

## **UN in Russia – joint activities in 2011 and perspectives for 2012**

### Background

The traditional technical assistance-based cooperation between the Russian Federation (RF) and the UN initiated in the face of the 1990's crisis has come to an end. The transition to market economy is now over, and the country's indicators have returned to their pre-crisis levels. On the global stage, beyond its permanent membership in the UN SC, and within the new global governance architecture, the RF has been increasingly asserting its role in development, financial, environmental and security matters. From a recipient of assistance, it has become an emerging donor whose international development policy prioritizes multilateral organizations for aid delivery, CEECIS and emergency operations as beneficiaries, and support to the MDGs. Locally however, standing in the country's path to modernization, challenges persist. Addressing those through the adaptation of global norms and access to international good practices are key strategies for the country and the backbone of an evolving partnership with the UN agencies, as honest, credible and neutral facilitators.

### Highlights of the UN in Russia joint efforts in 2011 were determined by the following developments:

With the abolishment of the post of UN Resident Coordinator in Russia, UNCT emphasized the importance to continue internal UN coordination and implemented rotational UNCT chairmanship on a quarterly basis during 2011 (lead agencies were UNICEF, UNHCR, UNAIDS and WHO). The Team focused on formulating key priority areas in the new operational context aimed at increased efficiency and interagency collaboration. Key areas of joint cooperation included, but were not limited to the following:

- (1) Setting internal coordination structure by re-defining roles and responsibilities, as well as rethinking thematic and working areas in the situation of a new operational environment
- (2) Positioning the UN in Russia through the means of communications tools, such as the [UN in Russia Bulletin](#) and [website](#) by revisiting the concepts and objectives of the resources
- (3) Contributing to the policy dialogue and partnership shift at corporate UN-Russia level outlining concrete strategic direction for advanced engagement with the RF at mutual interest; and
- (4) Raising public awareness and increasing local capacities to address remaining social gaps, promote the key human rights instruments, as well as meet emerging environmental obligations.

Human rights based approach remained at the core of the UN's activities. It was ensured inter alia by the presence of an OHCHR human rights advisor to the UNCT.

### Perspectives for 2012

The collaboration of the UN in Russia in 2012 with the host country would be built around the following directions identified as common priorities:

- (1) Engaging Russia in global governance architecture and the global and regional development agenda;
- (2) Accelerating the involvement of Russia in the UN's development work; and
- (3) Facilitating Russia's access to good international practices, global norms and standards to address remaining social gaps.

In practical terms the UN advocacy efforts will be implemented through thematic groups that inter alia will focus their work on joint communications, small and medium scale initiatives in the areas of human rights awareness for vulnerable groups with a particular emphasis on rights of persons with disabilities and gender equality, as well as sustainable and equitable regional development. UN operational efficiency will remain a priority area for 2012.