

CONCEPT NOTE

Design, development and implementation of a system-wide integrated planning skills training for the United Nations

1. Summary

- 1.1. This project will deliver a system-wide integrated planning skills training for United Nations staff that will contribute to improving the quality of planning exercises and the design of UN integrated presences. It will develop and roll out a modular curriculum for a system-wide training on advanced planning skills. The curriculum may be delivered in the form of a full classroom based course, as bespoke “just-in-time” seminars designed to meet specific training demands for multidisciplinary teams embarking on planning processes and as an on-line training course.
- 1.2. In 2017-2018, the establishment of the integrated planning skills training will be overseen by the Executive Office of the Secretary General (EOSG) with the support of the UN System Staff College (UNSSC) and an interagency working group of UN peace and security, development, humanitarian and human rights offices and agencies. The project funded by contributions from the People’s Republic of China through the Secretary General’s Peace and Development Trust Fund. It is housed within the Strategic Planning and Monitoring Unit of the EOSG which absorbed the small analysis and planning team established in late 2015. This team, funded by voluntary contributions, has been working to coordinate improvements in UN analysis and planning for conflict response, from the earliest stages, including efforts to strengthen system-wide capacity.

2. Background

- 2.1. The High-level Independent Panel on UN Peace Operations ([HIPPO](#)) noted that significant improvements were required to the implementation of multidisciplinary planning exercises in the United Nations. It noted in particular that although a reasonable UN policy and process for integrated planning existed, it was often not well-followed. HIPPO also recommended increased investment in training, including through leadership training and a deepened global training partnership.
- 2.2. The Secretary-General in his report on the implementation of the HIPPO recommendations (A/70/357–[S/2015/682](#)), committed to enhance UN system-wide planning. The report recognised the significant growth in international peace and security responsibilities shouldered by regional mechanisms in Africa and committed to continue to provide planning expertise to the African Union. The Secretary-General noted that “*effective planning also requires capable and multidisciplinary planners*” and committed to enhance training in “*strategic and operational planning, so that United Nations personnel are equipped to work capably together. I call upon Member States to support those efforts.*”

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- 2.3. In response, the Security Council, in its Presidential Statement of November 2015 ([S/PRST/2015/22](#)), encouraged the Secretary-General to take forward the proposals under his authority, including in the area of analysis and planning.
- 2.4. In the 2015 review of the UN peacebuilding architecture, ‘The Challenge of Sustaining Peace’, the Advisory Group of Experts ([AGE](#)) recommended strengthening the Secretariat’s capacity to conduct strategic planning across the UN system. They proposed integrating the UNCT’s strategic planning instruments with conventional mission planning and funding instruments. The General Assembly and Security Council reaffirmed this in their 2016 identical resolutions (A/RES/70/[262](#) and S/RES/[2282](#)) “*emphasizing the importance of joint analysis and effective strategic planning across the United Nations system*” in the context of peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

3. Rationale

- 3.1. Within the UN system, planning training is weak and particularly so for integrated planning, which seeks to better align the work of UN peace operations and UN agencies, funds and programmes. External options for training (academic, military and private) do not meet the UN’s unique need to provide training for the planning of integrated peace operations in the dynamic peace and security contexts faced by the UN.
- 3.2. At the same time, the demand for planning has grown. The UN is increasingly expected to plan more tailored, innovative peace operations in complex and insecure operating environments. The need for joint planning has also grown alongside an expansion in the number of peace and security actors and the diversity of operations, and particularly with respect to planning peace operations with and alongside the African Union (e.g. UN support to African Union deployments such as in Somalia, a hybrid UN-AU mission in Darfur).
- 3.3. Through this proposal, existing basic knowledge-based training efforts will be supplemented with a training focused on developing the skills and techniques needed to lead a complex planning exercise and will be made available to a wider range of people who may be called upon in future to lead or support planning exercises, in both headquarters and the field.

4. Approach and impact

- 4.1. Based on consultation with stakeholders in headquarters and in the field, an outline of the required training content was prepared by the EOSG analysis and planning

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team. This is currently being further developed in consultation with global training experts over a three-month period to develop a full advanced planning skills training curriculum. The course content and methodology will be refined and finalised during a workshop from 12-16 June 2017 at headquarters with UN Secretariat departments and UN agencies, funds and programmes.

- 4.2. The integrated planning skills training will be based on a series of interactive modules which can be taught either in a classroom, with remote facilitation or delivered through web-based courses. The training schedule will be developed in consultation with stakeholders but is currently expected to include four standard courses and two situation-specific courses each year (the expected focus being on Africa and the Middle East), four just-in-time trainings as well as alumni support and maintenance and promotion of the web-based course.
- 4.3. The immediate result of this planning training will be the development of a cadre of planners who have the necessary skills to work well together in integrated teams. They will be better able to incorporate diverse or divergent perspectives – including from Member States, the African Union and other regional partners and International Financial Institutions – and to produce technically sound plans that are resilient to changes in the external environment. As a result, the quality of integrated strategic assessment and planning exercises will be enhanced.
- 4.4. The expectation is that this increased planning capacity will result in the development and presentation of options and recommendations for the Secretary-General and the Security Council that are more tailored to the specific environment and consequently more likely to succeed at achieving the agreed goals.
- 4.5. Specifically, the expected impact includes:
 - More tailored, prioritised planning for peace operations better aligned to agreed objectives, and therefore more likely to result in effective efforts to sustain peace.
 - Better focused recommendations for missions to the Security Council and therefore more cost-effective peace operations both at a Mission level and at headquarters.
 - More integrated UN approaches to particular contexts that leverage the full spectrum of responses from across the UN family and complementing the comparative advantages of other external stakeholders.
- 4.6. A number of additional factors that fall outside the control of this project – ranging from the global security environment to the capacity of the Council or of regional partners to respond to new or adapted options – will influence the scale of impact of the planning training.

5. Deliverables and timeframe

5.1. The specific deliverables are:

- A 4-day integrated planning training curriculum for senior staff serving as members of integrated planning teams at headquarters and in the field
- Compressed half-day or one-day curriculum for 'just in time' training for new planning teams
- A web-based interactive training course utilising a combination of learning methodologies
- A training delivery plan

5.2. The course design will take approximately 4 months and will include the following steps:

- Design of curriculum by pedagogical and subject matter experts
- Consultation and agreement on the content of the course
- Production of technical materials, including examples drawn from existing peace operations as well as theoretical cases
- Development of suitable teaching methods and support materials (for classroom, on-the-job, and web-based training)
- Testing the course
- Training of Trainers

5.3. The roll-out, teaching and mentoring for the planning training courses is budgeted for a two-year period with 6 classroom based courses a year and a number of demand-driven on-the-job training and web-based learning opportunities.