

United Nations Reform

ILO Knowledge Sharing Platform

1. This knowledge sharing platform is managed by the Partnerships and Development Cooperation Department (PARDEV) of the ILO.
2. United Nations reform is a highly complicated process, or set of processes, occurring at many different levels and involving a wide variety of actors. At the highest level, there are the major decisions and discussions on fundamental policy issues taking place in New York, in the General Assembly, in ECOSOC, in UNDP and especially the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), which was established specifically to manage UN reform issues.
3. At the practical level, most of the key issues are being played out at country level, where many experiments are being conducted to bring together the international development effort under a single flag and in line with the “Four Ones” principle: One UN, One Programme, One Leader, One Budgetary Framework.
4. Eight countries (Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uruguay and Viet Nam) have been selected as pilot countries for an initial exercise. Issues to be addressed at the national level are both practical and political: how do we pool resources and rationalize operations to provide common services while at the same time capitalizing on the strengths and comparative advantages of the different members of the UN family?
5. This poses major challenges for the development of policy and practice, and hence has major implications for communications between the field and headquarters. The Knowledge Management task in this case consists in enabling all the actors involved – field offices and headquarters units concerned with human resources, finance, programme planning and development cooperation (HRD, FINANCE, PROGRAM, PARDEV and JUR) to share information on developments, discuss policy options, and coordinate the dissemination of information and decisions. Field staff will naturally have need for guidance from headquarters; headquarters will need up-to-date information on developments at the country level. Both need to be kept informed of developments in the UN system as a whole.
6. The major challenge here is to enable the field to communicate in an appropriate manner with HQ and to make these exchanges accessible to field staff in other duty stations. An initial website was established, bringing together key background information and reports on UN reform (including the UN itself and the High-level Panel), resources available in the ILO, information on meetings, reports and developments in UNDP and the UNDG bodies dealing with different aspects of the One UN project (there are many), and key sections on the One UN pilot countries.
7. The volume of information and the speed at which it was being generated, however, required a different approach to enable users quickly to enter and find information. A content management system (Plone) has hence been developed that automates many of the functions and provides extensive search and customization facilities, enabling different users to add content that is then reviewed for dissemination.
8. The platform is a repository for texts of all kinds: Word documents, PowerPoint, PDF text, pages created in HTML, etc., and provides a full-text index of all text files. It also offers an events calendar, news items, flash messages, Skype integration, a Wiki to aid understanding of key concepts (planned) and a powerful and a very rapid full text search

function. The interface is available in English, French and Spanish, and a special section is devoted to learning materials which is being coordinated with Turin and the UNSSC.

9. The various sections identify in particular items concerning the following:

- ILO: issues specific to the ILO and internal documents
- One UN: Policies and issues concerning the One UN exercise
- Countries: Issues concerning the One UN initiative in the pilot countries
- UNDP: United Nations Development Programme - documents and issues
- UN: Issues in the United Nations proper, including General Assembly decisions, and reports such as the report of the High-Level Panel
- UNDG: United Nations Development Group and UNDGO - documents and issues, as well as CEB matters
- Agencies: Developments in other specialized agencies of the UN system and other organizations, including the Bretton Woods institutions
- The UNDP/Spain Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund (MDG-F)
- Other bodies: Human Rights Council, Bretton Woods, OECD, civil society, etc.
- Library: An archive of key documents
- Learning: Resources for staff development in relation to UN reform.