
The Consultative Group
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Representatives
on Broader International
Environmental Governance Reform

United Nations Specialised Agencies versus United Nations Programmes

Note by the Executive Director

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Summary

This note serves to help clarifying the basic differences between United Nations Specialised Agencies versus United Nations Programmes, in relation to their legal bases, founding instruments, mandates and source of financing. It is not intended to provide any analysis on the advantages or disadvantages of either body.

Information Paper Comparing UN Specialized Agencies and UN Programmes

Introduction

In discussions on reforms to the international environmental governance system, the issue of UN specialized agencies and UN programmes has been one often brought up. The objective of this paper is therefore to lay out the differences as to the legal background, funding sources, mandate membership, etc. of each type of institution for purely informational and clarification reasons. Specific examples of UN specialized agencies and UN programmes are laid out in table format below to illustrate the case.

UN Specialized Agencies

A specialized agency is an autonomous intergovernmental organization that has been created through its own independent legal instrument and is normally mandated to address a specific issue, need or function. Specialized agencies are linked to the United Nations through the UN Charter whereby member-states have pledged themselves to “joint and separate cooperation” on social and economic issues including those related to standards of living, economic and social progress, health, human rights, culture and education.¹ The specialized agency provisions of the UN Charter essentially addressed two concerns at the time the charter was adopted. First, that the UN itself could not fully address all international issues without some degree of specialization that delved more deeply into the unique needs that these issues required. Second, that in 1945 at the time the UN Charter was adopted there existed some international organizations that were already working on specific issues for some time. Organizations such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Health Organization, the predecessor of the World Health Organization (WHO), and various committees and commissions had already existed under the League of Nations and these organizations needed to be incorporated under the new UN system. Article 55 of the Charter made such incorporation possible and it also left the door open for future independent specialized agencies to be created while still remaining linked to the UN system.

The main link the UN Charter provided for was through the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), one of the principle organs of the UN. The UN recognized the autonomy of specialized agencies through their individual basic instruments but also required that the members of specialized agencies be brought into a relationship with the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) through agreements made between the agency and the ECOSOC. All of the agreements were approved by the UNGA and each stipulated that specialized agencies should coordinate their activities through consultations with the UNGA and that the agreements recognize that the UNGA may make recommendations to the specialized agency.² Normally, the agreements with the UN also refer to aspects related to membership, cooperation with other specialized agencies, non-voting participation and budget and finance. The legal personality and the degree of autonomy of the specialized agency is dependent on the specific provisions in the instrument establishing the agency. Specialized agencies also have *locus standi* to request advisory opinions from the International Court of Justice, as long as this is within the scope of their activities.³

Under the UN system, the number of specialized agencies grew rapidly in the 1960s and 70s and now there are over 16 agencies including agencies such as the World Meteorological Organization

¹ Article 55 and 56 of the UN Charter.

² Article 63 UN Charter.

³ Article 96 (2) UN Charter.

(WMO), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) was the last agency created after being converted from the UN Industrial Development in 1985.

The Bretton Woods Institutions, the World Bank (WB) International Monetary Fund (IMF) and International Bank of Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), were established in 1944 before the establishment of the UN system and are often regarded as completely independent of the UN. While it is true that the influence the UN has on the Bretton Woods Institutions has been guarded by some governments and the influence the UN has had over the institutions has been less compared to the other specialized agencies, the Bretton Woods Institutions are technically considered to be specialized agencies and they do coordinate their activities through the ECOSOC.

A distinction, however, should be made between specialized agencies that are linked directly with the UN through the Charter and those that are intergovernmental organizations but are not formally linked and the main example here is the World Trade Organization (WTO). The WTO was established in 1995 to incorporate all agreements that existed under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and put them under one organizational roof and governed by one common dispute settlement system. The Marrakech Agreement which established the WTO provides that its General Council, the principal decision-making body of the organization, may as appropriate enter into arrangements with other international organizations but there is no explicit mention of the UN in the agreement. The WTO's relationship with the UN is governed by a separate agreement with the UN called, *Arrangements for Effective Cooperation with other Intergovernmental Organizations-Relations between the WTO and the United Nations*.⁴ The WTO is therefore not a member of the ECOSOC but coordinates its activities through the annual meeting of Senior Officials of the Bretton Woods Institutions, WTO and United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the annual high-level ECOSOC Session that is held in Geneva. It also participates in the Secretary General's Chief Executive Board for coordination along with the rest of the UN and Bretton Woods systems.

Governance

The governance and structure of specialized agencies generally follow a similar pattern but some agencies do have certain variations depending on the nature and scope the agency's work. Most agencies have some form of balance between universality where by all the members are expected to participate and a smaller representative group works inter-sessionally on necessary matters. For example, the WHO has near universal membership of 192 member-states and is governed by the World Health Assembly which is the supreme decision making body and composed of the whole membership. In addition, an Executive Board of 34 members elected by the Assembly, who are technically qualified as individuals, carries out the decisions and policies of the Assembly in between its meetings. Within the WHO system there are also 6 regional committees that have large autonomy for setting regional policy and priorities and for electing their regional directors. The ILO is another example that has certain unique characteristics particular to the nature of its mandate. Similar to other specialized agencies its has a principal assembly of all its members called the International Labour Conference (ILC) which sets general policy, the programme of work and adopts new labour codes, but it is the smaller Governing Body of 28 Members that works through the first draft of any decision going before the ILC. The Governing Body is particularly unique because, in addition to governments, there is also equal representation of worker and employer groups. (See Table below for comparison)

⁴ See WTO www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/coher_e/wto_un_e.htm

Most specialized agencies have developed conventions and treaties under their auspices in order to further carry out and implement their work. Unlike treaties negotiated under the UN subsidiary bodies these instruments do not require General Assembly adoption to come into effect but rather are adopted by the governing bodies of the specialized agencies and administered under the secretariat. Examples of such treaties and conventions include the ILO labour standards, UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, and FAO's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. Many specialized agencies also have other international instruments, such as standards, that guide national implementations and maintain collective international cooperation on the issue (i.e. WHO's health standards, the WHO/FAO Codex Alimentarius, Standards and Recommendations under the Convention on International Civil Aviation of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), or the International Atomic Energy Agency's Code of Practice On the International Transboundary Movement of Radioactive Waste: The IAEA Code of Practice)

Funding

The core funding of specialized agencies is through assessed contributions which is normally based on the UN rating system and calculated on the basis of countries' national income. The calculation also takes into account other factors including maximum and minimum ceilings. Specialized agencies do not receive any funds from the UN regular budget but trust funds and voluntary funding are commonly used to supplement core funding and usually account for 40-50% of their total funding. The Bretton Woods Institutions are the only specialized system that do follow the UN's assessed contribution system but rather have their own contribution system based on voting rights.

There are more than 15 specialized agencies currently established under the UN, including:

ILO International Labour Organization

FAO Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

WHO World Health Organization

World Bank Group

IBRD International Bank for Reconstruction and Development

IDA International Development Association

IFC International Finance Corporation

MIGA Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency

ICSID International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes

IMF International Monetary Fund

ICAO International Civil Aviation Organization

IMO International Maritime Organization

ITU International Telecommunication Union

UPU Universal Postal Union

WMO World Meteorological Organization

WIPO World Intellectual Property Organization

IFAD International Fund for Agricultural Development

UNIDO United Nations Industrial Development Organization

UNWTO World Tourism Organization

Entity	Legal basis	Governance structure	Mandate and scope	Funding
ILO	Established by Constitution in 1919. Became UN Specialised Agency in 1946.	<p>a) A General Conference and a Governing Body:</p> <p>The General Conference consists of member delegations, comprising each two government representatives as well as one employer and one worker representative.</p> <p>The Governing Body is composed of 56 members (28 Governments, 14 Employers and 14 Workers). Ten of the government seats are permanently held by States of chief industrial importance (Brazil, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States). The other Government members are elected by the Conference every three years. The Employer and Worker members are elected in their individual capacity.</p> <p>b) A Director General is appointed by the Governing Body and part of the CEB.</p>	<p>a) Objectives</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote and realize standards and fundamental principles and rights at work 2. Create greater opportunities for women and men to secure decent employment and income 3. Enhance the coverage and effectiveness of social protection for all 4. Strengthen tripartism and social dialogue <p>b) Norms and conventions</p> <p>Each of the Members agrees to make an annual report to ILO on the measures which it has taken to give effect to the provisions of Conventions to which it is a party. These reports are made in such form and contain such particulars as the Governing Body requests.</p>	<p>Arrangements for the budget are determined by the Conference. The regular budget consist of assessed contributions from member states.</p> <p>The budget for XXXX</p>
FAO	Established by Constitution in 1945.	<p>a) A Conference and a Council:</p> <p>The Conference consists of 191 Member Nations plus one Member Organization, the European Community and one Associate Member, The Faroe Islands. The Conference is the supreme governing body of FAO that meets in regular session every two years. Its main functions are to determine the policies of the Organization, approve the Programme of Work and Budget,</p>	<p>a) Objectives</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To collect, analyse, interpret and disseminate information relating to nutrition, food and agriculture. 2. To promote and, where appropriate, recommend national and international action with respect to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. scientific, technological, social and economic research relating to nutrition, food and agriculture; b. the improvement of education and administration relating to nutrition, food and agriculture, and the spread of public knowledge of nutritional and 	<p>The Regular Programme budget is funded by its members, through contributions set at the Conference. The budget for the biennium 2008-2009 is US\$929.8 million.</p> <p>The budget covers core technical work, cooperation and partnerships including the Technical Cooperation</p>

Entity	Legal basis	Governance structure	Mandate and scope	Funding
		<p>and make recommendations to Members and international organizations.</p> <p>The Council is the executive organ of the Conference. It has 49 Members, elected for three-year terms on a rotating, geographically equitable basis, and has powers delegated to it by the Conference. The Council meets at least four times between regular Conference sessions. In particular, it exercises functions dealing with the world food and agricultural situation and related matters, current and prospective activities of the Organization, including the Programme of Work and Budget, administrative matters, financial management of the Organization, and constitutional questions.</p> <p>b) The Director-General, elected by the Conference for a six-year term is also a member of the CEB.</p>	<p>agricultural science and practice;</p> <p>c. the conservation of natural resources and the adoption of improved methods of agricultural production;</p> <p>d. the improvement of the processing, marketing and distribution of food and agricultural products;</p> <p>e. the adoption of policies for the provision of adequate agricultural credit, national and international;</p> <p>f. the adoption of international policies with respect to agricultural commodity arrangements.</p> <p>3. And:</p> <p>a. to furnish such technical assistance as governments may request;</p> <p>b. to organize, in cooperation with the governments concerned, such missions as may be needed to assist them to fulfil the obligation arising from their acceptance of the recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Food and Agriculture and of this Constitution; and</p> <p>c. generally to take all necessary and appropriate action to implement the purposes of the Organization as set forth in the Preamble.</p> <p>b) Norms and conventions</p>	<p>Programme, information and general policy, direction and administration.</p> <p>In 2007, US\$505 million paid for 1615 active field programme projects, of which 520 were emergency operations amounting to US\$250 million across all funding sources and accounting for 49.5 percent of total delivery.</p> <p>The technical cooperation field programme amounted to US\$255 million, of which FAO contributed 10.7 percent with the remainder coming from outside sources: Trust Funds – 72.0 percent, unilateral trust funds – 15.9 percent, and the United Nations Development Programme – 1.4 percent.</p>
WHO	Established by Constitution in 1948	<p>a) An Assembly and an Executive Board:</p> <p>The Assembly consists of 193 member states and is the supreme decision-making body of the organization. It meets annually at its headquarters in Geneva. Its main function is to determine the policies of the Organization. The Health Assembly appoints the Director-General, supervises the financial policies of the Organization, and</p>	<p>a) Objective</p> <p>1) to direct and coordinate health within the United Nations system.</p> <p>2) providing leadership on global health matters,</p> <p>3) shaping the health research agenda,</p> <p>4) setting norms and standards,</p> <p>5) articulating evidence-based policy options,</p> <p>6) providing technical support to countries and</p>	<p>Programme budget 2008–2009:</p> <p>Total assessed contributions and miscellaneous income: US\$ 959 million.</p> <p>Total voluntary contributions US\$ 3 268 million.</p> <p>Total budget US\$ 4.227</p>

Entity	Legal basis	Governance structure	Mandate and scope	Funding
		<p>reviews and approves the Proposed programme budget. It similarly considers reports of the Executive Board, which it instructs in regard to matters upon which further action, study, investigation or report may be required.</p> <p>The Board comprises 34 persons technically qualified in the field of health, which are elected by the Assembly for three year terms, including three persons from established regional organisations. The Board meets biannually. The main functions of the Board are to give effect to the decisions and policies of the Health Assembly, to advise it and generally to facilitate its work.</p> <p>b) The Director-General is appointed by the Health Assembly on the nomination of the Executive Board and part of the CEB.</p>	<p>7) monitoring and assessing health trends.</p>	<p>million.</p>

UN Programmes

UN Programmes do not have the same clear distinction under the UN as compared to specialized agencies. UN Programmes are considered subsidiary organs of the UN General Assembly under Article 22 of the Charter. Article 22 is very vague in describing the details of the governance and links of the subsidiary organs but through general practice the article has typically been used to establish several different types of organs such as boards, committees, councils, commissions, panels and working groups. The vagueness of Article 22 has lent itself to allowing more flexibility for the UNGA to create various types of entities in order to carry out its work. These have varied from more permanent arrangements, such as the creation of governing councils (i.e. UNEP Governing Council, the Human Rights Council etc), Boards (i.e. UN Development Executive Board), and Commissions (i.e. UN Commission on Sustainable Development) to time-bound arrangements on narrower issues, such as working groups. Many of the programmes set up under Article 22 have assumed certain but limited legal personality as necessary to carry out their work and operational independence. However, most matters still derive their legal personality from the UNGA and follow UN rules and procedures as adopted by the UNGA. Decisions taken by UN Programmes and other subsidiary organs do not become effective until they have been reviewed and adopted by the General Assembly. Many UN subsidiary organs have secretariats to implement the work of the organ.

Governance

Coordination of UN programmes with other UN agencies varies depending on the resolution establishing the programme. For example the UNDP and UNEP report to the Economic and Social Council of the UN and ECOSOC then decides what is relevant to be reported to the General Assembly. However in the case of the Human Rights Council, it reports its decisions directly to the UNGA. All programmes work as members of the UNSG's Chief Executive Board.

Although there are no set rules under Article 22, UN programmes tend to have small governing councils made up between 30-60 members, while membership is generally open to all UN member states. Some UN programmes have set limits for serving consecutive terms and conditionality that members are in good standing with the issue. Membership is also normally regionally balanced. Unlike specialized agencies, UN programmes do not have separate instruments establishing them as organizations, rather their establishment generally comes from GA resolutions and each resolution has variations in specificity of how the programme is governed. In general, the resolution establishes the mandate of the programmes, its functions, its relationship to ECOSOC or the GA along with other UN and specialized agencies, rules of procedures, funding and decision making, and the role of their secretariats.

A very limited number of UNGA subsidiary organs act as administrative bodies for treaties and conventions. The main exceptions are the UN Human Rights Council which has a number of human rights instruments under it and for which it acts as a secretariat or a review and monitoring body; and UNEP which has a number of regional and international instruments for the protection of the environment that require secretariat functions. One of the main reasons for the development of treaties under both the UNCHR and UNEP has been because of the normative nature of both of these programmes as compared to other programmes that tend to be more operational and have presence in many developing countries.

Funding

Funding for UN programmes comes normally from two types of sources. The UN regular budget provides a certain level of funding for UN staff posts and the rest of the funds come from voluntary contributions, designated trust funds set up for the purposes of fulfilling the work of the programmes, or earmarked funds for specific projects undertaken by the programme.

There are more than ten funds and programmes currently established under the General Assembly⁵:

UNCTAD United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

ITC International Trade Centre (UNCTAD/WTO)

UNDCP United Nations Drug Control Programme (Part of UNODC)

UNEP United Nations Environment Programme

UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

UNIFEM United Nations Development Fund for Women

UNV United Nations Volunteers

UNCDF United Nations Capital Development Fund

UNFPA United Nations Population Fund

UNHCR Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

WFP World Food Programme

UNRWA United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (Only reporting to General Assembly)

UN-HABITAT United Nations Human Settlements Programme

Below, a comparison is made between UNEP, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

⁵ Indented names are under the authority of the previous programme/fund.

Entity	Legal basis	Governance structure	Mandate and scope	Funding
UNEP	Established by General Assembly (GA) resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) A Governing Council, consisting of 58 member states, which represent the UN regions in an equitable manner. b) Membership to the Governing Council rotates on a biennial basis with half of the members being elected by the GA at a time for a four-year term. c) The Governing Council reports annually to the GA through the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), which transmits to the Assembly such comments on the reports to questions of co-ordination and to the relationship of environmental policies and programmes within the United Nations system to overall economic and social policies and priorities. d) The Global Ministerial Environment Forum is convened annually to review important and emerging policy issues in the field of the environment, with the Governing Council constituting the forum. e) The GC/GMEF meets every two years for its regular sessions at UNEP's Nairobi headquarters and every other year for special sessions upon invitation in member states. f) The Committee of Permanent Representatives supports g) The Executive Director supports the Governing Council in the execution of its duties and is elected by the General Assembly for four year terms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To promote international cooperation in the field of the environment and to recommend, as appropriate, policies to this end; b) To provide general policy guidance for the direction and coordination of environmental programmes within the United Nations system; c) To receive and review the periodic reports of the Executive Director of UNEP on the implementation of environmental programmes within the United Nations system; d) To keep under review the world environmental situation in order to ensure that emerging environmental problems of wide international significance receive appropriate and adequate consideration by Governments; e) To promote the contribution of the relevant international scientific and other professional communities to the acquisition, assessment and exchange of environmental knowledge and information and, as appropriate, to the technical aspects of the formulation and implementation of environmental programmes within the United Nations system; f) To maintain under continuing review the impact of national and international environmental policies and measures on developing countries, as well as the problem of additional costs that may be incurred by developing countries in the implementation of environmental programmes and projects, and to ensure that such programmes and projects shall be compatible with the development plans and priorities of those countries; g) To review and approve the programme of utilization of resources of the Environment Fund. 	<p>Voluntary contributions to the Environment Fund, earmarked contributions to trust funds, counterpart contributions, and contribution from the UN Regular Budget.</p> <p>Biennial budget 2008-2009: US \$306.7 million</p>
UNDP	Established by General Assembly resolution 2029 (XX) of 22 November 1965.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) An Executive Board (also responsible for UNFPA), comprised of 36 member states, equitably representing all six UN regions. b) Members are elected annually by 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) To implement the policies formulated by the General Assembly and the coordination and guidance received from the Economic and Social Council; b) To receive information from and give guidance to the 	Sources of funding are: Multilateral donor resources; Bilateral donor resources; Local resources channelled

Entity	Legal basis	Governance structure	Mandate and scope	Funding
	<p>The Executive Board superseded the 48-member Governing Council on 1 January 1994 through the adoption of General Assembly resolution 48/162 of 20 December 1993.</p>	<p>ECOSOC for three year terms on a rotating basis.</p> <p>c) Interested member states and those under consideration of the Board may participate in the sessions without the right to vote.</p> <p>d) The Executive Board is under the authority of ECOSOC.</p> <p>e) The Executive Board holds one annual session and two regular sessions each year in New York headquarters or Geneva.</p> <p>f) The Executive Board may establish working groups as and when it deems beneficial to support its work.</p> <p>g) The Administrator of UNDP (and the Executive Director of UNFPA) support(s) support the Executive Board in the execution of its duties.</p>	<p>head of each fund or programme on the work of each organization;</p> <p>c) To ensure that the activities and operational strategies of each fund or programme are consistent with the overall policy guidance set forth by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, in accordance with their respective responsibility set out in the United Nations Charter;</p> <p>d) To monitor the performance of the fund or programme;</p> <p>e) To approve programmes, including country programmes (for UNDP: country cooperation frameworks), as appropriate;</p> <p>f) To decide on administrative and financial plans and budgets;</p> <p>g) To recommend new initiatives to the Economic and Social Council, and through the Council, to the General Assembly, as necessary;</p> <p>h) To encourage and examine new programme initiatives;</p> <p>i) To submit annual reports to the Economic and Social Council, which could include recommendations, where appropriate, for improvement of field-level coordination.</p>	<p>through UNDP by programme countries. Other sources of funds, include contributions to UNIFEM, UNCDF and UNV.</p> <p>Budget 2008: Core resources: \$1.1 billion Non-core resources: \$3.7 billion</p>
WFP	<p>Established by General Assembly resolution 1714 (XVI) of 19 December 1961.</p> <p>The Executive Board superseded the 20-member intergovernmental committee through General Assembly resolution 50/8 and FAO Council resolution 9/95 on 1 January 1996.</p>	<p>a) An Executive Board that consists of 36 members, equitably representing all six UN regions on a rotating basis.</p> <p>b) 18 are elected by ECOSOC and 18 by the Council of the Food and Agricultural Organization annually. Each member serves three-year terms and is eligible for re-election.</p> <p>c) Interested member states and those under consideration of the Board may participate in the sessions without the right to vote.</p> <p>d) The Executive Board is under the authority of ECOSOC and the FAO Council.</p> <p>e) The Executive Board holds three</p>	<p>a) To help evolve and coordinate short-term and longer-term food aid policies;</p> <p>b) To provide intergovernmental supervision and direction to the management of WFP;</p> <p>c) To review, modify as necessary, and approve programmes, projects and activities submitted to it by the Executive Director. In respect to such approvals, however, it may delegate to the Executive Director such authority as it may specify;</p> <p>d) To review, modify as necessary, and approve the budgets of programmes, projects and activities, and review the administration and execution of approved programmes, projects and activities of WFP;</p> <p>e) To report annually on WFP's programmes, projects and activities including major decisions of the Board to the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council</p>	<p>Contributions are made on a purely voluntary basis, pledged at conferences for such pledging periods as may from time to time be set by the Board; announced during periodic resource consultations; committed on an ad hoc basis by donor governments and bilateral institutions; made in response to appeals; through other fund-raising activities, including in the private sector; and made in any other manner as may be determined by the</p>

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		<p>sessions per year at Headquarters in Rome: one Annual Session and two Regular Sessions.</p> <p>f) The Executive Director is appointed jointly by the United Nations Secretary-General and the Director-General of the FAO for five-year terms.</p>	<p>and the Council of FAO.</p>	<p>General Assembly of the United Nations.</p> <p>Budget 2009: US\$ 4,021,778,242</p>
UNHCR	<p>Established by ECOSOC resolution 672 (XXV) of 30 April 1958</p>	<p>a) An Executive Committee comprising of 78 members, elected by ECOSOC on the widest possible geographical basis from those states with a demonstrated interest in, and devotion to, the solution of the refugee problem.</p> <p>b) The Executive Committee reports directly to the General Assembly.</p> <p>c) The Executive Committee meets annually at its Geneva headquarters.</p> <p>d) The Executive Committee does not substitute for the policy making functions of the General Assembly or ECOSOC but has its own executive and advisory functions.</p> <p>e) The High Commissioner is elected by the General Assembly for a term of three years.</p>	<p>a) Promoting the conclusion and ratification of international conventions for the protection of refugees, supervising their application and proposing amendments thereto;</p> <p>b) Promoting through special agreements with Governments the execution of any measures calculated to improve the situation of refugees and to reduce the number requiring protection;</p> <p>c) Assisting governmental and private efforts to promote voluntary repatriation or assimilation within new national communities;</p> <p>d) Promoting the admission of refugees, not excluding those in the most destitute categories, to the territories of States;</p> <p>e) Endeavouring to obtain permission for refugees to transfer their assets and especially those necessary for their resettlement;</p> <p>f) Obtaining from Governments information concerning the number and conditions of refugees in their territories and the laws and regulations concerning them;</p> <p>g) Keeping in close touch with the Governments and inter-governmental organizations concerned;</p> <p>h) Establishing contact in such manner as he may think best with private organizations dealing with refugee questions;</p> <p>i) Facilitating the co-ordination of the efforts of private organizations concerned with the welfare of refugees.</p>	<p>Funds are almost entirely provided by voluntary contributions, with 93 percent coming from governments. A further 4 percent comes from inter-governmental organizations and pooled funding mechanisms, while the remaining 3 percent is from the private sector, including foundations, corporations and the general public. In addition, the agency receives a limited subsidy from the UN regular budget for administrative costs, and accepts so called "in-kind" contributions, including relief items such as tents, medicines, trucks and air transport.</p> <p>Budget 2009: US\$ 1.3 billion US\$ 765 million for supplementary appeals.</p>