



## **UNDG meeting**

11 October 2016, 9:30 AM – 12:00 PM (EST)

DC1 – 21<sup>st</sup> Floor, Hank Shannon Conference Room

## **Meeting Report**

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### **Opening remarks by the UNDG Chair**

1. The UNDG Chair, Helen Clark, opened the third UNDG meeting of 2016 by extending a special welcome to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) as a new member of the UNDG. The addition of IOM brings UNDG membership to 32 UN entities and sixteen observers. By signing a relationship agreement with the United Nations Secretariat, which became effective on 19 September, IOM has joined the UN common system as a related organization. IOM has become a member of the UN System Chief Executives Board for Co-ordination (CEB), and in turn a member of the UNDG, the Regional UNDG Teams, and UN Country Teams.

2. Mr. Ashraf El Nour, the Director of the International Organization for Migration to the United Nations, thanked the UNDG Chair for the warm welcome and for her personal efforts to ensure IOM's seamless inclusion in the UNDG, including by sending a joint letter together with IOM Director-General William Lacy Swing to all Resident Co-ordinators and UN Country Teams (UNCTs). Mr. El Nour noted that IOM was looking forward to building on its rich history of working closely with the UN development system at the global and regional levels and specifically in some seventy countries, and to deepening its co-operation further through IOM's active engagement in the UNDG's working mechanisms.

3. The UNDG Chair recalled that the UNDG had been focusing its collective efforts on two overarching priorities throughout the year: supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and driving system-wide reform – including by supporting Member States in the preparations for the 2016 QCPR and in their discussions on the longer-term positioning of the UN development system.

4. On the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the UNDG Chair noted that there continued to be strong demand from Member States for support from the UN development system. One hundred UN Country Teams had reported receipt of requests in this regard, which Resident Co-ordinators and UNCTs had been meeting by supporting public advocacy on the SDGs and mainstreaming them into national planning, budgets, and policies, and by responding to calls for support for capacity development around data, measurement, and national reporting.

5. On the UNDG's work at the global level in support of Resident Co-ordinators and UNCTs, the UNDG Chair noted that the UNDG Sustainable Development Working Group was finalizing guidelines for country-led national SDG reporting, which would shortly be submitted to the UNDG for electronic endorsement. The UNDG Chair also noted that the UNDG Mainstreaming, Acceleration, and Policy



Support (MAPS) approach continued to be further developed, including by collecting good practices on ‘accelerator’ initiatives which can drive progress across the SDGs. In this context, the UNDG Chair noted that the UN development system had teamed up with the World Bank in unprecedented ways to support MDG acceleration, and that the World Bank was keenly interested in continuing these joint efforts on the SDGs, including in fragile contexts.

6. The UNDG Chair noted that the UNDG had showcased lessons learned from its support during the initial implementation phase of the 2030 Agenda in its recent publication: [“The Sustainable Development Goals Are Coming to Life – Stories of Country Implementation and UN Support”](#), and at side events at the High Level Political Forum in July and during the General Assembly in September. She noted that some of the most inspiring examples of early action came from countries affected by crisis, including Somalia and Sierra Leone. This reinforced the importance of humanitarian, peacebuilding, and development actors working together in seamless ways during crises and in their aftermath to build resilience and to re-focus on prevention. The UN Working Group on Transition would continue to lead UNDG efforts to this effect, working across the UN pillars in doing so.

7. The UNDG Chair referred to the high level of national ownership of the 2030 Agenda which exists as a key factor in its successful implementation. The inclusive way, in which the 2030 Agenda had been developed, with support from the United Nations development system, had helped build that high level of ownership. She noted that UN entities had committed to pursuing more integrated and innovative approaches to joint analysis, planning, programmes and financing, including at the World Humanitarian Summit, and these would need to be followed up with concrete actions over the coming months.

8. With regard to the 2016 QCPR, the UNDG Chair noted that Member States had an opportunity to support the UN development system with a new strategic vision and framework to help it achieve results, while also maintaining a clear distinction between governance and management. In this context, the UNDG Chair noted that Member States had been very appreciative that the UNDG had been speaking with one voice during the ECOSOC Dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the UN development system and thanked the UNDG Vice-Chair, Amir Abdulla, the ASG Advisory Group Chair, Jan Beagle, Deputy Executive Director UNWomen, Yannick Glemerc, the Senior Co-ordinator for UN Fit for Purpose, John Hendra, the Director of UN DOCO, Kanni Wignaraja, and others who had represented the UNDG in various related for a, particularly over the past few months, but also going back to the outset of the Dialogue processes in mid-2014.

9. The UNDG Chair thanked UN DESA for its efforts to ensure that the UNDG had been fully engaged in the ECOSOC Dialogue processes and in the preparations for the Secretary-General’s report. She noted that the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General’s report on the QCPR were broadly consistent with the UNDG’s collective thinking and vision for a new kind of QCPR, which could: (i) serve as a strategic framework to empower and reposition the entire UN development system; (ii) endorse a new generation of UNDAFs which facilitate integrated analysis, planning, and results monitoring across the development, humanitarian, peacebuilding, and human rights dimensions; (iii) call for scaling up Delivering as One through full implementation of the SOPs across all UN Country Teams, adapted to country context and with corresponding alignment of agency programme and operational



guidelines; (iv) encourage a shift towards more differentiated country presence relevant to individual country needs; (v) facilitate closer operational integration across the system to promote more efficient and cost-effective common operations, including through the mutual recognition of each agency's best practices and scaling up the use of integrated service centers; and (vi) strengthen the RC system as the cornerstone of the UN development system's collective support for the 2030 Agenda.

10. The UNDG Chair noted that the ball was now in the court of Member States, and that the UNDG stood ready to provide its support throughout the negotiation process through to the formal adoption of the QCPR resolution in December.

### **Item 1: Briefing on mid-term status of UNDG work plan**

11. The UNDG Chair introduced the agenda item by thanking the ASG Advisory Group, the UNDG Working Groups, and UN DOCO for their active engagement in support of the UNDG Strategic Priorities and Work Plan throughout the year. She noted that the global co-ordination work of the UNDG was supported by a highly cost effective Secretariat and the active engagement and team commitment of UNDG members. The UNDG results achieved in 2016 reflected this shared sense of purpose.

12. The Chair of the UNDG ASG Advisory Group, Jan Beagle, briefed the UNDG on the status of the implementation of the UNDG work plan, including recent results and upcoming priorities of the ASG Advisory Group. Ms. Beagle noted that 2016 had been a particularly busy year so far, which had been marked by a good spirit of collaboration across UNDG member entities and UNDG working mechanisms.

13. Ms. Beagle noted that the ASG Advisory Group had met with the Co-Chairs of the eight UNDG Working Groups on 14 September to take stock of progress against the key deliverables of the UNDG work plan. She confirmed that all UNDG working mechanisms were overall on track to reach their agreed objectives. Among the important flagship initiatives that had been successfully undertaken this year were the roll-out of the Mainstreaming Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS) approach and the roll-out of the new interim UNDAF Guidance for the next generation of strategic UNDAFs, which capture the core context and content of the 2030 Agenda.

14. Ms. Beagle noted that in support of an impactful UNDS response to the 2030 Agenda, a number of key deliverables were currently under preparation and due to be completed before the end of the year. These included: **Finalization of the new UNDAF/UNSDF Guidelines, MAPS Acceleration Toolkit, UNCT Guidelines for SDG Country Reporting, review of agency capacities for sustaining peace, updated Peace and Conflict Needs Assessment (PCNA) methodology, road map for addressing the humanitarian-development-peace nexus in collaboration with the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC), roll-out of the Assessment of Results and Competencies (ARC) Tool to Resident Co-ordinators and UNCTs, and a stocktaking of results achieved by Human Rights Advisers in Resident Co-ordinator offices.** All of these deliverables would be submitted in due course to the UNDG for endorsement over the coming weeks and months.



15. Ms. Beagle noted that the ASG Advisory Group had also identified two important cross-cutting issues: First, the need to better articulate and communicate linkages across UNDG work streams and **improved communication of joint results** to different target audiences in order to demonstrate the added value and collective impact in support of the 2030 Agenda. Second, the importance of **strengthening linkages with and among Regional UNDG Teams**. As one concrete measure in this regard, it had been proposed to convene all Regional UNDG Teams for a joint meeting in early 2017.

16. With regard to the work of the ASG Advisory Group, Ms. Beagle noted that in the first half of the year, the attention of the Advisory Group had been squarely focused on ensuring constructive and collective engagement of the UNDG in the ECOSOC Dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the UNDS, which had resulted in a set of concrete proposals that informed the Secretary-General's report. The analysis and thinking behind these proposals had also been captured in a series of more substantive papers, including the Theory of Change for the UNDS and position papers on pooled financing and the implications of universality, which, taken together, provided a solid basis for engaging constructively with Member States in the ongoing negotiations of the QCPR resolution.

17. With regard to upcoming work priorities, Ms. Beagle noted that the ASG Advisory Group would be overseeing two important review exercises: The stocktaking of the UNDG Management and Accountability System, which the UNDG Chair had called for earlier this year, and the Independent Review of the UNDG Cost-sharing Agreement in support for the RC system. The ASG Advisory Group would keep the UNDG closely abreast of progress in this regard. Ms. Beagle noted that the ASG Advisory Group had also made it a priority to see to the effective implementation of the Delivering as One Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for UNCTs, particularly with regard to removing critical bottlenecks at headquarters in close collaboration with HLCM.

18. With regard to next steps, Ms. Beagle noted that the ASG Advisory Group would hold a retreat on 25 October [since rescheduled for 3 November] 2016, which would focus on the UNDG's collective engagement in the QCPR process, seek to identify key issues, which the UNDG might wish to bring to the attention of new Secretary-General, and inform the Principals Advisory Group meeting on the margins of the CEB Fall Session on 8 November 2016.

19. Ms. Beagle noted that the ASG Advisory Group would reconvene with the UNDG Working Group Co-Chairs on 12 December to assess implementation of the UNDG work plan, take stock of overall progress against the UNDG Strategic Priorities for the four-year period of the current QCPR 2013-2016, and prepare for the next set of UNDG Strategic Priorities for the period 2017-2020, which would need to be aligned with the new QCPR. As had been agreed by the UNDG earlier this year, the UNDG global working mechanisms and current setup of UNDG Working Groups and Task Teams would subsequently need to be reviewed and aligned accordingly in early 2017.

## **Item 2: Summary presentation of 2015 UNDG Results Report**

20. The Director of UN DOCO, Kanni Wignaraja, presented a summary of the 2015 UNDG results report, titled "Together Possible: Gearing Up For the 2030 Agenda." Ms. Wignaraja noted that the report



synthesized the key trends and results of the Resident Co-ordinator system in 2015 and responded to a major ask of Member States, namely that the UN development system tell its story succinctly, accurately and compellingly. It also outlined how these results had been achieved through the UNDG cost-sharing agreement in its second year of implementation, supplemented by development partner financing. The Executive Summary of the report had been shared with UNDG members and Member States in September and the full report would be released by the end of October.

21. In her presentation, Ms. Wignaraja highlighted several trends that UN DOCO had identified based on an analysis of the data generated from UNCTs through the UNDG Management Information System. Notable trends included: **high demand from governments for SDG implementation support by UNCTs across all country categories; continuously growing demand for Delivering as One with 55 Governments having officially requested UNCTs to adopt the approach; UNCTs organizing differently in response to the demands of the 2030 Agenda with UNCT Results Groups increasingly working across SDGs and UN joint programmes adjusting to new priorities; the current generation of UNDAFs being designed with more strategic focus and underpinned by the SOPs, including by Business Operations Strategies that demonstrated tangible benefits; increased joined-up work by UNCTs in the areas of disaster risk reduction in support of the implementation of the Sendai Framework as well as human rights with collective UN system support for the follow-up to human rights treaty body recommendations; and increased demand for the UN development system to collectively support national data and statistics.**

22. With regard to areas that required the UNDG's attention, Ms. Wignaraja noted that while Government demand for UNCTs to deliver as one continued to grow, greater efforts would be required to ensure implementation of the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) across all UNCTs, especially by implementing the SOPs Plan of Action for Headquarters. Another area that called for UNDG action was the fact that in spite of the demonstrated positive impact of pooled funding mechanisms, inter-agency pooled funds for development continued to remain low both in number and volume compared to humanitarian pooled funding mechanisms. She also noted the trend of an increasing number of UN entities complying with the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) Standard, which is making the UNDS itself more transparent and accountable, and urged more member entities to follow suit.

23. With regard to the presentation on "shared UNDG leadership to achieve the SDGs" and the corresponding figure in the 2015 UNDG results report depicting the share of agencies that are co-chairing inter-agency groups in support of the SDGs at the country level (Executive Summary of, p. 5), it was noted that the data was necessarily preliminary given that the SDGs had only been adopted in late 2015. In the final version of the 2015 UNDG results report, it would also be clarified that the presented figures illustrated inter-agency groups, which could each address up to five SDGs.

24. The UNDG welcomed the Executive Summary of the 2015 UNDG Results Report, noting that it illustrated the impact created by a more co-ordinated UN development system on results on the ground. The UNDG underlined the importance of having a common storyline for reporting its collective results. In this context, it was proposed that the data and trends captured by the UNDG Information Management System should also be used to inform the strategic plans and reports of UNDG member entities, including messaging to individual UN governing bodies. There was consensus that the funding of the UN



development system would need to be reformed in light of the demands of the 2030 Agenda, whereby funding could serve to either incentivize or disincentivize joint approaches and collaboration across the UN system – a message, which the UNDG should convey to Member States in the context of the QCPR preparations.

### **Item 3: Preparations for the 2016 QCPR**

25. Mr. Thomas Gass, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Co-ordination and Inter-Agency Affairs in UN DESA, briefed the UNDG on the status of preparations for the 2016 QCPR. He noted that the first draft of the resolution was currently under preparation by the G77 and due to be released by 17 [since rescheduled for 28] October. He indicated that UN DESA would reach out to the UNDG for information notes on key issues as well as for organizing informal briefings if Member States decided to request this.

26. Mr. Gass noted that key topics for which Member States would likely seek further information included the Resident Co-ordinator system, UN entity mandates, UN co-ordination mechanisms, country classification, and system-wide instruments for analysis, planning, budgeting, implementation, reporting, M&E etc. Mr. Gass noted that the upcoming ASG Advisory Group retreat would be an important and timely opportunity for the UNDG to agree on common messaging on these topics as well as the overall resolution.

27. Mr. John Hendra, Senior Co-ordinator for UN Fit for Purpose, noted that the UNDG would like to see a strategic, outcome-oriented QCPR resolution, which facilitated delivery of results at the country level. Mr. Hendra noted that the QCPR would be an opportunity to define the functions that the UN development system was expected to perform in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Form should subsequently follow function, whereby the system's governance and organizational arrangements should be aligned accordingly.

28. Mr. Hendra noted that it would be particularly important for the QCPR to focus on ensuring close collaboration across the development / humanitarian / sustaining peace nexus. Mr. Hendra noted that the ASG Advisory Group would use its forthcoming retreat to discuss some remaining key issues that might come up in the draft resolution, such as mandate review, functions and capacity mapping across the UNDS, system-wide accountability and governance, UN system-wide framework, methodology for assessing/monitoring UNDS's support to the 2030 Agenda, and development/ humanitarian/ human rights/ sustaining peace linkages.

29. The UNDG Chair noted that the UNDG had already responded to a considerable number of requests from Member States during the ECOSOC Dialogue and expressed her hope that any further requests for information in the final phase of the QCPR preparations would be limited to compilations of existing materials and data that was readily available across the system. For any more far-reaching requests, the UNDG would otherwise need to request support from UN DESA to be able to comply physically and financially. The UNDG Chair noted that it would be important for the ASG Advisory Group to look into the issue of system-wide accountability and governance at its retreat and to identify



proposals that could inform a strategic QCPR, which ensured a clear separation of management from governance in support of the effective functioning of the system.

#### **Item 4: Good Practices in South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable Development**

30. The UNDG Chair introduced the agenda item by noting that mainstreaming and scaling up South-South and triangular co-operation was a central element of the UNDG Strategic Priorities. The UNDG's collective efforts in this regard were being led by the UNDG Task Team for South-South and Triangular Co-operation under the auspices of the Sustainable Development Working Group.

31. The Director of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and Co-Chair of the UNDG Task Team for South-South and Triangular Cooperation, Mr. Jorge Chediek, presented the publication "Good Practices in South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable Development." Mr. Chediek noted that the publication highlighted a number of good practices of how UNCTs had been advancing South-South Co-operation and was intended to serve as a reference for Resident Co-ordinators, UN Country Teams, and UN colleagues, as well as for national governments and development practitioners to facilitate the integration of South-South and triangular co-operation approaches into national development plans and actions.

32. Mr. Chediek noted that the publication had been widely consulted across the UN system, drawing on inputs from 31 UN entities. It had been presented at the High-level Committee on South-South Co-operation, where it had been well received by Member States. Upon endorsement by the UNDG, the intention was for the publication to be circulated to RCs and UNCTs together with updated guidelines on UN support for South-South Co-operation, which had been updated by the UNDG Task Team.

33. Mr. Chediek also noted that the Global South-South Development Expo would be held from 31 October until 3 November in Dubai, to which all UN entities had been invited. The General Assembly would also likely consider a proposal for holding a conference on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Buenos Aires Plan, for which it would be important for the UNDG to co-ordinate system-wide inputs.

34. **The UNDG welcomed and endorsed the publication "Good Practices in South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Sustainable Development."** It was agreed that the publication would be continuously updated and made available online as a "living document."

#### **Item 5: UN Business Operations Strategy (BOS) Guidance**

35. The UNDG Chair introduced the agenda item by recalling that the UN Business Operations Strategy (BOS) had originally been rolled-out by the UNDG in 2012 as part of the Standard Operating Procedures for Delivering as One (SOPs). The BOS had initially been piloted in 14 countries and the pilot phase had subsequently been independently evaluated. The UNDG Chair noted that the BOS had experienced strong demand and pick-up from UNCTs in the context of the 2016 UNDAF roll-out, and



that it had also received a lot of recognition from Member States in the context of the preparations for the 2016 QCPR. She noted that it was therefore timely for the UNDG to launch the next generation of Business Operations Strategies based on updated guidance.

36. The Co-Chairs of the UNDG Business Operations Working Group, Mr. Jens Wandel and Mr. Jean-Yves Le Saux, presented the 2016 BOS guidance, noting that it had been comprehensively reviewed and revamped in light of the lessons learned during the pilot phase and the recommendations of the evaluation. The Co-Chairs noted that the BOS had been designed to ensure that UNCT business operations were firmly aligned with the UNCT programming under the UNDAF on the same cycle, which would allow for holistic evaluations and result in a host of other tangible and intangible benefits. They noted that among the SOPs, the “Operating as One” pillar was only implemented by 45% of UNCTs, compared to 75% of UNCTs implementing the “One Programme” pillar, which pointed to the importance of accelerating implementation of the BOS based on the updated guidance. The updated BOS guidance had also been endorsed by the HLCM.

**37. The UNDG endorsed the 2016 UN Business Operations Strategy (BOS) Guidance. The guidance will also inform the roll-out of the next generation of UNDAFs in support of the 2030 Agenda for those UNCTs opting to implement the BOS alongside. UNDG Working Groups will implement and report on the related tasks as part of the established working arrangements of the UNDG and co-ordinate closely with HLCM.**

#### **Item 6: UN Leadership Model**

38. The UNDG Chair introduced the agenda item by noting that at the level of the UN System Chief Executives Board for Co-ordination (CEB), there had been a realization that the demands of the 2030 Agenda and the changed global development context called for a new leadership model, which reflected a new way of working together at the country, regional and global level. To this effect, all three pillars of the CEB – HLCP, HLCM, and the UNDG – had been asked to contribute towards a new system-wide leadership framework, which would be due to be adopted by the CEB at its first session in 2017.

39. The Co-Chairs of the UNDG Leadership Working Group, Mr. John Hendra and Mr. Craig Mokhiber, presented the UN Leadership Model, noting that the model was the result of an inclusive system-wide consultation process, including consultations with RCs, UNCTs and UN system colleagues from across the globe in 2015 and 2016. The model had also been informed by a review of key reforms underway across the system, and the transformational policy documents that were changing the Organization’s approach to leadership, particularly at the country level. These included the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, the Human Rights up Front policy, the Theory of Change, the revised RC Job Description and UNCT Code of Conduct, and multiple RC/UNCT policy guidance notes. The resulting model set out a framework for UN leadership that was firmly grounded in the United Nations Charter, the norms and standards of the Organization as contained in its treaties and declarations, its core mandate to promote peace and security, protect human rights, address humanitarian needs, and advance economic and social progress and development.



40. **The UNDG endorsed the UN Leadership Model. It was noted that it would be critical to arrive at a single system-wide proposal on leadership, informed by contributions from all three pillars of the CEB, and which could be applied to all levels of leadership at the global, regional and country level.**

### **Item 7: AOB**

#### **Update on status of UNDG cost-sharing review**

41. The Director of UN DOCO, Kanni Wignaraja, briefed the UNDG on the status of implementation of the UNDG cost-sharing agreement in support of the Resident Co-ordinator system.

42. With regard to the current 2016-2017 funding biennium, Ms. Wignaraja noted that with the exception of the UN Secretariat, all 18 UNDG member entities that were parties to the cost-sharing agreement had been contributing in 2016, even though some continued to provide reduced amounts. The Fifth Committee of the General Assembly had resumed its deliberations on the UN Secretariat's contribution, which amounted to \$6.5 million in 2016 and \$6.8 million in 2017 for the 19 UN Secretariat entities that were members of the UNDG. She noted that UN DOCO and UN DESA had provided several briefings to the Fifth Committee and that a decision was expected before the end of the year.

43. Ms. Wignaraja noted that the International Organization for Migration, which joined the UNDG on 19 September, had indicated its full commitment to the UNDG cost-sharing agreement, including by contributing a proportional share for the last quarter of 2016, which was an exceptionally good practice. Even though, total UNDG funding commitments for 2016 only amounted to \$27.6 million out of the \$35.9 million funding requirement, resulting in a shortfall of \$8.3 million.

44. Ms. Wignaraja noted that DOCO had therefore reached out to donors and, further to the announcement at the 30 June UNDG meeting, had launched the Delivering Together Facility (DTF), which combined the UN Country Coordination Fund, Capacity Gap Effort and the Human Rights Mainstreaming Trust Fund, which had thus far been managed as separate funds, under one umbrella.

45. With regard to the independent review of the UNDG cost-sharing agreement, Ms. Wignaraja noted that UN DOCO had launched the procurement process, following the endorsement of the terms of reference by the UNDG at its last meeting on 30 June 2016. She thanked colleagues from WHO, UNHCR and UNDP for joining the selection panel that evaluated the three qualified proposals that had been received.

46. Ms. Wignaraja noted that the procurement process was close to being completed and that the UNDG would shortly be informed of the selected company. The review would commence later in October for a duration of 13 weeks to be completed in January 2017. The study would review the first biennium of the cost-sharing agreement in 2014-2015 in order to inform the further development of the cost-sharing agreement for the 2018-2019 biennium and beyond.



**47. The inception report for the independent review of the UNDG cost-sharing agreement, which will outline the proposed scope and methodology for the study, is expected to be shared with the UNDG for review by mid-November.**

**Second High-Level Meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation**

48. The Director of UN DOCO, Ms. Kanni Wignaraja, noted that the UNDG ASG Advisory Group had discussed at its meeting on 22 September how the UNDG could engage in the Second High-Level Meeting of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (HLM 2), which would take place in Nairobi on 28 November–1 December 2016. Ms. Wignaraja noted that, as had been the case for the first High-Level Meeting of the Global Partnership in Mexico in 2014 and the previous conferences in Busan (2011) and Accra (2008), it was envisaged that the UNDG would host a joint side event in Nairobi.

**49. A concept note for the proposed UNDG side event at HLM2 in Nairobi will be shared electronically with the UNDG for review. UNDG members are kindly requested to indicate to UN DOCO whether their Executive Heads intend to participate in the conference.**