes, said that he had just returned from Iraq, where mobile phones were used to make last-minute changes to localities for vaccination drives as a bomb avoidance measure.

In addressing the food and financial crises, climate change and the potential influenza A (H1N1) pandemic, it was essential to ensure that no individual was left behind. In the face of soaring poverty, the United Nations system must be focused, creative and coordinated.

It must devise proper safety nets to take care of the world's most vulnerable. For WFP, that included food-for-work, cash-for-work, vouchers-for-food, and school-feeding programmes with a multiplier effect that benefited the wider community. Safety nets should be put in place before a crisis struck, be tailored to local situations and nationally owned. They worked best when supported by several donors, with the United Nations system "Delivering as One".

**Mr. Chang** (United States of America) asked how the various agencies were preparing to meet the donors' demands for demonstrable results.

**Mr. Rutgersson** (Sweden) asked the panellists to give more details of how the various agencies were helping developing countries to mitigate the impacts of the global financial crisis.

**Mr. Al-Humaimidi** (Iraq) asked how the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) planned to help ensure the smooth running of the forthcoming census in Iraq that would determine the political structure of the country. Iraq was an ancient civilization and Iraqis wanted nothing more than to return to the community of nations and counteract the violence that had been done to them.

**Mr. Ayub** (Pakistan) said that the world was in the midst of a development emergency triggered by multiple crises that were reversing achievements on several fronts. He wondered how the United Nations planned to help countries that lacked resources to meet the increasing needs of their populations.

**Mr. Ossio** (Plurinational State of Bolivia) said that in the 1980s, the Bretton Woods institutions had urged countries to adopt policies that had only resulted in further impoverishment. He wondered how the agencies now planned to persuade developed countries

to live up to their official development assistance (ODA) commitments.

**Mr. Birichevskiy** (Russian Federation) said that his delegation welcomed progress achieved in implementing General Assembly resolution 62/208 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. It also welcomed the greater input being provided by the Council on operational activities. It was to be hoped that the contribution of the agencies to improving the management and accountability framework of the United Nations development and resident coordinator system would result in improved reports to future sessions.

The panellists should explain how the "One United Nations" approach might be made more inclusive and how agencies not represented at the country level could be involved nonetheless in pilot projects. He wondered how likely it was that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) would not be achieved by 2015 and how the United Nations system planned to deal with that eventuality in the period following the target date.

**Mr. Goffin** (Observer for Belgium) asked whether UNDP would be providing advocacy to Governments to help them adjust their budgets in response to the crises. He wondered also what mechanisms existed to ensure that the US\$ 20 billion earmarked by the Group of Eight was appropriately channelled and how the absorptive capacity of recipient countries might be strengthened.

**Ms. Schwabe-Hansen** (Norway) said that her country was committed to maintaining its current levels of development assistance. At a time when demand for funding was high, donor countries were under pressure to demonstrate that such assistance was being used as effectively as possible.

She would appreciate information on the status of plans for a joint World Bank-United Nations response at the country level to the global economic and financial crisis. While there was a strong tendency to look for new mechanisms to address the crisis, it was important not to lose sight of the progress being made as a result of ongoing, long-term efforts.

She would welcome comments on how capacity development and institutional development, and in particular the shift from projects to programmes, was

affecting the operations of United Nations development agencies, both centrally and at the country level. She wondered also if, as a result of the crisis, programme countries had more need for project implementation than policy advice.

Finally, she would welcome suggestions on how to improve the quality of reporting on development assistance outcomes while reducing the reporting burden and avoiding duplication of efforts.

**Mr. Rastam** (Malaysia) said that donor countries had a responsibility to honour their development assistance commitments despite the global financial and economic crisis. That crisis should not stop United Nations development agencies from pursuing their work, although they would need additional funds to do so.

It had been mentioned that countries had limited capacity to produce sufficiently detailed censuses. What exactly were those limitations: were they related to a lack of resources or a lack of data? Were less resources available for conducting censuses as a result of the global financial and economic crisis?

One of the obstacles to infrastructure development was that countries, even when they could afford long-term maintenance costs, found the initial investment costs too high. What steps were being taken to address that issue?

**Ms. Basilio** (Philippines), noting that the developing countries frequently voiced concern at their lack of access to technology, asked what measures United Nations funds and programmes were taking to address the problem. With regard to the Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert System (GIVAS), she would like to know when it would become operational and how developing countries could gain access to it.

**Mr. Steeghs** (Netherlands) said that a system under which funds, once allocated, could not be redirected was probably not the most effective way to respond to the current economic crisis. He wondered how much flexibility United Nations agencies had in terms of reallocating resources from one country, or area, to another, where needs might be more pressing.

While official development assistance was important, and Governments should certainly honour their commitments to providing it, it was not the only way for countries to meet the challenges of the crisis.

Countries must find local solutions, rather than depending solely on external aid.

**Mr. Shao** (China) highlighted the importance of South-South cooperation, strengthening social security networks and using science and technology to increase aid effectiveness. He agreed with the Executive Director of UNFPA that all development partners should work together to ensure that programme quality was maintained without any further burden being placed on the developing countries.

Collecting data was crucial to development. Nevertheless, gathering additional data called for more resources — a challenge many programme countries found hard to meet. New development indicators should be established only if they were relevant. Instead of focusing on data and indicators, development efforts should be prioritized.

**Ms. Lida** (France) said that the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development was an essential tool for strengthening the United Nations system's response to the global financial and economic crisis. The report on the implementation of the review had made reference to difficulties which had emerged during the preparation of the plan of action for countries that were currently drafting their new planning framework. What precisely were those difficulties?

What measures were envisaged to harmonize the information provided to Member States concerning programmes implemented by United Nations agencies in the field? Reporting on such information needed to be improved.

Substantial progress had been made in the area of simplification and harmonization of procedures. What additional steps could be taken by United Nations funds and programmes in that regard?

**Ms. Clark** (Administrator, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)) said that UNDP, which possessed a vast pool of knowledge that could be used to facilitate the transfer of ideas and best practices, had been lending its support to various forms of South-South technology transfer, including the transfer of solar energy technology from India to African countries, and the transfer of biofuel technology from Mali to Ecuador.

In terms of mitigating the impact of the global financial and economic crisis, UNDP and the World

Bank had been entrusted with leading an inquiry into how development assistance actors could join forces in supporting countries severely affected by the crisis. UNDP could bring a human development perspective to an analysis of the recession's impact on developing countries. It could also contribute by providing countries with policy design advice, including advice relating to budget reprioritization.

Despite all the support provided by United Nations development agencies, many of the low-income countries did not have enough financial resources to do what was necessary to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. To rectify that situation, official development assistance and fiscal flexibility on the part of the international financial institutions was needed. UNDP was playing an advocacy role in that regard, urging the developed countries to honour their development assistance commitments and making sure that low-income countries got a fair share of the financial package agreed on at the G-20 summit held in April 2009.

Donor countries and development agencies were under pressure to demonstrate that the assistance they provided produced positive results. But achieving progress in the field of development was not always easy. A large number of actors, including the Governments and people of the beneficiary countries themselves, were involved and development results were also affected by various external factors such as the recession, the food crisis and climate change. In that context, United Nations development agencies had to make greater efforts to define clearly the benchmarks and expected outcomes of the assistance they provided so that they could account precisely for every dollar made available to them.

The heads of United Nations development agencies, meeting the previous day, had underlined the need for country teams to work closely together in order to achieve the best possible results. Consideration had been given to undertaking joint missions, which would send a powerful message to country teams about the importance of collaboration.

**Ms. Obaid** (Executive Director, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)) said that while donor countries often demanded immediate results, much of the development work being done by the United Nations was long-term in nature. Nevertheless, United Nations agencies all had strategic plans, the results of

which were measured by benchmarks, indicators and expected outcomes, thus providing an accountability framework for both development and management results. In addition, some donors established their own indicators, which also had to be taken into account. Ultimately, it was Governments, rather than agencies and donors, that were directly responsible for the results achieved. In general, there was a need to reform the system of auditing development assistance to align it with the shift from projects to programmes.

In terms of mitigating the impact of the financial crisis, priority had to be accorded to the countries most in need. For example, several United Nations agencies were working together with the World Bank to accelerate efforts to improve maternal and newborn health in 25 countries needing immediate support in that area. The crisis also called for a greater emphasis on the horizontal relationship between sectors to ensure that results in one sector had an impact on other sectors. Another consequence of the crisis was that UNFPA had no way of knowing how much funding it would have the following year as its principal donors had still not informed it about the contributions they would be making.

UNFPA was working closely with the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq on preparations for conducting a census in that country. UNFPA's role was to build capacities by providing the authorities concerned with the latest technological knowledge, so that the census could be conducted effectively and produce data that met international standards. A special technical dossier had to be designed for each country conducting a census. Countries that lacked the technical expertise to do so often relied on other countries for assistance and, in that connection, much use was being made of South-South cooperation. Donor countries also contributed to the census process by making pledges at donor conferences specifically held for that purpose.

With regard to budget flexibility, UNFPA endeavoured each year to move resources from countries that, for one reason or another, could not make use of them to countries that were in a position to do so.

**Ms. Veneman** (Executive Director, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)) said that it was urgent to redouble efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. Efforts could be

focused on areas having the greatest need. For example, Africa and South Asia accounted for 50 per cent and 40 per cent respectively of the burden of unmet Goals. Those two regions accounted for 92 per cent of under-five mortality and 93 per cent of maternal mortality, with India alone accounting for 21 per cent of under five mortality and 22 per cent of maternal mortality.

Child mortality had in fact dropped by 60 per cent since 1960 and she expected further good news in the figures to be published in September. In some countries there had been less improvement; in Ethiopia, Eritrea, Egypt and Mozambique for example the decrease had been 40 per cent. Nevertheless 9.2 million children died every year of preventable causes, half of them in the first 28 days of life. That suggested significant results could be obtained by focusing on that neonatal period, which required strengthening health systems and access to health care. Progress in reducing maternal mortality had been slower but many countries, for example Mozambique and Syria had achieved good results.

Cooperative efforts between the international organizations and Governments could achieve impressive results: immunization campaigns in Africa had already reduced the incidence of measles by 90 per cent, three years before the target date. By 2010 all areas affected by malaria would have full coverage availability of bed nets; future mortality data would reflect that fact.

She underscored that the MDGs constituted specific targets that countries and the United Nations system could focus on. More information was however needed in order to better compare and contrast the relative situations of individual countries. There was a movement away from individual projects to a focus on the building of sustainable systems. Resources should be allocated where they would have the most effect and where gaps had been identified. Countries increasingly requested support not in the form of financial resources but in transfer of knowledge and technical resources to help them meet their development goals. The United Nations system must therefore cultivate a culture of technical expertise.

She endorsed the concept of increased coordination; joint reporting, for example with regard to the MDGs, could be a way to avoid duplication. She strongly supported cooperation within the United

Nations system both at upper management levels and in the field, including cooperation between the various country offices and agencies and with Governments. In the area of maternal and newborn health UNICEF cooperated with various stakeholders, including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI) and the World Bank to undertake joint planning in such areas as health, education, protection and human rights.

Every effort was made to allocate funds to areas where they would have the most impact, especially over the long term, to help break the cycle of poverty. Focusing on improving nutrition for children under two for example greatly improved cognitive development. Children who did not receive adequate nutrition during that period would have difficulty in school and in finding employment later in life. A focus on encouraging education and school attendance, for example by identifying the reasons why parents did not send their children to school, would increase children's chances of long-term success in life.

UNICEF had limited discretionary funds; it had, because of the recent food and financial crises, provided additional support to nutrition programmes. In response to the representative of Malaysia, she said such institutions as the Grameen Bank could provide useful alternative sources of financing. New technology offered new opportunities for development. For example, women in Bangladesh and Africa acquired cell phones and used them as a source of income, charging people a small fee to use their phone. In West Africa the use of cell phones to send text messages to discourage the practice of female genital mutilation had been coupled with a literacy campaign.

Lastly, she said that the international community must not lose sight of the gender aspect of development and poverty eradication. Access to maternal health services, nutrition during pregnancy and girls' education must remain priorities. There should be an increased focus on keeping adolescent girls in school, which would delay marriage and limit the size of families, and on the elimination of gender violence.

**Mr. de Mistura** (Deputy Executive Director, World Food Programme (WFP)) said that the current crises provided an opportunity to focus on obtaining maximum results for money spent, for both donors and developing countries. WFP could at least demonstrate



immediate concrete results, for example the number of bags of wheat delivered, but for other agencies it was sometimes difficult to show immediate results because sustainable development by definition emphasized long-term progress.

The recent G-8 meeting had brought about a most welcome renewed focus on food security and agricultural production. In the long term it was important to increase food security overall; in the short term it was important to feed those who were already hungry. Such efforts had been largely successful: food assistance had been provided to the hungry, including more than 7 million children, thereby reducing tension and avoiding the food riots of the recent past. That would provide time for longer-term results from partner agencies, including FAO and IFAD.

With regard to mitigating the effects of the financial crisis, some tools existed, which were likewise valuable with regard to the food crisis. It was important to help those most affected as well as develop measures to prevent more people from being affected, through such programmes as food for work, school food vouchers and food assistance.

Turning to the census in Iraq, he stressed the importance for the validity of the electoral process of undertaking a modern census using international standards in order to avoid any questioning of the result. Iraq to a large extent had the human and financial resources to carry out such a project, with advice from the United Nations. With regard to the use of new technology, he noted the widespread use of cell phones in the medical sector in Iraq to promote vaccination.

In response to the representative of Belgium, he said that it would be important to make wise use of the 20 billion dollars in food aid over three years agreed to by the G-8. WFP was already working on identifying areas where those funds could best be used and he invited donors to likewise make suggestions. WFP for example was currently focusing on helping small farmers; some funds might be allocated to that area. The additional funds could be used to maintain and increase agricultural production in order to feed the hungry. In that context he showed delegates a red mug distributed by WFP that represented one serving of high-protein food for schoolchildren. Currently WFP was only able to fill one quarter of that mug; the new funding would help fill that mug. Some of the

20 billion dollars should be allocated to keeping people alive until increased food security and increased agricultural production was achieved.

**Mr. Chang** (United States of America) said that his delegation fully understood the difficulty of obtaining and demonstrating tangible results. There were two major hurdles to overcome. The official development assistance provided by States represented only a small part of total resources for development and the official development assistance from United Nations agencies was an even smaller amount. There were not enormous resources to work with. In addition, it was difficult to attribute responsibility, and it was unfair to hold agencies responsible for lack of progress towards the MDGs. At a more basic level, however, he wondered, when donors contributed money for assistance for activities to strengthen the system and fill gaps, how programmes were designed and objectives set and how success was evaluated. Reports to donors on how money was spent and what progress was made would go a long way towards justifying such spending in donor countries.

**Ms. Clark** (Administrator, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)), said that the current discussion had been useful in clarifying when results could or could not be clearly demonstrated. It was important for donors to understand how their money was being used and what outcomes had been achieved; it was also important to find effective ways of reporting. The concept of “deliver as one” might be extended to include “report as one”. All the United Nations agencies were committed to open, transparent and clear reporting but already had a heavy reporting burden. Perhaps they could report together with regard to individual countries. That was something that could be explored in the context of the ongoing reform of the United Nations.

**Ms. Obaid** (Executive Director, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)) underscored that at the country level objectives were defined and outcomes evaluated in cooperation with individual Governments and taking into account their national development plans. The United Nations increasingly played a support role for the implementation of national priorities. Governments and the United Nations system therefore shared a joint responsibility for achieving results.

In response to the representative of France, she said that at both the high-level management and country levels efforts were under way to harmonize financial rules and human resources practices. UNFPA had made proposals in that regard to donors and countries. Unfortunately such reforms required additional resources that, while promised, had not been forthcoming. Until such time as more resources were allocated specifically for that purpose, agencies would continue to do whatever possible within existing resources.

**Mr. de Mistura** (Deputy Executive Director, World Food Programme (WFP)) said that dealing with crises focused attention. The time had come to act. The current crises provided an opportunity to reform the reporting process and speak with one voice. Efforts already under way in that regard should be accelerated.

*The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.*