**Managing Prescriptive Content**

Definition

1. The definition endorsed by the Organizational Performance Group in 2015 refers to policies as providing an operational, long-term framework for the organization and describe "what" the organization intends to do. Policies are to be clear and simple statements and should not be overly prescriptive. UNDP’s main policy and procedures repository is the POPP (Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures).[[1]](#footnote-1)
2. Procedures serve as a blueprint for policy implementation and as step-by-step instructions on how to implement a policy and states who will implement it.

Governing principles and framework

1. In principle, the POPP is public in further pursuance of transparency and promotes mutual recognition of each other’s policies and procedures among UN entities.
2. All personnel are required to comply with the provision of the POPP (UNDP FRR 102.02).
3. To be effective, prescriptive content must be realistic, feasible, and practical in its application. It must be principle-based, concise and straight-to-the point.
4. Policies need to be coherent with corresponding UN Staff Regulations and Rules and/or UNDP Financial Regulations and Rules, as the legal basis for enactment. Policies must be coherent within and beyond a particular subject area, since a policy change in one subject area might have implication for policies in another areas.
5. Policy improvement should be practical and guided by taking country office/field perspectives of UNDP. Such improvement should contribute to the organizational agility and relevance as a development organization.
6. Before a new policy is introduced, the relevant business unit must review relevant policies in view of ensuring coherency through 1) retiring outdated content; and/or 2) updating content.

Accountability

1. Bureaus with prescriptive content in the POPP are accountable for regularly reviewing policies and procedures in a timely manner, for amendment and adjustment of existing policies, and publishing them on the POPP platform. Content owning units are responsible for reviewing policies every three years at least, or more frequently as required.
2. Bureaus may make amendment that are purely editorial and straight-forward changes, which do not have significant financial and strategic implications to the organization such as updates of fund code numbers.
3. Bureau for Management Services is accountable for providing guidance on coherence and monitoring of the POPP (Financial Regulation 2.04 and Rule 102.01).
4. The OPG and its Secretariat are accountable for reviewing and approving new policies and substantive changes to existing policies.
5. Bureaus with prescriptive content should ensure all documents linked to procedure are up-to-date.
6. Bureaus with prescriptive content should ensure timely communication to Country Offices on POPP updates.

1. The term policies is usually not used in order to explain programmatic standpoints of UNDP as these are established in strategies or position papers. (OPG, Working Definition November 2015) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)