

FRAMEWORK FOR NATIONAL EXECUTION

AND

THE PROGRAMME APPROACH

**Programme Management
Support Unit (NEX)
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FRAMEWORK FOR NATIONAL EXECUTION

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as other United Nations agencies has been giving aid to developing countries for well over the past forty years. The aid however, has neither made recipients self-reliant nor has it registered a significant impact. The operational activities were managed exclusively by the consultants of specialized UN agencies viz FAO, DDSMS (now DESA), ILO, UNIDO, UNESCO, etc. under the modality known as agency execution (AGEX). There was, therefore, little or no involvement at all of national organizations or governments concerned in the management of projects/programmes under the Technical CO-operation (TC). This became a matter of concern to recipient governments and the United Nations General Assembly.

1.2 The concern culminated into a number of TC evaluations being carried out to determine what went wrong under the agency execution. Conclusions were made that projects/programmes under agency execution were mostly not sustainable because recipient governments regarded them as being super-imposed and therefore had neither plans nor interest in sustaining them. It became imperative for the United Nations General Assembly to devise a different approach with a view of achieving better projects/programmes results.

2.0 The Genesis of National Execution:

2.1 The genesis of National Execution (NEX) can be found in the UNDP Governing Council (now Executive Board) decision 2 of July 1976 (76/57). That decision introduced Government Execution (GEX) under which modality recipient governments were given some responsibility in managing the TC projects/programmes.

2.2 A follow-up decision (81/21) was made five years later which came up with a serious observation that there was lack of progress in the matter and instructed the Administrator to review the modality and suggest changes in financial and administrative procedures to further improve on the operations by experimenting NEX. Since then, periodic reviews have been undertaken and necessary improvements have been introduced through a number of instruments i.e. General Assembly resolutions and UNDP Governing Board decisions to revamp the NEX.

2.3 The December 1989 (44/211) resolution of the UN General Assembly was a turning point, formalizing the rules and procedures to promote and maximize the utilization and strengthening of national capacities, while enabling the governments to make effective use of the expertise available within the UN system. Subsequently, in its December 1992 (47/199) resolution, the General Assembly reiterated, that NEX should be the norm with due consideration of the needs and capacities of recipient countries. Parallel to these resolutions, other Governing Council decisions sharpened the definitions and passed related legislation. NEX was introduced to Tanzania in 1987 on an experimental basis. Its growth did not materialize until 1993 after the Government and UNDP had taken a number of measures.

General Assembly resolution 47/199 (22 December 1992) reiterates that "NEX should be the norm for programmes and projects supported by the United Nations System, taking into account the needs and capacities of recipient countries."

Governing Council (now Executive Board) decision 93/25 (17 June 1993) "welcomes the increased use of national execution in UNDP assisted programmes/projects in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 47/199. It calls upon recipient countries, with the assistance of UNDP as requested by the countries concerned, to assess carefully national capacities for carrying out execution responsibilities before approval of such programmes/projects; encourages greater use of UN specialized agencies in the design, technical appraisal and backstopping of nationally executed programmes/projects."

3.0 Underlying Principles of NEX:

3.1 NEX Definition: There are several definitions which have been developed over the years. NEX may simply be defined as an operational modality of managing UNDP supported programmes under which recipient governments assume the ownership role of their development programmes/projects. It is also defined as a "co-operative operational arrangement entailing, among other things overall responsibility and assumption of accountability for the formulation and management by the programme country of UNDP supported programmes/projects."

3.2 Ownership: Programmes under National Execution must be owned by the Government and not the Donor. This means that the Government should plan and formulate its own programmes, then market them to donors for technical/financial support. The practice of allowing donors to formulate programmes and sell them to the Government is not in line with the spirit of National Execution. That has led to programmes becoming unsustainable. We have a duty of educating the Government system on this important change in order that the people may change their attitudes and accept the ownership concept of their own programmes. The Government or a national organization concerned should take responsibility of DIRECTING and CONTROLLING the activities of a project or programme.

3.3 Responsibility: Under agency execution the entire responsibility for the implementation of programmes was placed on respective agencies. Beneficiary Governments simply sat back and waited for results. Project

personnel (especially experts) reported direct to their agency headquarters, by-passing the local authorities. In a number of instances even local authorities of project locations did not know what was happening in their areas of jurisdiction! People talked of FAO, UNICEF, UNESCO or WFP projects rather than Government projects funded by these agencies.

National Execution places responsibility on the Government. This means that the Government takes full responsibility of programmes at all stages i.e. formulation, implementation and evaluation. Project personnel and other implementing agents are answerable to the Government. Expenditure on NEX projects/programmes should be authorized and accounted for by the Government i.e. Executing Agent. Ideally, even hiring of project personnel and the procurement of project/programme inputs should be done by the Government. Otherwise there should be Government authorization to the donor to act on its behalf.

3.4 Accountability: Under the National Execution modality, accountability of donor funds is borne by national government of the programme country. This means, that the government is accountable to the donor and to its people for proper utilization of programme inputs. Above all it is also accountable for quality and quantity of programmes' outputs and results.

Accountability calls for systematic monitoring and control of programme implementation. Ad hoc monitoring cannot help to achieve perfection in project/programme implementation. The Government has the duty of re-examining programme monitoring mechanism to ensure that it is sound enough to cater for NEX requirements and that it is sufficiently involved in the process. Joint monitoring by both stakeholders i.e. government and UNDP should be encouraged.

3.5 Other Definitions under NEX Implementation Arrangements:

(i) **The Government coordinating authority:** "This is the focal point of the Government for ALL communications with UNDP on programme and projects in the programme country. There can be only ONE government co-ordinating authority of a programme country. The government co-ordinating authority assumes ultimate responsibility on behalf of the Government for the overall management of UNDP funded programmes/projects and is ultimately accountable to UNDP for all UNDP programmes resources under NEX." In Tanzania the Government Co-ordinating Authority is the Ministry of Finance.

(ii) **The Executing Agent:** "The executing agent is primarily responsible for the planning and overall management of programme/projects activities, reporting, accounting, monitoring and

evaluation of the programme/project, for the supervision of implementing agents and for the management and audit of the use of UNDP resources. The executing agent is appointed by and is accountable to the Government co-ordinating authority. It is also accountable to UNDP for the production of outputs, for the achievement of programme/project objectives and for the use of UNDP resources.”

(iii) Implementing agent: “The implementing agent of which there may be more than one, provides services and carries out activities such as procurement and delivery of programme/project inputs and their conversion into outputs. The implementing agent is accountable to the executing agent.” Where a UN agency is involved in the implementation of a programme/project, it is called a Co-operating Agency and it has to sign a Co-operating Agreement with the government.

4.0 The Roles of Various Partners in the NEX Process:

4.1 The Role of Government:

The Government has the responsibility of:-

- (a) Setting-out priorities, the achievement of development objectives of programmes and projects and to ensure the sustainability of the results so obtained.
- (b) Proposing executing and implementation arrangements at the time of project/programme design in consultation with UNDP.
- (c) Overall management of the programme/project and accountability to UNDP for the production of outputs to achieve set objectives and of the use of the resources so provided by UNDP.

4.2 The Role of UN organizations:

In the “upstream” stages, the UN agencies may contribute through involvement in:-

- (a) Policy dialogue and sectoral advice to governments through sectoral studies and consultations.
- (b) Assist in aid coordination activities through participation in technical cooperation assessments and formulation exercises.
- (c) Assist in design and formulation of national development and (sub) sectoral programmes.

At the project formulation stage, the specialized UN agencies may be called upon to:-

- (a) Provide technical expertise in designing and developing technical operation projects.

- (b) Provide assistance in the appraisal of projects formulated by national authorities and submitted to UNDP for financing.

At the operational stage an agency may be called upon, on request by the government, to:-

- (a) Act as a co-operating agent of a project.
- (b) Provide technical monitoring and backstopping services.
- (c) Provide technical support to the executing agent.
- (d) Act as implementing agent for the entire project or part of it and/or provide technical support to national implementing agents.

4.3 The Role of UNDP:

A distinctive role for UNDP, as provided for in the policy, is a multilateral funding partner supporting cooperation for development. It does so by providing effective response to government requests for building and strengthening national capacity, including the coordination of external assistance, and by ensuring that operational arrangements reflect the principles of tripartite partnership irrespective of execution modalities.

- (a) UNDP will use the expertise of the organizations of the UN system in:-
 - Policy dialogue and sectoral advice to government, through sectoral studies and consultations.
 - Aid coordination activities, through their participation in technical cooperation assessments and formulation exercises.
 - Design and formulation of national development and sectoral programmes.
- (b) Approve execution and implementation modalities proposed by the government, taking into account government policies, country-specific factors and requirements of individual projects.
- (c) Appraisal of UNDP financed projects.
- (d) Approve UNDP assistance to programmes/projects.
- (e) Ensure that projects are relevant to national priorities, plans and programmes as well as to global norms, policies and objectives of the United Nations.
- (f) Ensure that UNDP resources are used in cost-effective and efficient manner in order to have maximum impact.
- (g) Provide such guidance and support as is necessary by utilizing the capacities of the UN system in performing this role.
- (h) Provide backstopping or monitoring services, irrespective of execution and implementation modalities.
- (i) Provision of administrative support in project execution and accountability functions and also facilitating implementation.
- (j) Provision of relevant information to assist recipient countries to assume responsibility for national execution.

- (k) Provide assistance to governments to enhance their execution capacity in both the central and sectoral areas concerned with technical cooperation. Such support can include training of national staff; strengthening of institutional capacities needed by governments to assume execution responsibilities; and provision of information to national implementing agents to facilitate their understanding of international procurement requirements.

5.0 Conclusions:

5.1 As stated at paragraph 2.3 above, NEX was introduced as the "norm" during the Fifth Programme Cycle (1992-1996). Its adoption was strongly supported by participating governments. After several years of experience with NEX, most personnel of UNDP country offices, programmes and governments are now committed to the process and policy. The NEX modality is now taking about 75% of total UNDP resources globally. In Tanzania the achievement was more than 80% of December 1997.

5.2 However, the broad implementation of NEX is a complex and difficult endeavour that is not yet complete. UNDP Headquarters recognizes the fact that NEX operationalization should be country specific depending on local environment of the programme country concerned.

5.3 General guidelines and definitions are still evolving and Country Offices and governments are improvising as they cope with the challenges of practical implementation. UNDP Headquarters (BPPS, DOPP) has now completed a review of the NEX policy. A number of issues have been studied e.g. the terms "Execution" and "Implementation" which have since been confused up and used inter-changeably. The "Tripartite" relationship which was more relevant to AGEX is also being studied with a view of establishing a "bipartite" relationship which would be more in line with NEX. New and improved guidelines have started being issued by Headquarters with the view of enriching operationalization of the modality.

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Source of Information:

- GA Resolution 44/211, December 1989
- HQ Teaching material on Policies and Procedures for Determination of Execution and Implementation Arrangements and Successor Arrangements for Agency Support Costs, 1992
- GA Resolution 47/199, December 1992
- Evaluation Report on National Execution - June 1995
- National Execution: Promise and Challenges, OESP 1995
- National Execution Policy - Issues Paper, June 1996.
- Procedures for National Execution, February 1998

Attachment 1	-	How well is NEX understood
" 2	-	Capacity Building and Self Reliance
" 3	-	Governance of NEX
" 4	-	Revised Roles for UNDP and UN Agencies
" 5	-	Sustainability.

HOW WELL IS NEX UNDERSTOOD?

Is the modality of NEX fully comprehended in the UNDP Country Offices and countries in your region?

Arab States: "NEX is not fully comprehended by all governments and country offices. It was introduced without enough effort devoted to producing user friendly guidelines, as well as the necessary training."

Europe and CIS: "The modality is not very well understood. There is confusion among our partners and even within the UNDP!"

Africa: "The modality of NEX is comprehended in the governments and UNDP country offices."

Latin America and the Caribbean: "Each country office has adapted the NEX modality to the conditions and needs particular to its country. Normally the basic principles have been transmitted by the office and grasped by national authorities without any significant problems. The assumption is that the modality should not be imposed on governments and that governments can be trusted to identify their own needs and the means to fulfill them."

Asia and Pacific: "While the modality of NEX as such is fully comprehended, management arrangements with regard to execution and implementation responsibilities are still subject to discussion, in particular between the government coordinating agencies and the executing/implementing agencies. This has to do with novel management structures, such as programme steering committees and programme coordination offices, required for implementation of programmes which, by their nature, are more complicated than projects."

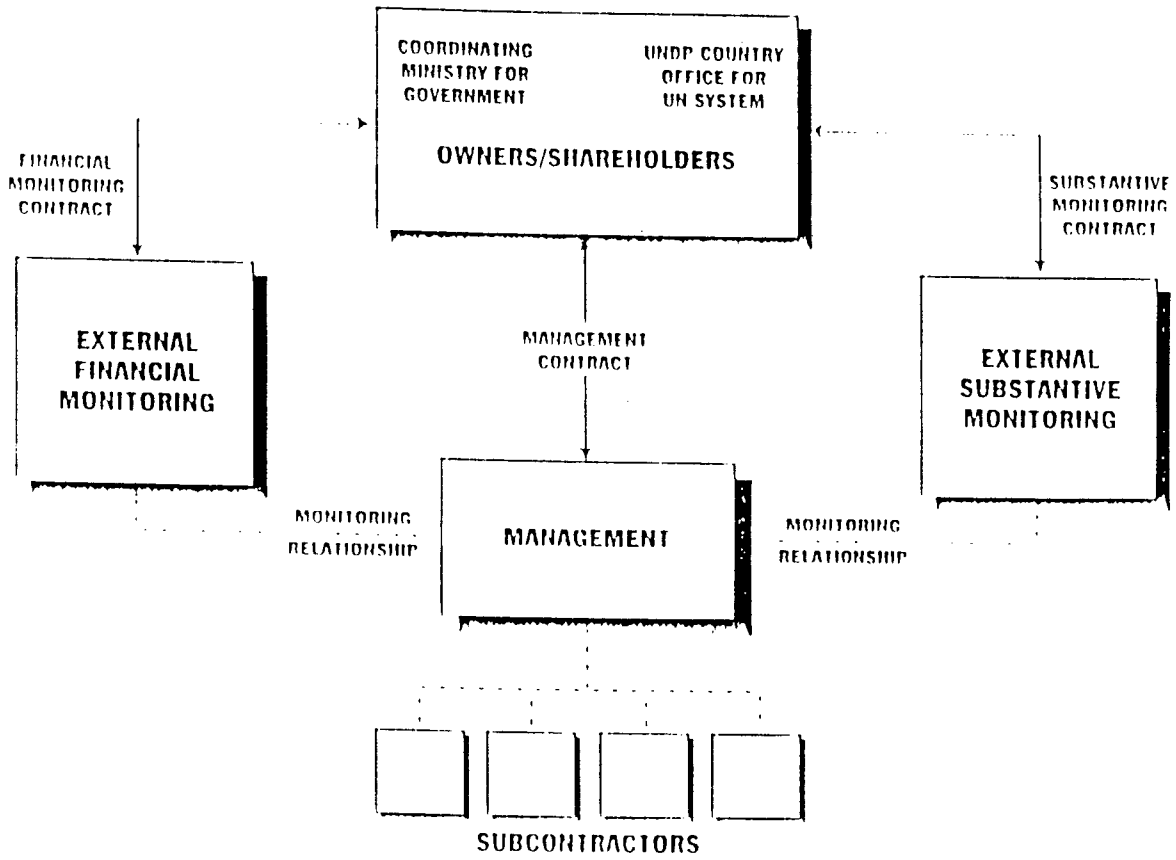
(From a survey questionnaire sent to the UNDP Regional Bureaux)

CAPACITY BUILDING AND SELF-RELIANCE

A majority of countries, around 60%, expressed the view that NEX was helping to develop and reinforce national managerial and administrative capacity for development management. Its main value derives from the opportunity to gain actual hands-on experience in the design, management and monitoring/evaluation of technical assistance programmes and projects. (Benin, India, Mongolia, Malaysia, ROK, Vietnam) Evaluations in the UNDP/OESP database so far do not provide much evidence that nationally-executed programmes are any more successful in building capacity than agency-executed endeavours. Still the increased use of national capacities provides some hope that over the long haul NEX is going to make an impact. Non-LDCs, where the use of national capacities has increased more quickly as a result of NEX, are likely to derive more significant benefits from NEX than LDCs where national capacities are not available to the same degree. (UN 1995 Triennial Policy Review) In a few of the least developed countries, NEX is therefore perhaps thought of not so much as a capacity building tool but rather taken for what it does, i.e., transferring management to national authorities, hence as an end in itself. But clearly national capacity for self-reliant development management is an issue far beyond the reach of nationally-executed UNDP-assisted programmes and projects (Brazil, Nicaragua)

(From the survey questionnaire for governments and country offices and other sources)

GOVERNANCE OF NEX



REVISED ROLES FOR UNDP AND UN AGENCIES

The dynamics of NEX has changed the roles and relationships of governments, the UN agencies and UNDP. Under the combined influence of NEX and the programme approach, UNDP has become more involved in the upstream policy dialogue with government and in programme formulation (Benin, Bolivia, Kuwait, Swaziland). It is also increasingly playing the role of a donor/funding agency with monitoring and evaluation responsibilities with regard to the utilization of funds and accountability (Benin, Cameroon, Colombia, India, Malaysia, Philippines). On the other hand, in the bulk of countries, UNDP is still an active "partner" in both execution and implementation of programmes and projects. UNDP's involvement ranges from operational level advice (Ecuador, Guyana) to being partially or fully in charge of operations and administration (Bangladesh, Benin, Guinea, Nepal, Guyana, Zambia). Thus, UNDP has effectively taken over some of the functions previously performed by UN agencies (Jordan, Honduras, Dominican Republic).

Still, in most countries, UN agencies continue to provide technical inputs and advice in their areas of competence, but often at a reduced scale as their role has shifted from project execution to technical support in the execution and implementation of projects, and to monitoring and evaluation (Bhutan, Dem. Korea (DPRK), Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Malaysia, Morocco, Niger, Peru, Syria, Thailand). The relationship between governments and UN agencies has been turned upside down. Governments are now in a very strong contractual position relative to the UN agencies which can no longer impose their own views and agenda (Bhutan, Bolivia, CAR, DPRK, Swaziland, Tunisia). They now report to and take directives from national project coordinators (Gambia, Tunisia).

In terms of relationships, NEX has forged a closer and improved link between government and UNDP, whereas interaction between UNDP and the other UN agencies has become more infrequent and more distant (Bhutan, Brazil, Chile, Guyana, Honduras, Iran, Morocco, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Yemen) as have contacts between governments and UN agencies (Argentina, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Venezuela).

(From the survey questionnaire for governments and country offices)

SUSTAINABILITY

50% of the countries responding to the evaluation questionnaire believed that NEX was promoting sustainability. Among the specific reasons to support this claim they cited that institutional capacities remain in place after the completion of UNDP assistance and that NEX favored more permanent institutional linkages (India, Jordan, Tunisia, Uganda). In some countries (Chile, China, Peru or Thailand) the Team found necessary conditions for sustainability met, including the fact that UNDP-assisted activities were derived from government programmes, and that they were integrated into the normal performance of duties of staff funded from regular government budgets. But there was no indication of any simple automatic relationship between NEX and sustainability. There are of course badly designed nationally executed projects with little chance of lasting impact. For most countries, including some of those visited by the Team it was still too early to tell. More frequently, however, sustaining project results posed serious problems due to endemic weaknesses of the public sector environment, including the difficulty of covering recurrent cost, the lack of political will, turnover of staff and motivational problems due to low salaries, patronage and the absence of a performance-based system (Bangladesh, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Malawi, Nicaragua, Niger, Zimbabwe). The evidence echoes the findings of the earlier reviews.

(From the questionnaires sent to governments and country offices and observations from country visits)

THE PROGRAMME APPROACH



THE PROGRAMME APPROACH

1.0 Introduction

1.1 For some years there has been widespread frustration with the slow pace of development in many developing countries. While the situation cannot be generalized, it is true that in some countries earlier gains have been reversed and in others there has been serious retrogression. Few countries have made notable and sustainable progress in human development indicators over the past 40 years. Of course, expectations are constantly rising. However, adverse criticism is understandable given the substantial contributions made in technical/financial aid to development efforts in developing countries.

1.2 The principal reservations on aid have been that:

- It fails to achieve the intended impact on country goals;
- it is too narrowly focused on individual project objectives which are widely scattered and unco-ordinated, and which inevitably have a limited impact on the majority of the population;
- too often, aid reflects donors' "agendas instead of the aid recipients' needs" and is managed accordingly; and
- it is not sufficiently responsive to changing needs.

1.3 The position outlined above has prompted a search of ways to make aid more effective, with greater emphasis on the commitment and responsibility of aid recipients, flexibility and cost-effectiveness. The search has profoundly influenced the debate on the operational activities of the United Nations system. It is in this context, that the term "Programme Approach" has found its currency and popularity in an effort to augment the potential of achieving better results and impact under the National Execution modality.

1.4 The "Project Approach" tends to look upon projects as an end rather than as a means of development. Projects do not always grow organically out of the specific needs of an individual country, but sometimes reflect world-wide sectoral policies of an international organization which are not applicable indiscriminately.

1.5 In recent years analysis of development experience - and more particularly of the role played by external co-operation - has once more concluded that a piecemeal or project-oriented approach to development has not yielded the results and impact expected. This has led the international community to re-emphasize the use of the programme approach.

1.6 The General Assembly (GA) passed its landmark resolution 44/211 in December 1989. Since then, there has been considerable use of, and discussion on the Programme Approach, as stipulated in the resolution, as well as the related term "programme oriented mechanism" but neither has been defined in a universally agreed manner. There has been substantial variation in the meaning given to the terms by different authors; consequently confusion and misunderstanding have often arisen.

1.7 UNDP has attempted to arrive at a common understanding of the term "programme approach" and to determine the essential elements of a "programme oriented mechanism." It has involved its own staff, both in the Field and at Headquarters, in this endeavour, as well as representatives of UN Specialized Agencies, aid recipients and donor governments. Two meetings were convened in the second half of 1991, one in Santiago (Chile) and the other in Geneva, to move the process forward. Subsequently, elaborate guidelines on the programme approach were developed.

1.8 To understand the essence of the programme approach, it is crucial to understand that the "programme" referred to is a national programme; it is not that of UNDP or any other outside partner as used to be the case.

2.0 Definition

2.1 The approach is the way in which the national authorities attempt to achieve their national objectives, not through a series of discrete or ad hoc projects, but through a carefully through-out and articulated programme. The programme should contain all the elements or means needed to reach and sustain the national objective. In short, the programme approach is a concept which applies primarily to national development: it should not be pursued unilaterally by external partners. Therefore, it is not possible to speak of external partners following a programme approach unless such an approach has already been developed by national authorities.

2.2 A Programme: Is a coherent set of policies, strategies, activities and investments designed to achieve a specific time bound national development of objective or set of objectives.

2.3 Programme Approach: The pursuit of national development goals through cohesive national programmes. Such an approach by national authorities will permit UN system inputs to be merged with national and other external inputs in support of programmes that have been conceived by the host country with such external assistance as it may seek. An

illustration of a framework of a national programme on Poverty Alleviation is attached.

3.0 Advantages of Programme Approach (PA):

The advantages of the programme approach are several, viz.:

- it recognizes the indispensable need to place national authorities at the heart of the development effort, with a clear sense of commitment and direction;
- it recognizes the usually complex and often multisectoral nature of most development objectives;
- it takes into account such aspects as policy, legislation, manpower incentives, financial needs and other factors, previously considered as externalities, which are crucial for the attainment of a given development objective;
- it recognizes the need for responsiveness and flexibility in the implementation of national programmes: it is virtually impossible to foresee and provide in advance for the varied and changing components of a national programme;
- it focuses on impact rather than on inputs or even outputs in the narrow sense.

3.2 External Support to National Programmes: The programme approach requires that attention be focussed on a national development objective, and that a coherent programme framework be formulated to reach the objective. All partners, national and external, thus find their direction and co-ordination within that framework. This approach does not exclude the possibility of concentrating on a component at the sub-programme level, but it does require that the development objective be recognized and constantly borne in mind as the overarching justification for the sub-programme.

3.3 The programme approach underlines the need for frequent review of, and flexible responses to, unfolding events, not only within the components of the programme but within the programme as a whole. In a strict sense, there are not external factors: if the programme is to succeed, all the inter-related elements have to be considered. In addition, the programme approach, while concerned with all outputs focuses on their impact on the development objective. It is by the latter, above all, that the progress of programme implementation - including external contributions - is to be judged.

3.4 When external partners are invited to co-operate in development efforts, their co-operation should be consonant with national objectives. It may take place at various stages of the development process i.e. at policy formulation, programme formulation, programme implementation and evaluation. Whenever possible, external co-operation should support

national programmes rather than isolated or ad hoc national development projects.

3.5 Although it cannot be construed that the programme approach must always be implemented under National Execution, by placing the prime responsibility for national development squarely on the national authorities, the programme approach, if fully pursued, virtually calls for national execution of UNDP funded activities.

3.6 Recognizing that the programme approach has created a number of new demands on the national governments, UNDP has offered its full support needed by recipients to ensure that national programmes are developed in line with the approach's requirements in order that implementation may not face undue hitches.

4.0 Important Requirements for the PA:

4.1 The Programme Approach works best when a well defined and articulated national programme framework exists. Consequently, for the programme approach to operate effectively, the following should also be available:

- Existence of a national programme framework , or at least a national and or sectoral policy statements or integrated development plans.

A national programme framework describes problems and solutions, translates policy statements into development activities, specifies resources, capacities, strategies to achieve time-bound goals, describes institutional frameworks and management arrangements.

- Demonstrated Government leadership and commitment to applying programme approach.
- A viable institutional framework at the central and decentralized levels, that will ensure Government ownership in the implementation process.
- An efficient mechanism of support management of a national programme framework and aid co-ordination in the country.
- The involvement of all stakeholders and beneficiaries in the planning and implementation process.

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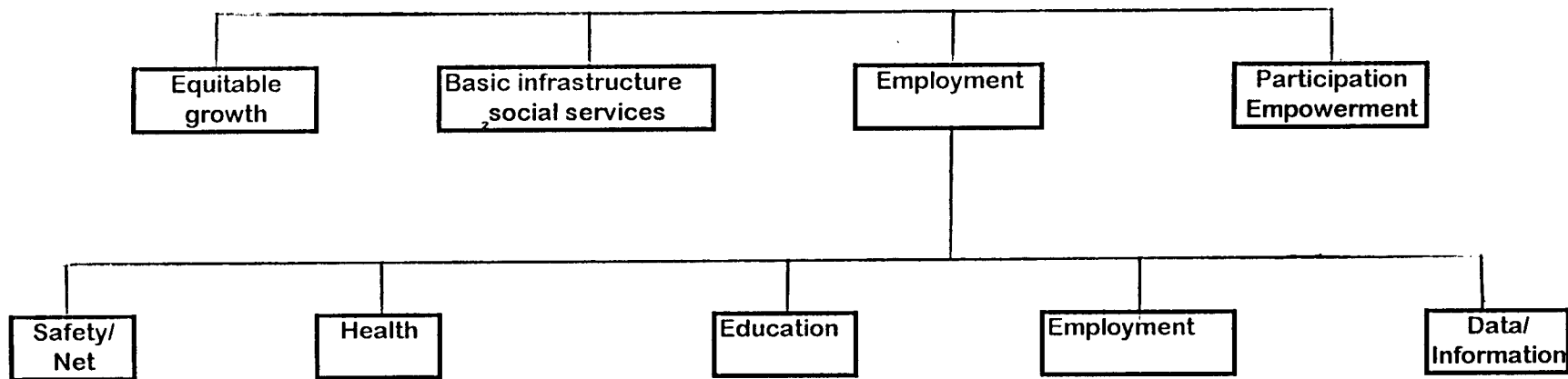
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Source of Information:

- The Programme Approach, Guiding Principles - UNDP 1993
- User's Guide - How to Implement Programme Approach - UNDP 1997

Attachment 1	-	Illustration of a framework of a national programme on poverty eradication
" 2	-	Some Reasons for moving to a programme approach
" 3	-	The programme approach
" 4	-	A framework for UN agency cooperation
" 5	-	A national programme framework is
" 6	-	The process of dialogue.

Illustration of a framework of a national programme on poverty alleviation





Some reasons for moving to a programme approach

- National development objectives as a starting point.
- Increased national responsibility for and involvement in development activities.
- A better mechanism for donor agency coordination & resource mobilisation.
- Better designed interventions with sustainable impact.

Slide 3 of 10

These and other issues associated with the management of development and development cooperation lead to changes in policy in many development organisations .

These changes operate in varying degrees given the specific needs of the country and the nature of the initiatives being funded.

Some of the major changes in the UN system are;

- dramatic increase in national execution
- more emphasis on strengthening national capacity
- programme approach
- increased emphasis on sustainable development

Each development organisation has it's own way of articulating these policy changes, depending on the area it works in and the technology it specialises in.

The programme approach is defined by the UN as..



The programme approach..

- is a *means* through which *the government* can address a set of national development problems, in a coherent and integrated manner.
- is a *participatory process* that enables stakeholders to articulate priorities, develop strategies, manage and coordinate resources to achieve a national goal.

Slide 4 of 10

Here the programme approach is applied within the context of a developing country that is assisted by partner UN agencies.

The interventions are centered around a national programme, with inputs that have to be integrated and coordinated through a process of dialogue, consensus and joint planning.

The alternative to this approach is a myriad of separate activities that may [undermine national autonomy and] affect national ownership, while donor agencies pursue their own agendas by funding interventions that are not significantly linked to national development objectives

The programme approach presents a more integrated means of providing UN system support to address development problems.



A framework for UN agency cooperation

- Promote the central role of the government.
- Support capacity development, self reliance and sustainability
- ensure the relevance and impact of external inputs in relation to national programmes and priorities.

Continued

Slide 5 of 10

This and the next slide contain items from the The Programme Approach - A common UN framework by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC)

The programme approach, when applied at the country level can serve as a framework for UN agency cooperation.



A framework for UN agency cooperation, continued

- Ensure that programming strategy takes account of the multi-sectoral character of many development objectives.
- Promote a national strategy and programme framework into which may be integrated a coherent and coordinated UN system response.

Slide 6 of 10

Background

The commitment to a programme approach to development by the government is a necessary pre-condition for such an approach to be followed by external donors. There is no substitute for such commitment or leadership.

The exercise by governments of the above responsibilities is crucial to the optimal use of external assistance.

The formulation of national development plans/programmes/ frameworks/policies is exclusive responsibility of the programme country UN agencies do participate in the process and global conferences influence the setting of national priorities.

National development programmes and priorities constitute the only viable frame of reference for programming of external assistance.



A national programme framework is..

- Describes problems and solutions.
- Translates policy statements into development activities.
- Specifies resources, capacities, strategies to achieve time-bound goals
- describes institutional frameworks and management arrangements.

Slide 7 of 10

A national programme framework is rare, but when it does exist, it is a very useful tool for enlisting support from development agencies. It forms a basis for further dialogue and discussion, and enables the national owners of the programme to obtain resources to specific interventions based on their own priorities and needs.

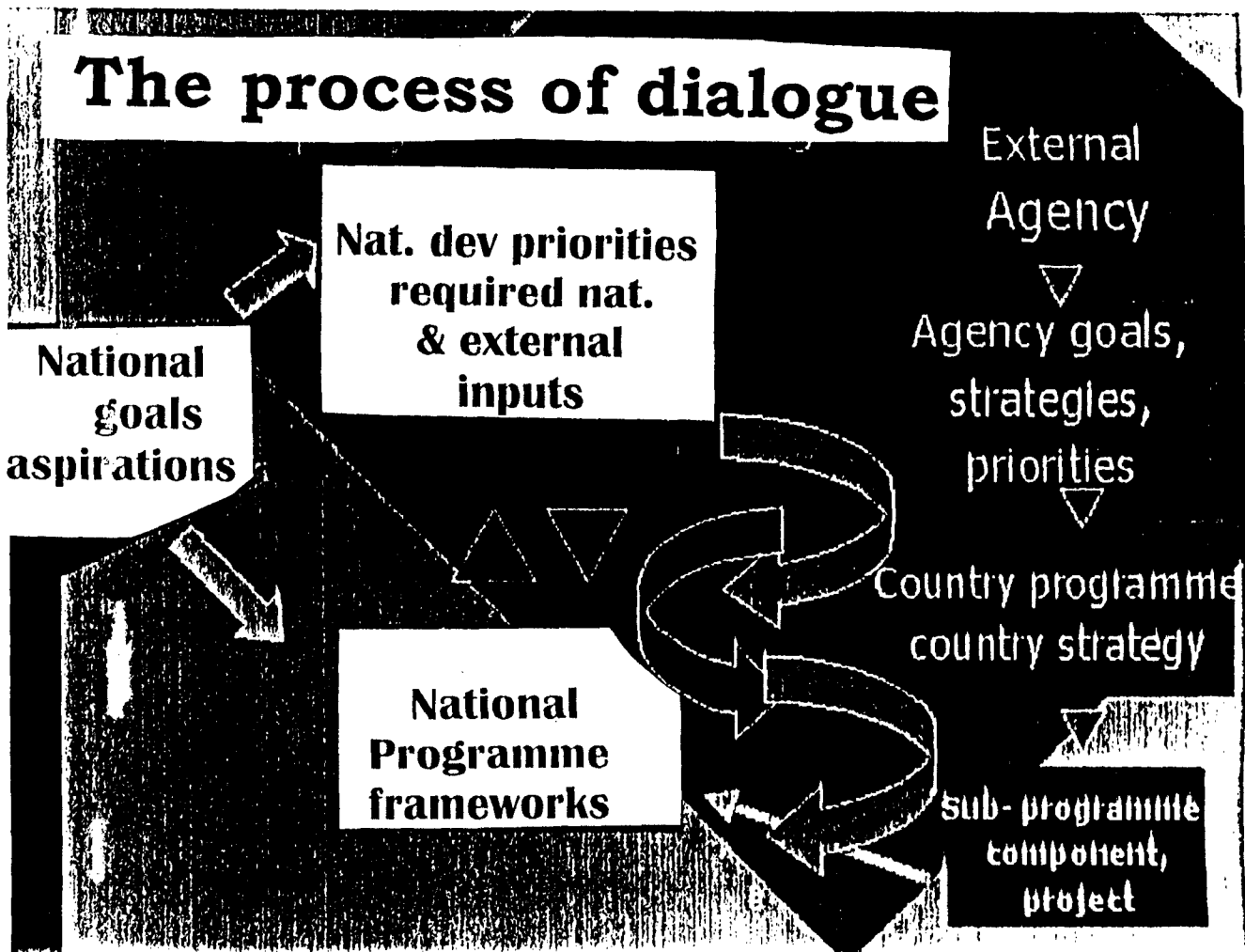
How the framework is structured depends upon the situation of the individual country and the set of goals it is intended to address.

A framework would include an outline of components and elements that need to be addressed to meet programme objectives: when it is more detailed, it would include, inputs, budgets and work plans as well.

To assist in the design and formulation of the National Programme may be one of the first and most significant steps that UN agencies can collaborate in.

If the country in question does not have national programme frameworks or uses another format, you may want to discuss this further and respond to questions from the audience on how to apply the programme approach under these conditions

The process of dialogue, discussion and understanding is pivotal to programme approach succeeding. It may be similar to the process described in the next slide.



Slide 8 of 10

The red boxes represent external agency (multi- or bi- lateral) dimension, the yellow, the national dimension. (This is not restricted to UN agencies)

The red boxes represent the flow of external assistance through programmes and projects in support of national goals.

National programme frameworks articulate national development priorities which flow from national goals and aspirations.

The block arrows in gray are for the discussions and interactions that takes place which:

influence the setting of national priorities (global conferences like the social summit, SHD)

influence external agencies to set their priorities in response to national needs.

The arrows are for dialogue, understanding, discussion and negotiations that lead to matching of needs and priorities of national partners with external resources.

The process of dialogue and discussion that takes place within the national dimension (blue arrows) is what ideally results in translating peoples aspirations and goals into strategies, programme.