

**Executive Board of the United Nations
Development Programme, the
United Nations Population Fund and the
United Nations Office for Project Services**

Report of the Executive Board on its work during 2016



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Note

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Part one
First regular session 2016

**Held at United Nations Headquarters in New York
from 25 to 28 January 2016**

I. Organizational matters

1. The first regular session 2016 of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS was held at United Nations Headquarters, New York, from 25 to 28 January 2016. The President of the Board welcomed all delegations and thanked the outgoing President and Vice-Presidents for their leadership and commitment to the work of the Board in 2015. He congratulated the new members of the Bureau on their election.

2. In accordance with rule 7 of the rules of procedure of the Executive Board, the Board elected the following members of the Bureau for 2016:

President: Mr. Zohrab Mnatsakanyan (Armenia)
Vice-President: Ms. Bénédicte Frankinet (Belgium)
Vice-President: Mr. Mamadi Touré (Guinea)
Vice-President: Mr. Khiane Phansourivong (Lao People's Democratic Republic)
Vice-President: Mr. Tumasie Blair (Antigua and Barbuda)

3. The Executive Board approved the agenda and workplan for its first regular session 2016 ([DP/2016/L.1](#)), and approved the report of the second regular session 2015 ([DP/2016/1](#)). The Board adopted the annual workplan for 2016 ([DP/2016/CRP.1](#)) and approved the tentative workplan for the annual session 2016.

4. Decisions adopted by the Executive Board in 2015 appeared in document [DP/2016/2](#), which is available on the UNDP website.

5. The Executive Board agreed, in its decision 2016/3, to the following schedule for future sessions of the Executive Board in 2016:

Annual session 2016: 6 to 10 June 2016 (New York)
Second regular session 2016: 6 to 9 and 13 September 2016

UNDP segment

II. Statement by the Administrator and country programmes and related matters

6. In her opening remarks to the Executive Board (available on the UNDP website), the Administrator thanked the outgoing President and Vice-Presidents for their commitment and support throughout 2015 and congratulated the newly elected President and Vice-Presidents for 2016. The session was webcast live and, in a short film, the Administrator highlighted the work of UNDP in 2015. She said that in 2106 the international community had a huge opportunity to make real progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the related global development agendas. She mentioned a ministerial meeting that UNDP was organizing on 24 February 2016, marking its fiftieth anniversary, and indicated it offered a prime moment for partners to reach a shared understanding of the role of UNDP in translating the ambitious commitments of the 2030 Agenda into concrete actions and results.

7. Turning to current work, the Administrator highlighted the UNDP role in response to crises, drawing attention first to the migration and displacement of millions due to conflict, a trend that was pushing security and humanitarian concerns to the top of the agenda. There was the urgent need to focus on root causes, and vital for all partners to work across the old humanitarian and development lines to ensure the most effective response. The report of the High-level Panel on Humanitarian Financing, established by the Secretary-General, was helpful in charting the way forward. She highlighted UNDP work in the Syrian Arab Republic under a new two-year programme that would expand its resilience assistance, focusing on the most vulnerable groups, including displaced persons and migrants. UNDP work in that area was built on the agreements reached at the 2015 Resilience Development Forum, held in Jordan, which was aimed at the better integration of humanitarian and development efforts and supporting national efforts and capacities of host communities and countries through, for example, the Jordan Response Plan. She also drew attention to the unstable situation in Burundi where UNDP was deploying a Surge team for crisis response and early recovery.

8. The Administrator, in turn, underscored the work of UNDP on the transition to constitutional government in Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, Libya, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen, where the organization worked in various interrelated areas to support electoral processes in partnership with United Nations peacekeeping missions, including: peace consolidation; violence reduction; restoration of state authority; State-building; transitional justice and reconciliation; constitution making; the rule of law; human rights; social cohesion; food security and livelihoods; delivery of basic services; and local resilience and recovery. She also drew attention to UNDP support to elections in Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Haiti and Sri Lanka, as well as other countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, focusing on assisting electoral management bodies and strengthening civil society and citizens participation, especially that of women.

9. According to the Administrator, the 2015-2016 El Niño was the strongest since 1950, and its impact on food security could last for two years. To counter its negative effects, UNDP was supporting early recovery initiatives and drought resilience work in hard-hit Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa jointly with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and regional economic communities to strengthen national and regional coordination mechanisms. Similar UNDP work was also under way in the Central American “dry corridor” in El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras and Paraguay, strengthening the national and regional response, boosting capacities and ensuring coordination of the United Nations humanitarian system. In the Pacific, UNDP was engaged with the Government of Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu on emergency coordination and disaster preparedness through the UNDP Pacific Risk Resilience Programme.

10. The Administrator turned to the implementation of the new global agendas, on which UNDP was working with the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) on the mainstreaming, acceleration and policy support (MAPS) approach. In 2015, UNDP had led the preparation with the World Food Programme and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) of the reference guide for United Nations country teams on mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals into national agendas, while it was developing a toolkit with UNICEF to support governments

and stakeholders to accelerate progress on the goals. UNDP spearheaded the articulation of three key UNDP-specific drivers at the heart of the goals: (a) the “whole of agenda” and the “whole of society” approach; (b) mobilization of expertise and programme support around Goals 1, 10 and 16, as well as other Goals where UNDP had particular strengths; and (c) support to countries to monitor, report and apply lessons learned on the implementation of the Goals based on UNDP work on the Millennium Development Goals. On the recent agreement on climate reached at the twenty-first Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Administrator highlighted that UNDP was well placed to turn the commitments outlined in the intended nationally determined contributions into ambitious climate action, given its work to date helping countries to finalize their intended nationally determined contributions.

11. She stressed that regular (core) resources were critical for the ability of UNDP to fulfil its mandate, and as such the continued downward trend in core remained a major concern. She hoped that in 2016 that trend would be reversed by increased flows from partner Member States, as well as through a rise in the number of core contributing partners. UNDP would continue to strive to diversify its resource base, she stated, including with development banks, and by the rolling-out of a revised strategy to help the organization work better with the private sector and philanthropic institutions. A new key development was the creation of four new funding windows through which partners could contribute to supporting country-level efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals on: (a) sustainable development and poverty eradication; (b) climate change and disaster risk reduction; (c) governance for peaceful and inclusive societies; and (d) emergency development response to crisis and recovery. She indicated that at least 15 per cent of the funds would be used for gender-specific activities to ensure a mainstreamed and integrated approach to women’s empowerment and gender equality. On a related note, she stressed that UNDP was committed to transparency and accountability and maintaining its high ranking through the International Aid Transparency Initiative, and that it had regularly published its internal audit reports on the UNDP website, demonstrating that its work was subject to rigorous and independent scrutiny.

12. In 2016, UNDP would undertake the midterm review of its strategic plan, 2014-2017, and was already gathering data and carrying out analyses in order to identify good performance, explain shortfalls and align it better with the 2030 Agenda. In parallel, the Economic and Social Council dialogues would provide important input to the 2016 review of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development. She noted that UNDP had worked closely with a diversity of partner Member States in putting together the new South-South and triangular cooperation strategy, and was in close partnership on its implementation with the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation. UNDP was also providing financial and technical support to the UNDG Task Team on South-South and Triangular Cooperation to map good practices and lessons learned into a user guide for country teams and Governments. She highlighted that UNDP and other United Nations development system partners were working together to assist country teams in forging an integrated approach to the Sustainable Development Goals through the MAPS approach, which included closing the funding gap of 17.5 million for the 2016-2017 biennium for the resident coordinator

system. She hoped, in particular, for the approval by the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly of the contribution from the United Nations Secretariat, under the leadership of the Member States and with their support.

13. Board members welcomed the Administrator's statement and commended her strong leadership of the organization. They focused their comments on the importance and the challenge for UNDP in balancing its central role in driving forward the implementation of the 2030 Agenda through its critical work assisting countries and regions in the grip of humanitarian crises and protracted conflict. Harmonizing humanitarian and development interventions, they stressed, was critical not only to bringing an end to the world's many conflicts and crises but also to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

14. Drawing attention to the major global agreements of 2015, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, delegations were pleased with UNDP efforts, along with the funds, programmes and specialized agencies, to define how to approach the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and other targets, grounded in national ownership and leadership. They appreciated the UNDP piloting of the UNDG MAPS approach to help to define indicators and to build capacity for data collection and analysis for the implementation of the Goals at the national level. They also welcomed the organization's development of pragmatic, operational guidelines on implementing the 2030 Agenda for Governments and United Nations country teams. They looked forward to hearing the lessons learned from the pilot stage of the MAPS approach and welcomed other creative ideas to accelerate country-level progress. They encouraged UNDP, as part of efforts to ensure continued coordination of the United Nations development system for the implementation of the Goals and to promote wider country adoption of "Delivering as one" standard operating procedures and their lessons learned. They concurred with the UNDP focus on Goals 1, 10 and 16, and were especially keen to see UNDP foster rule of law and stable-investment environments, two key elements for the success of Goal 16, a foundational Goal, noting that, in the absence of just, peaceful and inclusive societies with strong and accountable institutions, all efforts would prove unfruitful. Similarly, they were pleased to see the organization's inclusion of gender equality and women's empowerment as cross-cutting issues in each country's basic package of UNDP support.

15. A number of delegations emphasized that the overarching goal of all UNDP work in developing countries remained poverty eradication, especially in the least developed countries, in line with the quadrennial review, built on the organization's crucial national capacity-building role. In that regard, they noted that the paradigm shift, which the 2030 Agenda had engendered, placed productive sectors at the heart of the development agenda, as a result of which UNDP had to pay careful attention to the economic dimension of the 2030 Agenda, especially in the areas of employment, industrialization and infrastructure. They called on the organization to reflect that shift when realigning its strategic plan, 2014-2017, during the 2016 midterm review, with the 2030 Agenda, which, they indicated, should include a corporate review of the monitoring, aggregation and reporting systems related to the integrated results and resources framework, in accordance with Board decision 2015/7, in order to boost its credibility and accountability. Engagement with UNDP

on South-South and triangular cooperation was highlighted, including a request for increased consultations with UNDP on its new South-South and triangular cooperation strategy. Delegations also stressed the importance of UNDP work in middle-income countries and small-island developing States, where large pockets of entrenched poverty demanded that resource allocation criteria went beyond simple gross domestic product (GDP) per capita to include pro-poor parameters.

16. While heartened by the promise of the 2030 Agenda, Board members expressed grave concern at the growing number of “mega-crises” throughout the world, which included unprecedented numbers of displaced populations, underfunded appeals and the closing of humanitarian space, and the intense burden it was placing on the United Nations humanitarian system. They welcomed UNDP efforts to strengthen its crisis response capacity and encouraged all stakeholders to take advantage of the humanitarian gatherings in 2016, especially the World Humanitarian Summit 2016 and the Syria Donors Conference 2016, in order to think creatively, put people at the centre of the international community’s work and embrace a much needed paradigm shift in how to better integrate and harmonize humanitarian and development strategies. Humanitarian work, they stressed, must contribute to longer-term development gains, while development work must address vulnerabilities, inequalities and risks with greater urgency.

17. Delegations highlighted that 2016 was critical for the United Nations development system as a whole, as the 2030 Agenda had refocused common goals and provided a framework to gauge progress over the ensuing 15 years. As custodian of the resident coordinator system, UNDP had a lead role to play. It was therefore crucial, they asserted, to reform and retool the United Nations development system to ensure that it provided the best quality assistance and the most effective and efficient delivery of results. They highlighted that the Economic and Social Council operational activities segment, the Council dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations development system and the review of the quadrennial review offered the ideal forums within which to tackle those issues head on, including the overall structure of the United Nations development system. On a related issue, a number of delegations underscored the importance of inclusiveness in the government structures of the entities of the United Nations development system, which needed to reflect equitable representation of each region. Delegations highlighted the universal scope of the 2030 Agenda, which applied equally to both developing and developed countries, and stressed that UNDP should focus on its comparative advantages, which would arise in discussions on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations system. It was proposed to further discuss those issues during the annual session in 2016.

18. In the light of the work ahead and the key leadership role of UNDP, Board members were keenly concerned about the organization’s difficult funding situation, noting the dramatic drop in core funding from \$1.1 billion in 2008 to \$550 million in 2016. Referencing the quadrennial review, a number of countries expressed concern that UNDP would not be able to achieve the critical mass goal and to redress the core/non-core funding imbalance through the use of more flexible non-core resources aligned with the strategic plan and priorities, avoiding the use of core resources to subsidize activities financed through non-core resources. A UNDP overly dependent on non-core resources, they asserted, could jeopardize its

universality and multilateral nature. Concerned that funding pressures would only worsen in the face of mounting humanitarian crises, they called on UNDP to continue to explore avenues to broaden and deepen its donor base, through both Member States and partnerships with non-traditional donors, including civil society, philanthropic institutions and the private sector. A group of delegations stressed that the universal consensus to “leave no one behind” required that every country had to play an active role, commensurate with its means and abilities, not only to achieve the goals nationally but also to contribute in meaningful ways to help the United Nations development efforts in programme countries.

19. In response, the Administrator, recognizing the magnitude of the agenda and the high expectations placed upon the organization, underlined that UNDP was committed to poverty eradication as its main overarching goal, which was coherent with what was laid out in the 2030 Agenda and the UNDP strategic plan. UNDP sought to tackle the multidimensional aspects of poverty, building especially on the experiences coming out of Latin America and the Caribbean in order to share them globally. She emphasized the issue of universality within the UNDP mandate, stressing that UNDP was a thought leader on development discourse, for example through its support of the role of Member States in the design of the 2030 Agenda. It did not seek a development role in countries where that was not within its mandate, but sought to maximize its comparative advantages where needed. On crisis-related work, UNDP, she affirmed, was working to assist displaced and migrant populations along with its partners, who strongly supported the organization’s resilience-based approach, an area where UNDP could be particularly helpful in the midst of crisis. She stressed that UNDP would continue to adjust its business model based on its actual funding situation, but highlighted that while the organization actively sought to broaden its funding base, including through non-traditional donors such as development banks, the private sector, philanthropic institutions, private individuals and the new proposed funding windows, only 51 Member States had contributed core resources to UNDP compared to more than 120 Member States that had contributed core resources to other organizations of the United Nations development system. She affirmed that UNDP would continue to actively engage with partner Member States on developing its strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation while it also continued to drive forward its South-South-related activities, which included the organization’s commitment to working in the middle-income countries and small-island developing States. She noted, on the subject of the least developed countries, that UNDP was actively engaged in the review process for the Istanbul Programme of Action in 2016 and in supporting their graduation process. She reiterated that UNDP would allocate at least 15 per cent of its resources from the four funding windows to the mainstreaming of the cross-cutting issues of gender equality and women’s empowerment throughout its work. She stressed that the United Nations development system was in the process of continual reform, as part of efforts to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and included the adoption of the common MAPS approach among United Nations organizations. Similarly, UNDP was engaged in supporting the Economic and Social Council dialogues and the 2016 quality review of the quadrennial review. She highlighted that the system was seized with the aim of ensuring greater gender and geographical representation in the resident coordinator pool. Finally, she assured the Board that UNDP took on board and actively addressed all of the

recommendations of the Board of Auditors and was ready to make further information available to the Board.

Country programmes and related matters

20. The UNDP Regional Director, Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States introduced the item. The UNDP regional directors for Africa, the Arab States, Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, and Latin America and the Caribbean elaborated on the draft country programme documents Argentina, Azerbaijan, Ethiopia, Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uruguay, as well as the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Ghana, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Trinidad and Tobago and Ukraine, and the two-year extension of the country programme for the Philippines.

21. In accordance with decision 2014/7, the Executive Board reviewed and approved the following country programmes: Ethiopia ([DP/DCP/ETH/3](#)) and the United Republic of Tanzania ([DP/DCP/TZA/2](#)) for Africa; Iraq ([DP/DCP/IRQ/2](#) and Corr.1) and the Syrian Arab Republic ([DP/DCP/SYR/3](#)) for the Arab States; Azerbaijan ([DP/DCP/AZE/4](#)) for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States; and Argentina ([DP/DCP/ARG/3](#)) and Uruguay ([DP/DCP/URY/3](#)) for Latin America and the Caribbean.

22. The Executive Board took note of the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Brazil, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Trinidad and Tobago from 1 January to 31 December 2016, and for the Dominican Republic, Ghana and Ukraine from 1 January to 31 December 2017, already approved by the Administrator ([DP/2016/3](#)).

23. The Executive Board also approved the two-year extension of the country programme for the Philippines from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2018 ([DP/2016/3](#)).

III. Evaluation

24. The Director of the Independent Evaluation Office, UNDP, introduced the item. The Evaluation Manager of the Office presented the evaluation of the UNDP contribution to mine action ([DP/2016/4](#)) and the Director of the Bureau for Programme and Policy Support, UNDP, presented the management response to the evaluation ([DP/2016/5](#)).

25. Board members commended the Independent Evaluation Office for its report on the UNDP contribution to mine action, and commended management on its response. They urged UNDP to ensure that the recommendations form the basis of future enhancements for its mine action cooperation. Delegations highlighted the organization's invaluable contribution to mine action, as recognized by the evaluation team, especially its work to strengthen the institutional capacity of national partners and improve the safety and security of mine-affected communities. They welcomed UNDP work to improve livelihoods and to facilitate South-South cooperation, and shared its vision for mine clearance and socioeconomic

development, including victim assistance focused on disabilities and inclusive development. They also welcomed the UNDP emphasis on taking different approaches to women, men, boys and girls in mine-risk education, and its application of a gender perspective. They stressed that UNDP work on mine action should be shaped by the priority outcomes in agreed country programmes, and encouraged UNDP to work with national Governments to ensure that its demining activities had greater positive impact in poorer, more marginalized communities.

26. Delegations stressed that the organization's long-term strategic commitment to supporting ongoing mine action programmes be coherently supported at the headquarters and regional levels in order to provide technical advice, capacity support and practical guidance to countries making the transition to national implementation of mine action programmes. Building national management capacities for mine action was key, including strong advisory services in UNDP country offices and better mainstreaming of mine action in broader development actions, especially for affected areas. That approach, they noted, should: take into account local needs and risks before determining priorities; include clear indicators for success; engage civil society and other partners in development planning for post-conflict recovery; and strive for greater efficiency and accountability. They looked forward to UNDP reaffirming its work on mine action globally, and requested that UNDP reflect its work on mine action in future annual reporting and in the next strategic plan, while providing timely, results-focused reporting to donors of non-core resources.

27. In response to references made on links between mine-victims assistance and broader work on disabilities, the Evaluation Manager of the Independent Evaluation Office stated that the midterm evaluation plan had included an evaluation on disabilities-inclusive development in 2015. He noted that the office would provide the results of that evaluation at the first regular session 2017, which would pave the way for discussions with management on the way forward on disabilities issues, taking into account the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and recognizing the evolving work of UNDP.

28. The Director of the Independent Evaluation Office highlighted that the evaluators had sought to reflect evidence from the field and from local communities, which included many case studies that provided country-level evidence that could help to aggregate information in order to demonstrate development results.

29. The Director of the Bureau for Programme and Policy Support, UNDP, stressed that the UNDP role was to support efforts, in a neutral manner, to resolve the problems that landmines caused and to minimize casualties. He highlighted that while non-core contributions helped to fund mine action programmes, core resources guaranteed that UNDP had the technical and advisory capacity to build national capacities, maintain regional and global teams and implement the programmes. He stated that while it had prioritized mine action in its strategic plan, 2014-2017, UNDP continued to respond to requests from programme countries and included mine action in its overall development work, complementing efforts of the United Nations Mine Action Service and other organizations implementing the Strategy of the United Nations on Mine Action 2013-2018. He emphasized the tremendous South-South cooperation exchange driving results on mine action, and underscored that resource mobilization should complement UNDP expertise and

coordination capacity in discussions with donors to back those efforts. He noted that under international rules of war, UNDP could only engage in mine action activities once conflict had ceased. In closing, he stressed the importance of knowledge and information-sharing in efforts to find and demine mine-affected areas.

30. The Executive Board adopted decision 2016/1: evaluation of the UNDP contribution to mine action and management response.

UNFPA segment

IV. Statement by the Executive Director and country programmes and related matters

31. In his statement to the Executive Board (available on the UNFPA website), the Executive Director of UNFPA thanked the outgoing President and Vice-Presidents for their commitment, leadership and guidance throughout 2015. Their active engagement in the open working group on the Sustainable Development Goals and post-2015 consultations had ensured that the ICPD agenda and the rights, health and empowerment of women and young people were firmly woven into the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals. He highlighted that endorsement of the demographic dividend by the 2030 Agenda opened a unique opportunity for UNFPA to accelerate action on the core aspirations of ICPD beyond 2014. He congratulated the newly elected President and Vice-Presidents for 2016, noting that it would be a pivotal year for the international development community as it began implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

32. The Executive Director highlighted the multilateral achievements of 2015, including the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change adopted at the twenty-first Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development. The latter, he noted, aimed to align financing flows and policies with economic, social and environmental priorities, and emphasized the need to mobilize domestic resources. While stressing that financing was the linchpin for the success of the Sustainable Development Goals, he underlined that the funding landscape remained a challenge — a situation that demanded new thinking, new partnerships and new ways of doing business.

33. He underscored the importance of predictable core funding to allow the Fund to maintain high-quality services and fulfil its mandate. In 2015, he noted, there had been an \$80 million drop in core resources due mainly to unfavourable exchange rate fluctuations, with a further fall expected in 2016. Non-core funding, mostly for non-thematic streams, were overwhelmingly short-term commitments, making it difficult for UNFPA to maintain its robust institutional framework, including post freezes. To meet the challenge head on, he affirmed that UNFPA had established a non-core funding management unit and was in close dialogue with donors to improve the core funding situation while it continued to drive innovation in operations and programme delivery.

34. The Executive Director affirmed that the UNFPA mandate had never been more relevant. Sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women and young people were key to sustainable development, to unleashing the power of the demographic dividend and to building resilience. Stressing that the ICPD agenda and the 2030 Agenda only reinforced each other, he stated that the Fund would focus its major investments under the 2030 Agenda on family planning, the demographic dividend, humanitarian response and resilience building and data for development.

35. The Fund's family planning activities, in pursuit of reaching those "farthest behind", was based on the UNFPA supplies programme — the largest global fund for family planning and the largest supplier of contraceptives. The programme was key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the Family Planning 2020 goal of enabling 120 million more women and girls to use modern contraception by 2020. He highlighted that although since 2007 the supplies programme had saved over 700,000 lives and billions of dollars in health-care spending in countries with the highest unmet needs, there remained a global funding crisis in family planning, estimated at a \$1 billion gap for the programme over the next five years, potentially jeopardizing its impact across the globe.

36. The Executive Director underlined that the Fund's work to optimize the potential of youth and adolescent girls, through the demographic dividend, focused on creating conditions to empower them to exercise their right to sexual and reproductive health and family planning. The Fund was working to advance that initiative with partners through, for example, the World Economic Forum, the World Bank, the Sahel Women's Empowerment and Demographic Dividend project and faith-based organizations, among others, and by promoting high-level dialogue, facilitating regional efforts, supporting the development of national studies for national planning, and creating an enabling environment for multi-sector investment.

37. In crisis situations, he highlighted that UNFPA was providing sexual reproductive health services and responding to gender-based violence in the Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen, South Sudan and the Central African Republic, among others, often in difficult conditions tainted by extremism and human rights violations. He noted that the *2015 State of the World Population* report focused on a transformative agenda for women and girls in crisis-prone countries. UNFPA looked forward to the Syria Donors Conference 2016, at which it would appeal for more funding to meet the urgent demand of the internally displaced and refugees. Because some 60 per cent of maternal deaths globally occurred in humanitarian contexts, the Fund was a strong advocate for the "Every Woman, Every Child, Everywhere" agenda, including in crisis and disaster settings, providing services that included the sexual and reproductive health toolkit and the placement of expertise, where needed.

38. In closing, he highlighted that UNFPA continued to support and develop data and statistical capacities, national population data systems and the ability to collect, analyse and use disaggregated data for programming and to track progress. The 2016 midterm review of the strategic plan, 2014-2017, would provide an opportunity for UNFPA to refine its strategic direction and better align it with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development,

which was also under review in 2016, and the 2030 Agenda. Similarly, the Fund was committed to ever more effective oversight and accountability.

39. Board members thanked the Executive Director for his effective leadership and expressed their continued strong support for the work of UNFPA in both crisis and non-crisis countries in promoting and delivering sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights services, focused on women, youth and vulnerable populations. They were pleased with the Fund's focus on family planning, the demographic dividend, humanitarian response and resilience building, and data for development, in line with the principles of the ICPD agenda, the 2030 Agenda and Family Planning 2020. They stressed that, given its mandate, UNFPA was ideally placed to spearhead Sustainable Development Goals 3 and 5, which they viewed as cross-cutting in nature for the achievement of the entire 2030 Agenda and the overarching goal to "leave no one behind".

40. Delegations strongly commended and endorsed the Fund's work in humanitarian settings, which they saw as crucial to peace, recovery and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. They were most supportive of the Fund's work with the internally displaced and refugees in the Syrian Arab Republic, Iraq and Jordan, and its response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, especially for women and youth in remote areas, who needed assistance and capacity development for socioeconomic recovery. In that regard, they were particularly concerned by the fragile situation of and violence against women and girls in emergency settings, as documented in the *2015 State of the World Population* report. They urged the international community to address those issues directly at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016. Noting the centrality of sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2015-2030, they underlined the Fund's leading role not only in delivering assistance but also in ensuring that women and girls were able to be actors in building peace and security, and in laying the foundations for long-term development. That included the Fund's already successful work running its supplies programme, which made it a major player in providing access to contraceptive and reproductive health medicines, services and supplies, particularly in humanitarian settings. Welcoming the Fund's proposed reforms to the supplies programme, they expressed concern, however, that scarce resources had led to an actual reduction in the level of supplies, potentially imperilling the impact of the programme.

41. Delegations stressed that the 2016 midterm review of the strategic plan was a good opportunity for UNFPA to adjust the course of its programme in coordination with the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, in line with its comparative advantages. Two delegations expressed their interest in taking advantage of the joint meeting of the Executive Boards in June 2016 as a platform to discuss system-wide issues and preparations for the 2016 review of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development in order to better define the Fund's role in implementing the 2030 Agenda within the common United Nations vision. Others noted that UNFPA support to the least developed countries under the Istanbul Programme of Action should also remain a priority. They also saw the outcomes of the dialogues of the Economic and Social Council as key inputs for discussion across the entire United Nations development system on the balance between implementing the 2030 Agenda and tackling the

world's multiple humanitarian crises. It was suggested that the Fund play a greater role in global health governance, in particular in response to public health emergencies such as the outbreaks of the Ebola virus in West Africa and the Zika virus in Latin America, where maternal and newborn deaths were especially high. Those topics, they noted, should be discussed at the World Humanitarian Summit 2016 and the Syria Donors Conference 2016, in the preparations for which the Fund should actively participate.

42. Board members welcomed the Fund's priority focus on evidence-based planning, transparency and accountability, as well as its drive to build corporate, regional and national capacities for reliable, high-quality data gathering and analysis. They counted on UNFPA to help to improve the quality of data and the development of indicators on population dynamics as well as access to sexual and reproductive health services. They welcomed the joint UNFPA evaluation, with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which recommended that greater attention be given to implementing the guidelines of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the mainstreaming of gender-based violence into the humanitarian response in the Syrian Arab Republic. On a related note, while appreciating the need to address the capacity needs of national institutions through capacity development, the Fund was asked to ensure that its proposals for improvement were sustainable and backed by strong policies and adequate resources. Member States stressed that the success of UNFPA interventions across the globe had to be grounded in multi-stakeholder partnerships and tight coordination with other organizations of the United Nations development system.

43. Given that important mandate, and the continued slow economic growth in certain regions, delegations were concerned about the ongoing trend of declining core resources, which, they noted, could jeopardize the quality of UNFPA activities and distort priorities. They also asked about the financial health of the Central Emergency Response Fund and the humanitarian response reserve, as well as UNFPA efforts to continually fund them, in light of the number of simultaneous crises UNFPA had to attend to. They welcomed UNFPA efforts to undertake donor harmonization and inter-agency coordination in that area. Similarly, there was concern over staff cuts and moves at the regional level arising from the difficult financial situation. A group of delegations strongly underscored the key role of UNFPA regional offices in delivering technical expertise, access to regional and global networks and sharing of good practices. Across the Board, delegations encouraged those in a position to do so to step up their contributions, while recommending that the Fund continue to make every effort to explore new, broader funding sources and partnerships and non-traditional arrangements, including with the private sector and through domestic financing.

44. In response, the Executive Director reiterated the Fund's commitment to engaging with all partners in implementing the 2030 Agenda and the ICPD agenda, while underlining that UNFPA would have to do more with fewer resources and improve coordination with the United Nations development system. The Fund would work with the Board to address all issues raised in the midterm review of the strategic plan, 2014-2017.

45. On the humanitarian front, he assured delegations that UNFPA would deliver its services transparently and work to ensure that gender and the protection of

women and girls figured prominently at the World Humanitarian Summit 2016. He noted that UNFPA had used the Emergency Response Fund for humanitarian crises, including those in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, while stressing the need for continued adequate funding to meet demand. On the Ebola response, he stated that more needed to be done to address global health diagnostics and to build strong health systems nationally and locally. On the Zika virus, UNFPA had taken steps, through its country offices, to ensure clarity of information and to provide prenatal health-care services to women and girls.

46. He affirmed that the Fund actively sought out non-traditional avenues to mobilize resources and that it had already reached agreements with countries to fund programmes to relieve pressure on core resources. He assured delegations that, despite its heightened focus on humanitarian crises and financial difficulties, UNFPA work in middle-income countries remained a top priority. The Fund would continue to engage in consultations with those countries and to do its best to maintain post levels at regional and subregional offices. In that regard, he highlighted the potential of regional-level resource mobilization. He also welcomed the initiative of Brazil, the Russian Federation, India, China and South Africa (the so-called BRICS) to use South-South technology and knowledge transfer to help countries capitalize on the demographic dividend.

Country programmes and related matters

47. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme) introduced the item. The UNFPA regional directors for the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, East and Southern Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean presented and elaborated on the country programmes for Ethiopia, Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uruguay, as well as the two-year extension of the country programme for the Philippines, the second one-year extension of the country programmes for Algeria and Yemen and the first one-year extension of the country programme for Ghana.

48. In their comments, delegations expressed concern over the lack of clarity about the country programme preparation and approval process. In that regard, they stressed the critical importance of programme country ownership of the strategic planning, drafting and implementation of country programmes, in line with the principle of national ownership, and with the participation of all stakeholders at the national level.

49. The Executive Board reviewed and approved, in accordance with its decision 2014/7, the country programmes documents for Ethiopia ([DP/FPA/CPD/ETH/8](#)), Iraq ([DP/FPA/CPD/IRQ/2](#)), the Syrian Arab Republic ([DP/FPA/CPD/SYR/8](#) and Corr.1), the United Republic of Tanzania ([DP/FPA/CPD/TZA/8](#)), and Uruguay ([DP/FPA/CPD/URY/3](#)).

50. The Executive Board approved the two-year extension of the country programme for the Philippines, and the second one-year extension of the country programmes for Algeria and Yemen ([DP/FPA/2016/2](#)) and took note of the first one-year extension of the country programme for Ghana ([DP/FPA/2016/2](#)).

UNOPS segment

V. Statement by the Executive Director

51. In her opening address to the Board (available on the UNOPS website), the Executive Director thanked the outgoing President and Vice-Presidents for their commitment and support throughout 2015 and congratulated the newly elected President and Vice-Presidents for 2016. She drew attention to the alarming rise in humanitarian crises, the rapidly growing world population and global warming and climate change. She highlighted the work of UNOPS in addressing those challenges, working with public and private sector partners, in order to provide rapid response products, infrastructure, procurement and project management services in humanitarian and peace operations in, for example, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen — experiences it looked forward to sharing at the World Humanitarian Summit 2016.

52. In order to continue to meet those challenges, she stated that UNOPS had adjusted and improved its structure and function, and stepped up its coordination with other United Nations organizations, in particular the International Labour Organization and the World Health Organization, and was strengthening its communications and outreach function. In 2016, UNOPS would combine its annual report with a “sustainability report”, based on the Global Reporting Initiative standards, focused not only on financial but also operational risk, and building on private sector experience. It would also join the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data in 2016, working with partners to create, open and use data to help end poverty, fight inequality and injustice and combat climate change.

53. The Executive Director highlighted that 2015 was a positive year for UNOPS, marked by stronger quality operations and effective structural changes, including the creation of a single new platform named “OneUNOPS” for its administrative and financial support systems, which had gone live on 1 January 2016. It had also set up an investment committee to advise on the management of the more than \$1 billion it oversaw annually. She stressed that UNOPS continued to strive for innovation and to mobilize private sector investment for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. UNOPS would submit the midterm review of its strategic plan, 2014-2017, in September 2016, which would allow for further course adjustment for the 2030 Agenda.

54. Board members commended UNOPS for its modern, innovative approaches to sustainable procurement and project implementation and management, which were grounded in the principles of sustainable development laid out in the 2030 Agenda. Recognizing its clear focus on sustainability in all areas of its work, delegations were especially pleased with UNOPS responsible procurement work and encouraged other United Nations organizations to use UNOPS for their procurement needs, especially given the environment of scarcer resources. They encouraged UNOPS to continue to pursue its sustainable procurement model in ongoing partnership with United Nations organizations, the World Bank and the private sector, an area where it had a particular comparative advantage, especially in mobilizing support for the Sustainable Development Goals. Furthermore, they appreciated UNOPS unique business model within the United Nations system, whose success, they noted, was

evident in its expanding budget and activities, with a diverse range of public and private sector actors, and often working in the toughest environments. They underlined UNOPS critical role on the road towards achieving the 2030 Agenda and encouraged UNOPS to pursue its efforts for ever-greater transparency and effectiveness, notably through solid risk management and continued engagement with the private sector.

55. In response, the Executive Director welcomed the continued strong support of the Board members for finding innovative ways to promote sustainable development, including sustainable procurement, a cornerstone of UNOPS operations. She noted that 2016 would be a transformative year for UNOPS as it worked to introduce a new information and communications platform and a new e-commerce platform to facilitate easier access to partners and promote innovative, cost-efficient quality solutions. UNOPS also collaborated with partners to disseminate information about the United Nations web-buyers website in order to expand its usage, promote innovation and maximize the use of available funding to help those most in need. Working with the private sector also meant that UNOPS was striving to strengthen its risk management systems, which included the recent establishment of a risk and quality control unit, aimed at better managing risk with its partners.

Joint segment

VI. Recommendations of the Board of Auditors

56. The Director of the Bureau for Management Services, UNDP, introduced the report of UNDP and the United Nations Capital Development Fund on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors for 2014 ([DP/2016/6](#)). The Deputy Executive Director (Management), UNFPA, introduced the report of the Executive Director on follow-up to the report of the United Nations Board of Auditors for 2014: status of implementation of the recommendations ([DP/FPA/2016/1](#) and annexes). The Deputy Executive Director, UNOPS, introduced its report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors for 2014 ([DP/OPS/2016/1](#)).

57. Board members expressed appreciation with the unqualified audit opinions for UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS and welcomed the progress made overall by all three organizations in the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors. There was a call for the organizations, as part of their audit priorities, to continue to focus on crosscutting and emerging issues, including those related to the challenges of implementing International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS), and to share lessons learned among United Nations system organizations. Delegations in turn commented on areas of progress and improvement for each agency individually. There was also a request for additional information on: (a) the structural changes each organization had undertaken and how they would impact human resources; (b) the benefits realization plan of the structural changes, so that Board members could determine their qualitative contributions; and (c) UNOPS

specifically, including further details on when the organization planned to finalize its benefits realization study on its enterprise resource planning implementation.

UNDP

58. Board members, commending UNDP for the progress it had made in implementing the recommendations of the Board of Auditors, welcomed the annual opportunity to exercise oversight and take stock of where management had made improvements. They noted in particular the decrease of almost 50 per cent in the number of top audit-related priorities since 2007 and the near elimination of long-outstanding audit recommendations. While welcoming the insights on how to address management challenges on progress against the eight audit-related priorities for the 2014-2015 biennium, they expected more specific information on progress towards implementing the recommendations of the Board of Auditors. They requested more detailed information in future reports on how UNDP had responded to recommendations, and suggested exploring UNFPA and UNOPS reports for an idea on the level of detail expected.

59. Delegations were pleased that UNDP had made procurement a top priority and welcomed the preventive steps it had taken to mitigate fraud, corruption and the misuse of funds. They were especially interested in the organization's new procurement strategy, were optimistic that it would address capacity and compliance issues and looked forward to its future impact. They urged UNDP, as well as other United Nations organizations, to take advantage of UNOPS procurement expertise. Board members stressed that UNDP had to do more to address risks associated with its reliance on external partners. Echoing the recommendation of the Board of Auditors, they saw the need for greater monitoring of implementing partners, especially national implementation modality partners. While pleased with the roll out of the 2015 revised harmonized approach to the cash transfers framework, they encouraged UNDP to continue to prioritize and monitor its implementation closely and to report to the Board in 2016. In that regard, they urged UNDP to invest in high-quality capacity-building for the ongoing roll out of the framework, especially in high-risk countries.

60. On the issue of fraud, Board members welcomed the transparent way UNDP had addressed the matter in the financial report, but speculated whether the decrease of reported cases was due to management intervention or merely a drop in reporting. Referencing previous Board decisions, they stressed that the organization had to make every effort, backed by robust policies known to all staff members, to protect whistle-blowers against retaliation. In response to the comments of the auditors about the continued weakness in project management, oversight and progress reporting, delegations encouraged UNDP to give high priority to quality assurance of programming and results-based management at the country level. UNDP should also ensure that country offices prepare timely reports for all projects and meet project monitoring requirements, including updating risk logs. Noting that after-service health liabilities grew after 2014, due to external factors, and aware that UNDP had a 15-year strategy to fund the gap between the historical liability and the amount funded, delegations sought further details on the success of the strategy to date.

UNFPA

61. Board members welcomed the progress made by UNFPA since 2015 in implementing most of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors. Recognizing that complex working environments exposed UNFPA to considerable risks, they were pleased with the progress made in developing and implementing its enterprise risk management framework, and looked forward to hearing about its impact in future reports. They stressed, however, the need to ensure that all business units involved in strategic risk assessments had the required training and skills to make it effective and sustainable. They appreciated the significant progress UNFPA had made since 2009 in strengthening country and field office capacity, and were pleased with its efforts to improve oversight through a comprehensive review of decentralized offices and revisions to its organizational handbook. Nevertheless, they urged further monitoring and assessment of regional and country office capacities, and sought additional information on the overall impact of the regionalization exercise.

62. Delegations stressed the need for UNFPA to have strong procurement arrangements and inventory management, noting that a better shipment tracker would help the Fund to monitor delivery and distribution and enable more effective supply management. They encouraged UNFPA to monitor the new system and its impact on programme delivery closely. They also underlined the importance of regular tracking metrics at all levels of the supply chain in order to ensure that supplies reached intended beneficiaries in a timely manner. On the risks associated with using implementing partners, delegations commended UNFPA for launching the global programming system, and looked forward to its phase-two functionality and welcomed its requirement that implementing partners provide regular, timely workplan progress reports before they could receive payments. While welcoming the status update on the new micro-assessment of the harmonized approach to cash transfers framework, as well as the revised policy for selecting and assessing implementing partners, they encouraged the Fund to use those tools to continue to strengthen its oversight and management of implementing partners.

63. Board members were also pleased with the improved management and oversight of consultants through the review of all existing service contracts to examine terms of reference and ensure compliance with the service contract policy. They welcomed the revised individual consultant policy and the new online tool to assess performance prior to contract renewal. They encouraged UNFPA to continuously review those policies and tools to ensure their effectiveness.

64. While welcoming the Fund's level of transparency and detail, delegations sought greater openness regarding audit procedures at future sessions of the Board, and requested that financial reports and audited financial statements be included as an annex to the management response. They welcomed the reduced levels of liquidity in the financial statements, and sought greater clarification, notably on how UNFPA was managing risk and the return on investments. Noting that after-service health insurance liabilities had grown in 2014, owing to a change in actuarial assumptions; in this regard, delegations sought further details on the success of the implementation of the enterprise risk management framework to date. They also requested clarity on the process and risks associated with transferring

funds to manage the employee benefits liability to external fund managers, and the related mitigation measures UNFPA had taken. Finally, they sought clarity on if, and how, the Fund's challenging financial situation might impact its ability to implement the recommendations of the Board of Auditors.

UNOPS

65. Board members welcomed the report and recognized the vulnerabilities to which UNOPS was exposed in challenging field contexts. They were pleased by the efforts UNOPS had made to meet and mitigate those risks, notably through the new risk management system rolled out in 2013, which they noted would help to establish an effective risk management framework. They looked forward to the impact of that new programme in future reports. They also commended UNOPS for developing a new planning system for enterprise resource planning, and were pleased to see a status update in the report before the Board at the first regular session. They sought further information on UNOPS efforts to improve country-level capacity to apply the risk management system for UNOPS projects, including through the evaluation of the capacity and oversight of a project's health over its lifetime. They requested more details on how the Board could support those efforts through enterprise development programmes or through enterprise resource management planning. They looked forward to more detailed information on those recommendations of the Board of Auditors on which UNOPS had not yet reported and sought clarity on how the organization was following up on them.

66. In response, the Director of the Bureau for Management Services, UNDP, highlighted that: (a) UNDP would continue the systematic approach to documenting its progress in addressing audit recommendations, including providing further details; and (b) the High-level Committee on Management also had an initiative to more systemically address and reduce after-service health insurance liabilities, including better use of national health authorities and insurance schemes. He stated that the United Nations organizations would be ready to report on that initiative at a future session of the Board. On the issue of the benefits realization for the structural changes, he stated that UNDP had made good progress, with some benefits to come in the future, and would provide relevant information, as requested, to the Board.

67. The Deputy Director and Chief Financial Officer of the Bureau for Management Services, addressing more technical issues, indicated that the UNDP report included a detailed annex that provided the status of each audit observation. He noted that management was ready to discuss with Board members other options for presenting the information provided in a different format. UNDP, he noted, had undertaken a review of its work with national partners, focused on the different processes followed, an exercise that went beyond the harmonized approach to cash transfers modality to include other related issues. He indicated that management had had an internal discussion on a concept paper and that it had an action plan it was ready to implement within two weeks, which included not only a risk-based assessment model but also options for targeted capacity-building at country level. Programme countries will incorporate both the assessment model and the options for targeted capacity-building into their country programmes. Examples included the UNDP global database on country office progress in implementing the harmonized approach to cash transfers modality. The Deputy Director also drew attention to the fact that the country offices had achieved an 80 per cent macro-

assessment completion rate and a 68 per cent micro-assessment completion rate. In addition, they had prepared some 58 insurance plans. He stressed, however, that despite such progress more was needed. He noted that transparency over the implementation of the harmonized approach to cash transfers modality was significantly higher than in 2014, a pace UNDP would strive to maintain while it continued to work with its implementing partners. He underscored that UNDP took fraud very seriously, both within the organization and with its partners, and had, as a result, issued a new fraud policy that encouraged every national partner to have an anti-fraud policy. He stated that it was the Office of Audit and Investigations, an independent body, that produced the presumptive fraud numbers, thereby guaranteeing that management could not influence them in any way.

68. He stressed that project and programme monitoring continued to be a major area of work for UNDP, which had devised a three-phased approach, from programme inception to project implementation and closure. Similarly, after-service health insurance continued to be an important area for UNDP, which to date had funded 49 per cent of the liability, a fluctuating figure that UNDP monitored closely and adjusted regularly. It was an exercise that took time because UNDP was catching up on an underfunded liability that had accumulated over a number years. UNDP, he highlighted, as a partially funded organization, issued allocations before it received its total funding, which was why it had taken the 15-year approach. On the slow pace of implementation, he drew attention to the UNDP accelerated delivery programme that monitored the top 10 lagging countries to help them step up delivery; and on project closures, a major issue, he highlighted the launching of a new tool and guidelines for old projects that had helped to bring about significant progress in 2015. He drew attention to the independent study being undertaken for both UNDP and the United Nations Capital Development Fund on the operational reserve, taking into account all comments made by the Board of Auditors; the report was to be ready shortly, with implementation to begin in 2016. On the standard operating procedures for anti-fraud policy, given its broad scope, he noted that UNDP updated the policy regularly to reflect changes in the individual prescriptive content for each given area.

69. The Director of the Division of Management Services, UNFPA, indicated that in June 2015 the Fund had launched its own enterprise risk management mechanism, the risk assessment module, an internally driven and successful exercise that had a high compliance rate. The risk response model, to be launched in 2016, was designed in part to raise awareness throughout the organization of the types of risk possible. Since June 2016 would mark the end of the first cycle of the risk assessment module, UNFPA would seize the opportunity to take stock of lessons learned, which it would incorporate in future. Its goal was to ensure that enterprise risk planning was part of standard practice for the Fund. He highlighted that the enterprise risk management mechanism also included fraud risk assessment, which established zero tolerance for fraud risk throughout UNFPA; the risk response model would boost the zero tolerance policy once it became fully operational in 2016. Because UNFPA was increasingly working in high-risk environments, such as humanitarian crises, the Fund would closely monitor and regularly update its risk management tools to counter emerging risks. While training was a major component of enterprise risk management, the Fund had resorted exclusively to online training

owing to financial difficulties, although he stressed that gaining expertise with the module hinged largely on learning-by-doing. He noted that UNFPA was working with UNDP and UNICEF on a revised policy to merge the harmonized approach to cash transfers modality with its implementing partner capacity-assessment tool, including user guidelines. On the issues of liquidity, risk and return, noting market volatility in 2014, he stressed that, with the aim of maintaining liquidity and locking into a set rate, the Fund sought to ensure that it had access to its funds and, as a result, had chosen long-term investments. Current financial statements, he noted, reflected a lower ratio of return on short-term investments, which matured in one year. However, he assured the Board that overall investments remained at their 2013 levels, while longer-term investments had almost doubled from their 2013 levels. UNFPA managed its investment with the UNDP treasury through a common policy driven by the need for liquidity, not risk.

70. On the subject of after-service health insurance, he highlighted that UNFPA was ranked third among United Nations organizations in funding liabilities, as it had sought to ensure that past liabilities were funded on a yearly basis, and that ongoing liabilities for existing and new employees were funded on a monthly basis, factoring after-service health insurance costs into payroll contributions, thereby ensuring the liability did not grow further. UNFPA, in turn, funded the liability that was quantified (at that point in time) either through end-of-year surplus funds or through income on investments. UNFPA collaborated with UNDP and UNICEF to ensure that their investment in after-service health insurance liability funds matched longer-term liabilities. The organizations were set to hand over after-service health insurance liability funds to professional fund managers in the first half of 2016, the aim being to improve the return by investing those funds in markets that matched the long-term liability nature of after-service health insurance. In closing, he was pleased to announce that UNFPA had issued new guidelines on decentralized offices, as recommended by the Board of Auditors; that the global programming system had addressed the issue of performance indicators; and that UNFPA had successfully addressed issues related to service contract holders. While recognizing the potential negative effect of funding difficulties, he assured the Board that UNFPA gave top priority to addressing the recommendations of the Board of Auditors.

71. The Deputy Executive Director of UNOPS addressed three issues that had been raised. The first was the question of the financial situation in the field and how UNOPS managed internal controls given the size of its operations and associated risks — he stated that UNOPS controlled not only the overall costs but also the total costs of ownership, which included all costs that the organization either incurred or charged to clients. There were three such costs: overhead fees; indirect costs; and direct costs. Direct costs were further broken down into costs related to headquarters, regions and country offices. UNOPS sought to ensure that over time those costs were kept in check. In 2015, those costs went down by 0.2 per cent overall, although the organization aimed to maintain a level of 9 per cent for charges, all costs included, which was in addition to fees usually disclosed. The second question was on the enterprise resource planning system. Since 1 January 2016, UNOPS has undertaken a comprehensive review of system vulnerability and fraud risk assessment to ensure that issues such as double payment were countered. The UNOPS internal audit unit was leading that initiative, with implementation

outsourced to an experienced private sector firm. With regard to the third question, on after-service health insurance and end-of-service liabilities, UNOPS was well positioned as only one of two United Nations organizations to be fully funded for after-service health insurance. Although aware that problems could arise in the future if UNOPS kept expanding, at the moment management was not concerned about after-service health insurance. Finally, on the realization of the benefits of the implementation of the enterprise resource planning system, he noted that UNOPS was already in the middle of post-implementation, with actual results and outcomes to report, which it would provide to Board members, as requested. He stressed that UNOPS was ahead of schedule and was already experiencing the benefits of its implementation.

72. The Director of External Audit of the Board of Auditors was encouraged to hear that delegations were in agreement with the recommendations of the Board, especially regarding programme and project management, which was a particular challenge for auditors. He also welcomed management's response and commitment to addressing those recommendations.

73. The Executive Board adopted decision 2016/2: reports of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on the status of implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors for 2014.

VII. Other matters

UNFPA special event: partnerships for addressing maternal and child health and realizing the demographic dividend: African-based organizations in the lead

74. Board members welcomed the Fund's initiative to create a platform for faith-based dialogue. They recognized the key role that faith-based organizations play in promoting and addressing sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, especially among youth, at the global, regional and country levels. They sought to learn how faith-based organizations could mobilize young people behind the Dakar Declaration of Faith-based Leaders in Harnessing the Demographic Dividend in West Africa and were keen to know how such organizations could help to eradicate the widely held perception that religion was incompatible with sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights.

75. Delegations drew attention to the important leadership role of faith-based organizations in changing behaviours, and in driving a rights-based approach to sexual and reproductive health, and sought information on the role the organizations played in promoting dialogue to determine good practices and ongoing challenges. The important role of secularism as a platform for dialogue was underlined. They stressed that any approach to faith-based education on sexual and reproductive health, however, should adapt to the national context, engaging closely with national religious leaders. They emphasized that countries should use the Dakar Declaration to counter the radicalization of youth at the grass-roots level.

76. Delegations welcomed the proposed national partnership plans that would bring together faith-based organizations with the aim of integrating sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights in Africa, but pointed to the need for

safety education and awareness-raising, in which women and girls played a key role. They encouraged UNFPA, along with UN-Women, to continue to work with faith-based organizations to leverage their leadership towards a gender-responsive approach. There was the suggestion to convene such discussions with the Board on a regular basis.

Part two
Annual session 2016

**Held at United Nations Headquarters in New York
from 6 to 10 June 2016**

I. Organizational matters

1. The annual session 2016 of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS was held at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 6 to 10 June 2016.
2. The Executive Board approved the agenda and workplan for its annual session 2016 (DP/2016/L.2), and approved the report of the first regular session 2016 (DP/2016/7).
3. Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at the annual session 2016 appeared in document DP/2016/19, which was available on the [Executive Board website](#).
4. The Executive Board agreed in decision 2016/15 to the following schedule for future sessions of the Executive Board in 2016:

Second regular session 2016: 6 to 9 September 2016

UNDP segment

II. Statement by the Administrator and annual report of the Administrator

5. In her opening remarks to the Executive Board (available on the [Executive Board website](#)), the Administrator highlighted important developments for UNDP in early 2016, notably its participation in the World Humanitarian Summit and the signing of the Commitment to Action for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to “leave no one behind”. She noted that in April 2016 UNDP was for the second year recognized as the world’s most transparent aid organization. As part of her statement, she presented the integrated annual report for 2015 and the midterm review of the UNDP strategic plan, 2014-2017 (DP/2016/9 and annexes).
6. The Administrator informed the Board that the midterm review of the strategic plan, 2014-2017, had found that, two years into its implementation, UNDP had made solid progress in results delivery. Furthermore, the organization was now more robust, open and transparent, better organized following restructuring, operating at lower cost, with more staff and services in regions, higher standards for programmes and projects and better monitoring and evaluation. The review found that the strategic plan was aligned with the 2030 Agenda. More attention would be needed, however, to better understand the link between resources and results and in order to build on existing achievements to promote more transformative roles for women. The midterm review of the institutional component of the integrated budget, 2014-2017, showed significant progress towards achieving objectives, despite reduced contributions to regular (core) resources. Although the drop in core resources had affected programmatic and institutional components, UNDP had protected core allocations for programme countries, United Nations coordination activities, the Human Development Report Office and the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation. The Administrator highlighted that increasing core resources was a top UNDP priority.

7. The Administrator touched on UNDP crisis and disaster support work in the Central African Republic, Ecuador, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen, and its response to mitigate the effects of the El Niño weather pattern. Reaffirming the commitment of UNDP to hosting the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, she confirmed that steps were being taken to implement all recommendations from the recent audit. Similarly, the revised evaluation policy, to be submitted at the second regular session 2016, would bolster the quality and utility of evaluations and introduce a funding target for the evaluation function. In addition, with regard to UNDP leadership over coordination efforts, she looked forward to Member States upholding the organization's stewardship of the resident coordinator system in the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review and securing funding so that the system could carry out its mandate.

8. Board members affirmed that UNDP had a central role to play in ensuring development impact, notably regarding the 2030 Agenda. Delegations were pleased with the alignment of the strategic plan with the 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals and the quadrennial review. They showed strong support for the UNDG MAPS approach to driving the 2030 Agenda and UNDP leadership in that area.

9. Board members were pleased with the midterm review progress report, commending efforts towards establishing a robust reporting system and effective results-based management. They welcomed the review's evidence showing that UNDP was on track in achieving most outcome targets. They acknowledged the structural improvements that led to progress, and the organization's consistent ranking as the world's most transparent aid organization. They noted that those successes were especially welcome, given the economic uncertainty, environmental threats and protracted crises.

10. While commending UNDP for its strong gender performance, Member States drew attention to shortcomings in women's empowerment, social protection, gender mainstreaming and gender marker targets. They expected UNDP to show greater corporate flexibility and transparency by taking concrete steps to improve human resources, programme analysis and delivery, monitoring and evaluation, risk management, and more robust controls and assurance processes. They encouraged UNDP to seek out common procurement, human resources and financial management arrangements with United Nations organizations. While commending UNDP for its strong oversight function, they called for a review of monitoring and evaluation functions and tools related to the integrated results and resources framework for greater credibility and accountability.

11. Delegations, welcoming the organization's work in the areas of crisis and early recovery, made the point that poverty eradication had to remain the cornerstone of its mandate, including helping countries to mitigate the impact of climate change. Respecting national ownership and nationally defined priorities was key, along with UNDP fostering of South-South cooperation, including with the private sector, through its South-South cooperation strategic plan and by its hosting of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation. Delegations drew attention to the special needs of small countries and small-island developing States, many of which

had graduated to middle income status, for whom the success of the 2030 Agenda was linked to recent agreements on climate change (Paris Agreement on Climate Change), disaster risk reduction (Sendai Declaration of the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction) and the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (Samoa) Pathway. They stressed the importance of promoting regional programmes grounded in strong partnerships, which they hoped would not be jeopardized by funding gaps.

12. Across the board, delegations expressed continued concern with the core/non-core resources imbalance. They stressed the importance of predictable, flexible, high-quality funding to achieve the ambitious strategic plan, and encouraged UNDP to continue to diversify its funding base and adjust its business model to sustain finances. They called on UNDP to improve cost recovery, urging partners to fulfil official development assistance commitments. They welcomed the new funding windows but stressed they would not rectify the core/non-core imbalance. The concern over reduced core funding to middle-income countries was raised, along with the call for UNDP to recognize the entrenched inequalities and disparities in middle-income countries, which required an ongoing UNDP presence.

13. Board members strongly supported UNDP stewardship of the resident coordinator system, a key tool for driving results. They underlined the importance of the UNDP leadership role in building coherence and coordination in the humanitarian-development nexus in partnership with United Nations organizations.

14. In response, the Administrator assured Board members that poverty eradication remained at the heart of the work of UNDP. In supporting programme countries in implementing the 2030 Agenda, UNDP was committed to assisting the least developed countries and the small island developing States, especially in integrating the humanitarian-development nexus and tackling climate change, while addressing the special needs of middle-income countries. UNDP was working through the MAPS approach, grounded in national demand and ownership. While pleased with the results of the midterm review, she expressed concern about the continued drop in core resources and its potential impact on delivery, despite efforts to adjust the organization's business model. She reiterated the resolve of UNDP to implement all audit recommendations for the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and UNDP, and its commitment to accelerate progress on gender and women's empowerment, making women agents of change. She highlighted the notable upward trend in gender parity within the organization.

15. The Executive Board adopted decision 2016/4: Midterm review of the UNDP strategic plan, 2014-2017, and annual report of the Administrator.

III. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

16. The Associate Administrator, UNDP, presented the midterm review of the UNDP integrated budget, 2014-2017 ([DP/2016/10](#)).

17. Board members welcomed the results of the midterm review of the integrated budget and commended UNDP, amidst the challenging financial situation, for shielding certain budget items on development effectiveness and support to United Nations coordination which the Board sought to protect. They welcomed the

reduced amount of core resources allocated to the budget's institutional components, thanks mainly to structural changes. However, they noted that protecting certain budget lines had forced UNDP to scale down activities in areas such as gender mainstreaming. Delegations sought management's views on the impact of reduced funding on development effectiveness, and requested alternative options to finance or reorganize services that UNDP had to scale down.

18. Delegations stressed that core resources should not subsidize the cost of programmes funded by non-core resources. They were encouraged that UNDP had exceeded its compliance level with its new general management support cost-recovery policy. They were concerned, however, that UNDP had to overspend more cost-recovery income on development effectiveness activities than originally planned. They looked forward to continuing discussions at the second regular session 2016, encouraging UNDP to fully implement its cost-recovery policy. On results-based budgeting, delegations would have liked to see more ample information and deeper narrative analysis, and noted the funding shortfall after two years, despite Board agreement in 2013 on funding the seven development outcomes. They encouraged UNDP to analyse its experience with implementing that approach.

19. Turning to the four-year updated resource plan, delegations wished to know how the budget reduction for programmes might affect outcomes, and how UNDP would make allocation adjustments to offset that reduction. They sought a coherent rationale linking resource allocation to programme performance, which involved improving the integrated results and resources framework. Noting that the available aggregated budget information for 2016-2017 had been merged with figures for 2014-2015, Board members would have preferred a juxtaposition of the two planning periods for better clarity. One delegation underlined the importance of complying with the three pillars of the integrated budget, taking into account resources for country offices and United Nations coordination. Additional details were sought on the adjustment to the cost-recovery policy. Delegations reiterated their request for a breakdown of information, especially for resource allocations to the Office of Audit and Oversight, the Ethics Office and the Evaluation Office. Delegations expected UNDP allocations for support to the resident coordinator system to be guided by the 2016 quadrennial review and relevant UNDG cost-sharing experiences.

20. In response, the Deputy Chief Financial Officer, UNDP, reiterated that despite the difficult financial situation UNDP had exceeded targets set in the integrated budget, thanks largely to structural changes. UNDP was taking concrete steps to redress its financial situation, reducing management costs and improving efficiency and effectiveness. With regard to the cost-recovery policy, the organization had made good progress, although he underlined the request to extend transition measures so that UNDP could take further steps before the current programme cycle ended. On transparency, UNDP was ready to respond to Board requests for information with breakdowns. On the integrated results and resource framework targets and resource allocation, UNDP had done well but remained constrained by earmarking and reductions in core funding. The four funding windows offered an opportunity for greater flexibility.

21. The Director, Bureau of Management, UNDP, highlighted that while UNDP was adjusting its business model to the drop in core resources, the funding reduction hindered it from acting with strategic intent and limited its ability to address areas of the strategic plan, owing to earmarked funding. As a result, UNDP was mapping the demand for its services for the subsequent two years.

22. The Associate Administrator, UNDP, noted on the issues of results-based management and fragmented information that UNDP was ready to provide detailed information to Board members, including on ethics and audit matters.

23. The Board adopted decision 2016/5: Midterm review of the UNDP integrated budget, 2014-2017.

IV. Gender in UNDP

24. The Director, Bureau for Programme and Policy Support, UNDP, presented the annual report of the Administrator on the implementation of the UNDP gender equality strategy in 2015 (DP/2016/11).

25. Board members were pleased with the progress made by UNDP and its resolve to advance gender equality corporately and programmatically. They recognized successes in women's economic empowerment, political participation and gender-based violence, and the higher number of country offices reporting gender equality results. They were pleased with the tools and institutional arrangements that bolstered UNDP gender equality efforts. They welcomed collaboration with UN-Women, and sought details of UNDP plans to strengthen that partnership, in light of the Flagship initiative. They encouraged UNDP to expand collaboration with United Nations organizations based on comparative advantages, and called for a UNDP progress report on implementation of the System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. They welcomed progress on gender balance in the workforce, while stressing the need to support women in leadership roles.

26. Delegations welcomed the shift towards transformative actions where women and girls were agents of change, which required deeper quantitative analysis and staff capacities. They were concerned that funding constraints were disproportionately impacting the UNDP gender architecture. They asked if UNDP was on track to meet its gender equality expenditures target, given the 2015 increase, and sought details on actions UNDP was taking to accelerate performance. They welcomed the shift to fund longer-term initiatives for gender results, while highlighting that the report did not mention the importance of involving men and boys in gender equality activities. They were pleased with UNDP actions on the recommendations of the Independent Evaluation Office and its contribution to gender equality, and looked forward to progress in 2016. They agreed with the need to integrate the gender equality strategy and the strategic plan in 2018, but felt the gender strategy should include concrete plans and targets for operationalization. Delegations echoed similar points, highlighting that women and children had to be agents of change, not just beneficiaries, and welcomed UNDP as the leader of the gender action plan and its engagement in sector-wide approaches (including the System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women).

27. In response, the Director of the Bureau for Programme and Policy Support, UNDP, underscored that the UNDP capacity-building approach focused on building partners' capacity at the national level. He noted that Sustainable Development Goal 5, and the 2030 Agenda as a whole, stood at the centre of the organization's work, with the understanding that women were development leaders. UNDP was proud to lead joint efforts on implementation of the System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women to ensure progress on gender equality. On the programme budget, UNDP aimed to spend at least 15 per cent of its budget on gender-related issues in programmes, especially those related to post-crisis situations; the gender team was involved in UNDP programmes where gender equality was an important or main objective. On quality programming tools, social and environmental safeguards included quality criteria to mainstream gender equality throughout country programmes. UNDP was committed to better results, taking concrete steps to build its institutional capacity in this area. UNDP sought to complement country office capacity so that they would have a strong gender-balance component. Particular areas that required improvement included disaster risk reduction, post-crisis, recovery and environment. UNDP was keen to work with men and boys on gender equality, which was already under way in more innovative country offices. He stressed the importance of partnerships, especially with UN-Women, UNFPA and UNICEF, and highlighted that UNDP actively promoted women from underrepresented countries to senior management posts.

28. The Executive Board was presented with the annual report of the Administrator on the implementation of the UNDP gender equality strategy, 2014-2017 ([DP/2016/11](#)).

V. Human Development Report

29. The Director of the Human Development Report Office gave an oral report on consultations for the development of the *Human Development Report 2016*, in accordance with General Assembly resolution [57/264](#).

30. Board members commended the office for the consultation process, and underlined the importance of the *Human Development Report*. One delegation stressed the importance of data presented as evidence-based and objective, and that consultations with Member States could be deepened. Another delegation requested details on the status of regional consultations, and requested information on the schedule of consultations with Member States, how and when to respond, and whether a more developed concept note would be produced. Highlighting that its Government was chairing the Statistical Commission, the delegation sought clarification on its coordination role in preparing the *Human Development Report* and level of consistency between the report's indicators and those developed nationally.

31. The Director of the Human Development Report Office underscored that its work was aimed at ensuring that report's data was as evidence-based and objective as possible. He noted that there were issues with data at national and global levels, and that the process of improving data was ongoing. The office looked forward to building on the work of the Secretary-General's Independent Expert Advisory

Group on a Data Revolution for Sustainable Development. The office gave consideration to non-official data and related research, such as real-time and big data. He concurred that consultations with Member States could be deepened, noting that bilateral dialogue proved particularly enriching. The office sought to use the launch of the regional human development reports to engage in consultations, while bilateral consultations continued on various issues, including innovative policies and South-South cooperation. The office would consult with the Board and provide more detailed documentation once the report was developed further.

32. The Executive Board took note of the oral report on consultations regarding the *Human Development Report 2016*.

VI. Country programmes and related matters

33. The Associate Administrator of UNDP introduced the item and presented the country programme documents for Mauritius and South Sudan, the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Burundi, Cape Verde, the Central African Republic, Gabon and Mauritania from 1 January to 31 December 2017, the second one-year extensions of the country programmes for Burkina Faso and Yemen from 1 January to 31 December 2017, and the two-year extension of the country programme for Senegal from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2018. The Deputy Director of the Regional Bureau for Africa presented more detailed information on the country programme documents and the extensions from a regional perspective.

34. Following discussions, the Executive Board reviewed and approved, in accordance with its decision 2014/7, the country programme document for Mauritius (DP/DCP/MUS/4), and the country programme document for South Sudan (DP/DCP/SSD/2).

35. The Executive Board took note of the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Burundi, Cape Verde, the Central African Republic, Gabon and Mauritania from 1 January to 31 December 2017, as contained in document DP/2016/12.

36. The Executive Board approved the second one-year extensions of the country programmes for Burkina Faso and Yemen from 1 January to 31 December 2017, as well as the two-year extension of the country programme for Senegal from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2018, as contained in document DP/2016/12.

VII. Evaluation

37. The Director of the Independent Evaluation Office, UNDP, presented the annual report on evaluation (DP/2016/13), and the Director of the Bureau for Programme and Policy Support, UNDP, gave the management response.

38. Board members welcomed the report, especially the thematic evaluation of the UNDP contribution to gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment, in which area the organization had made much progress. They encouraged UNDP to implement the evaluation's recommendations, in particular by prioritizing and resourcing gender work for transformative impact. They noted country-level

progress aligning country programmes with national priorities, including in middle-income countries, but indicated that UNDP structural dependence on two funding sources in some countries raised questions about programme relevance. Delegations encouraged UNDP to draw lessons from country programmes where lack of coherent long-term development and exit strategies hindered transformative results.

39. Welcoming UNDP coordination and efficiency in Delivering as One, delegations highlighted that implementation mechanisms needed improvement to avoid fragmentation. They wished to see more joint capacity-building collaboration among agency evaluation offices, sought details on the capacity-building efforts of the Independent Evaluation Office at the country level, and welcomed UNDP work using the EvalLink software. They encouraged the office to pay closer attention to the link between data production and country office use. They appreciated the number of decentralized evaluations and management responses, but noted that completion and compliance rates were low. They encouraged UNDP to use evaluations and data to improve corporate strategies and to optimize their institutionalization. The delegations approved of the management response tracking system, which was a good tool for this purpose, and should be strengthened. They stressed the importance of the independent system-wide evaluation for the 2030 Agenda, and urged United Nations organizations to collaborate to ensure its resourcing and institutionalization. They sought an update on UNDP evaluation culture and constraints, while stressing the importance of UNDP continued presence in middle-income countries.

40. In response, the Director of the Bureau for Programme and Policy Support, UNDP, highlighted that UNDP implemented evaluation recommendations using the gender equality seal certification programme and the gender analysis tool to measure progress. On resource dependency, UNDP funding resources were varied, abundant, transparent, untied and grounded in national ownership, and they did not constitute an impediment to delivering transformative actions. The organization's funding-to-transformation ratio remained the highest in the United Nations. On the evaluation-learning link, the restructuring of the Evaluation Resource Centre made it possible to generate lessons from evaluations. Greater resource stability and a revised evaluation policy would help to improve delivery. UNDP embraced evaluation as an invaluable tool, and was strongly committed to working in and addressing the unique needs of middle income countries.

41. The Director of the Independent Evaluation Office, UNDP, confirmed that structural dependence on a few funding sources limited UNDP autonomy and scope, a situation linked to the core/non-core imbalance. He stressed that more could be done on capacity-building for evaluation and evaluators, and that the Independent Evaluation Office planned to focus more on capacity-building to meet growing demand. Given the importance of country-level evaluations, the office sought to refine its capacities. Delivering as one likewise posed a unique evaluation challenge owing to its joint nature and the varied evaluation approaches used by United Nations agencies; such efforts worked better through common offices. On the assessment of development results, improvements and the efforts of the Independent Evaluation Office to ensure those evaluations informed country programme design, the office would submit its strategic position on the issue in future. The uptake in recommendations served as proof that evaluation culture in UNDP had improved.

On decentralized evaluations, the office was working with UNDP in designing a revised assessment system to measure performance.

42. The Evaluation Adviser of the Independent Evaluation Office, UNDP, highlighted that the office was working with UNDP to address quality assessment issues for decentralized evaluations. The office now went beyond desk reviews to engage with country offices in providing feedback on the quality of decentralized evaluations. UNDP would begin reinvigorating the roster of evaluation experts, while the restructuring of the Evaluation Resource Centre helped to cull lessons from decentralized evaluations. UNDP and the office planned to engage with regional and country offices in designing guidance on decentralized evaluations.

43. The Executive Board adopted decision 2016/6: Annual report on evaluation (UNDP).

VIII. United Nations Capital Development Fund

44. The Executive Secretary of the United Nations Capital Development Fund presented the integrated annual report on results for 2015 and the midterm review of the strategic framework, 2014-2017 (DP/2016/14).

45. Board members welcomed the Fund's excellent performance in 2015. They observed that the three key elements of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, mobilizing domestic resources, private finance, and official development assistance for the Sustainable Development Goals — featured prominently in the mandate of the Fund. The Fund was the only United Nations organization focused on the least developed countries, for which it had unique capacities, notably pro-poor financing. The Fund worked in places where other sources of external finance were unavailable, building the capacity of local partners and fostering environments for private sector activities, especially subnationally.

46. Delegations recognized the significant progress made by the Fund towards its strategic goals, and its continued relevance and value to stakeholders, as shown by the results of recent evaluations. They welcomed the proposed changes to the integrated results and resources framework in the midterm review, especially those reinforcing the Fund's reporting on gender. They looked forward to more details of the Fund's long-term impact in future reports, and commended the Fund, in particular, for its innovative financial approaches to advance the development of new solutions. There was also a call for the Fund to expand its work to all least developed countries.

47. Delegations were concerned with the decline in core funding, which could jeopardize the achievements of the Fund, force it to limit the number of least developed countries where it worked, and undermine its mandate. Affirming that the Fund was already "fit-for-purpose" to deliver on the 2030 Agenda, delegations urged it to maximize its resource mobilization efforts and fully use its funding windows, including the Last Mile Finance Trust Fund, while securing reliable unearmarked funding and expanding, if necessary, into "frontier finance". They called on the Fund to devise a strategy in the next strategic framework on how to

remain effective and relevant in the event of a core-funding shortfall. Contributing Board members encouraged countries to step up their contributions.

48. In response, the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Capital Development Fund reassured Board members that the Fund was making every effort to improve its financial situation, including through new partnerships and financial instruments that devised new ways to close financing gaps for the needs of the least developed countries. She noted that the Fund's Evaluation Unit, although small, had undertaken 25 evaluations since 2010, aimed at measuring immediate and longer-term impact, the lessons of which had fed into the strategic framework. The Fund sought to conduct more thematic evaluations, although lack of funding for that purpose could be an impediment.

49. The Director of the Financial Inclusion Practice, UNCDF, highlighted that the Fund had developed the "Making Access Possible" diagnostic and programmatic framework to address women's economic empowerment through financial inclusion. Through the framework, the Fund sought to increase disaggregated data that helped Governments inform their financial inclusion strategies for women. In future, the Fund hoped to leverage that data to become an even more powerful tool for women's empowerment.

50. The Director of the Local Development Finance Practice, UNCDF, highlighted that the Fund had developed the joint global programme, "Inclusive and Equitable Local Development", with UNDP and UN-Women, which unlocked structural barriers in local economies that held women back and mobilized public and private investment for projects and investments that overcame barriers. The impact of the programme on women's economic empowerment could be measured.

51. The Executive Board adopted decision 2016/7: UNCDF: Integrated annual report on results for the 2015 and midterm review of the strategic framework, 2014-2017.

IX. United Nations Volunteers

52. The Associate Administrator of UNDP presented his report on the United Nations Volunteers programme ([DP/2016/15](#)), which was followed by a statement by the Executive Coordinator of the United Nations Volunteers.

53. Board members welcomed the results-orientated biennial report 2014-2015, expressing appreciation to the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) and United Nations Online volunteers, who are mobilized under the same programme, for their outstanding contributions to peace and development. They viewed UNV as a strong partner for the United Nations system that drove innovation in volunteerism, partnership-building and South-South cooperation, thanks in part to ever increasing numbers of volunteers from the South. Delegations welcomed the continued investment in online volunteer mobilization and the rise in financial investments in joint programmes. They were pleased with the progress made by UNV in broadening the knowledge base of volunteerism's value through its support for studies and engagement with research institutions. They acknowledged that implementing the plan of action on volunteerism, approved by the General

Assembly, was a major opportunity for building transformational partnerships to deliver solutions, and welcomed the UNV initiative to consult regularly with Member States.

54. Board members encouraged UNV to increase support to countries to mobilize volunteers on a national basis through domestic and regional schemes. They encouraged UNV to step up dissemination of its openings, especially for youth from the South, and to continue to broaden volunteer opportunities and increase the number of volunteers from the South. They encouraged UNV to use volunteerism as an avenue for civic engagement and mobilization of volunteerism for development at the national level. Delegations expressed strong support for the work of UNV in crisis and conflict, where they provided critical operational capacity, often working in difficult settings. They were concerned with the downward trend in funding and encouraged delegations to consider providing financial support to UNV, for example through the Special Voluntary Fund. UNV, it was noted, had to maintain a healthy balance between volunteer mobilization and management, advocacy and support to country-led volunteer schemes in order to ensure its continued strong performance in the face of decreasing funds.

55. Delegations appreciated the mid-term review of the UNV strategic framework, and the broad overview of its current operations worldwide. They welcomed the strategic reorientation, innovation focus, internal alignment and strengthened results-based management, and commending UNV for meeting or exceeding two thirds of its outcome/output indicators. The reorientation made UNV a more strategic partner, and a client-focused organization. They noted that adjustment to the 2030 Agenda was critical and welcomed the continuing UNV strategic transformation as it developed its next strategic framework, 2018-2021.

56. In response, the Executive Coordinator, UNV, thanked delegations for recognizing the value of Volunteers, volunteerism, UNV and its efforts to realign for greater strategic focus. He supported the idea of continuing to broaden volunteer opportunities, increasing the number of volunteers from the South and stepping up support for national and regional volunteer schemes to mobilize volunteerism. As a client-focused common service, UNV sought to strengthen partnerships throughout the United Nations system. He welcomed the call to raise core funding and noted that the Special Voluntary Fund and the strategic framework were funded and owned by all Member States. He acknowledged the feedback from the Board of Auditors, stating that UNV had demonstrated that it was a responsive, proactive and results-focused partner. He welcomed the recognition that, with UNV representing one third of international civilian capacity in peacekeeping missions, without the role of the Volunteers, the United Nations could not carry out its numerous obligations and Security Council mandates could not be delivered.

57. The Executive Board adopted decision 2016/8 on UNV: Report of the Administrator.

UNFPA segment

X. Statement by the Executive Director and annual report of the Executive Director

58. The UNFPA Executive Director, in his statement to the Executive Board (available on the UNFPA website), drew attention to the importance of the midterm review of the UNFPA strategic plan and integrated budget, 2014-2017, within the context of implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The review proposed minor adjustments, changes in available resources and better alignment with the 2030 Agenda to improve response to the changing development and humanitarian environment. The review reconfirmed the relevance of the Fund's focus on its strategic direction (the "bull's eye") and its business model. Recent global agreements, such as ICPD beyond 2014 Programme of Action and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, had strategically positioned UNFPA, but financial resources had fallen, along with regular resource funding. UNFPA had maintained the proportion of resources for development activities in the revised budget, despite having to implement austerity measures. The Fund engaged with partners in all sectors, including non-traditional donors, to raise additional funds.

59. UNFPA worked to maintain the humanitarian-development continuum so that root causes, such as poverty and inequality, were tackled and embedded in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. In doing so, UNFPA placed women and girls at the heart of the solution to mitigate and halt future crises. Underscoring the Fund's participation in the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, he touched on its life-saving work amid disaster and conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic, Iraq, Nepal and Nigeria, in addition to combatting the Zika virus. He encouraged Governments to endorse the joint statement on sexual and reproductive health in emergencies and to support the compact for young people in humanitarian action.

60. The Executive Director pointed to the Fund's steady progress implementing its strategic plan and improving organizational effectiveness and efficiency, and to its success in helping Governments to embed sexual and reproductive health issues into national planning and budgets. He highlighted the Fund's role in advocating the integration of adolescent and youth priorities in development frameworks, as part of which helping to nurture and capitalize on the demographic dividend was one key aspect. The still untapped potential of data to drive forward the implementation of the 2030 Agenda was a major impetus of the Fund's work for evidence-driven development and national capacity-building to produce, analyse and disseminate population-related data.

61. The Executive Director stressed the UNFPA commitment to effective oversight; it had expanded evaluation activities, reinstated the original allocation to the Evaluation Office budget, along with greater investment in the Office of Audit and Investigation Services, and aimed to address "unsatisfactory" audits of country offices. He highlighted its commitment to nurturing a corporate ethics culture by raising awareness, especially at regional and country levels, and providing managerial training. Given the financial landscape, the Fund was undertaking an

organizational efficiency and effective review, for which it would seek Board guidance once completed. In closing, he reiterated the importance of regular resources to ensure UNFPA could deliver on its mandate.

62. As part of his annual report, the Executive Director presented the integrated progress and midterm review report on the implementation of the UNFPA strategic plan, 2014-2017 (DP/FPA/2016/2 (Part I)); the statistical and financial review (DP/FPA/2016/2 (Part I/Add.1)); the report on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit in 2015 (DP/FPA/2016/2 (Part II)); the midterm review of the UNFPA integrated budget, 2014-2017 (DP/FPA/2016/3); and the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the midterm review of the UNFPA integrated budget, 2014-2017 (DP/FPA/2016/4).

63. Board members welcomed the midterm review and the Fund's steps to realign its strategic plan and integrated budget, 2014-2017, to the 2030 Agenda and the quadrennial comprehensive policy review 2016, while adjusting to new funding trends. They expressed confidence that the revised strategic plan placed the Fund in a good position to deliver on its mandate. They reiterated strong support for its sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights mandate, focused on the four outcomes of the strategic plan. Strongly supporting continued emphasis on building national capacity, advocacy and technical support for sexual and reproductive health, they expressed appreciation for the clarity and balance of the annual report, the increased levels of organizational effectiveness and efficiency, depth of analysis and improved approach to results-based management. Delegations stated that the Fund was central in efforts to strengthen ICPD-related data management for better planning, monitoring and evaluation against the Sustainable Development Goals and for national-level decision-making.

64. Delegations welcomed the Fund's strong focus on adolescents and youth, and stated that it should continue to play a strong role in supporting the demographic dividend through a coordinated United Nations effort. They stressed the need to accelerate progress in certain areas, notably capacity-building for the human rights-based approach in the design and implementation of national-level policies, and its role in helping to build national capacity for data collection in ICPD-related areas. They expected UNFPA to lead efforts in areas crucial to achieving universal access to sexual and reproductive health by 2030. They expressed concern that policies designed at headquarters were not adequately reflected in country-level implementation. Some delegations were keen on the Fund's involvement in Family Planning 2020, the global partnership that supports the rights of women and girls to use contraceptives by 2020, and the related UNFPA supplies programme, calling on donors to participate; others stressed the importance of respecting national ownership, and hoped that UNFPA would, within its mandate, leverage its comparative advantages in supporting the least developed countries, under the Istanbul Programme of Action.

65. While strongly supporting its work in areas of traditional ICPD-related development, Board members urged UNFPA to increase its support in crisis settings. They highlighted the special needs of women and girls in humanitarian situations, and stressed the Fund's sexual and reproductive health-service delivery and work in combatting gender-based violence in crises. They counted on UNFPA to advance the commitments of the World Humanitarian Summit and to ensure that women and

girls were central to humanitarian action, mainstreaming ICPD-related development goals within the humanitarian response system. Some expressed concern that the emergency fund and the humanitarian response reserve remained underfunded or had been maintained at a reduced level. Drawing attention to its strong response to the Ebola virus, delegations encouraged UNFPA to help countries to build sustainable and resilient medical infrastructures and to establish preventive mechanisms to combat the Zika virus.

66. Delegations welcomed the Fund's stronger financial accountability, improved resource utilization, unqualified audit opinion and full compliance with the standards set out in the International Aid Transparency Initiative. Some encouraged further strengthening of regional structures and risk management tools, and looked forward to the evaluation of the enterprise risk management framework in 2016. Board members stressed the importance of the evaluation and audit functions, and welcomed the proposed increase in funding for corporate evaluations. Delegations commended UNFPA for its progress in implementing the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit and recognized its readiness to improve ombudsman services, as well as the inclusion in the programme of work of the Joint Inspection Unit for 2016 of a review of UNFPA administrative services delivery and travel policies.

67. Board members once again expressed concern about the decline in regular resources, noting its negative impact on the Fund's ability to deliver on its mandate. Delegations encouraged donors to increase contributions to core resources, and urged UNFPA to actively seek innovative means of funding. Some expressed concern that the 2030 Agenda blurred the lines between donors and programme countries, and could negatively affect programme countries, which were being called on to mobilize domestic resources for national development, since UNFPA financing alone was no longer adequate. They stressed that some Governments were heavily burdened and indebted, and urged UNFPA to use caution when approaching countries for additional financial support through domestic resource mobilization. Several delegations confirmed they would maintain contributions at current levels, while others announced they would increase contributions to regular resources.

68. Board members expressed appreciation for the Fund's engagement in the Delivering as one initiative. They encouraged UNFPA to expand its involvement in wider United Nations common system approaches, and to work in joint policy teams and on joint programming at the country level. Noting that the upcoming quadrennial review could help to better define agency functions in different country contexts and modes of engagement, delegations expressed hope that Member States would devise a better development-funding architecture that increased efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations system and encouraged UNFPA to continue to improve cooperation and coordination with United Nations system partners.

69. In response, the UNFPA Executive Director, thanked the Board for strongly approving its mandate, especially its humanitarian and demographic dividend work, and reaffirmed that key aspects of its next strategic plan would be fully aligned with the 2030 Agenda and ICPD-related development. UNFPA would replenish its humanitarian reserve going forward to ensure its delivery in crises. On the need to build its human rights-based capacities, the Fund was working with the Human Rights Commission to achieve results on the ground. UNFPA was building its

capacities for ICPD-related data and evidence-gathering, working with Governments. Noting that the Fund was engaged in developing the new quadrennial review, he assured delegations that UNFPA would work with them on their regional needs, while ensuring their participation in formulating the next strategic plan. UNFPA was making every effort to mobilize additional resources, including through its new resource mobilization strategy and new partnerships. Underscoring the importance of regular resource funding, he noted that while the Fund was actively engaged in cost recovery, it required that Member States adhere to their own commitments.

70. The Executive Board adopted decision 2016/9: Midterm review of the UNFPA strategic plan, 2014-2017, and the annual report of the Executive Director.

71. The Executive Board adopted decision 2016/10: Midterm review of the UNFPA integrated budget, 2014-2017.

XI. Country programmes and related matters

72. The UNFPA Deputy Director (Programme) provided an overview of the draft country programme document for South Sudan, 2016-2017, and the first one-year extension of the country programme for the Dominican Republic for 2017. She emphasized the importance of national ownership and the consultative process with UNFPA support during the preparation of country programmes. Following the overview, the Regional Director for East and Southern Africa presented the draft country programme for South Sudan, 2016-2017, from a regional perspective.

73. Expressing full support for its country programme, one delegation highlighted that the country programme preparation process had benefitted from a full participatory approach, and also underscored the importance of data and evidence gathering in developing the programme.

74. The Executive Board approved, in accordance with its decision 2014/7, the country programme document for South Sudan, 2016-2017 ([DP/FPA/CPD/SSD/2](#)).

75. The Executive Board took note of the first one-year extension of the country programme for the Dominican Republic for 2017 ([DP/FPA/2016/6](#)).

XII. Evaluation

76. The Director of the UNFPA Evaluation Office presented the annual report of the Evaluation Office ([DP/FPA/2016/5](#)) as well as the thematic evaluation of UNFPA support to population and housing census data to inform decision-making and policy formulation, 2005-2014. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) provided the management response to both documents.

77. Board members welcomed the multi-year budgeted evaluation plan, as well as the increased diversity of evaluations at the country and regional levels. They appreciated the improved country programme evaluations, and looked forward to a study of lessons learned in 2016. They welcomed efforts to design guidance on conducting programme-level evaluations to ensure decentralized evaluations adhered to the evaluation policy and plan. Welcoming initiatives to disseminate

evaluation results and encouraging the Fund to channel lessons learned into programming, they urged UNFPA to incorporate evaluation indicator reporting tools of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women into its own quality assessment system. They welcomed improvements to tracking funds allocated to evaluation, encouraged the Fund to meet its aspirational 3 per cent evaluation budget allocation and sought a more comprehensive picture of evaluation expenditures.

78. Delegations appreciated the proposed increase in the budget of the Evaluation Office, while noting the funding reductions for a number of country programme evaluations. They encouraged the Fund to continue to build evaluation capacity, corporately and nationally, and welcomed efforts to improve the consultancy roster. They encouraged the Director and the Evaluation Office to be actively engaged in the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), and expressed the view that while independent system-wide evaluations could be useful in monitoring and reporting on the 2030 Agenda, they would require adequate funding. The quadrennial review offered an opportunity to promote system-wide collaboration for evaluations. One delegation requested clarification on the hierarchy of evaluations and how they were chosen.

79. In response, the UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) reiterated the commitment of UNFPA to the evaluation function while underlining the importance of adequate resources. UNFPA was keen to explore ways in which to ensure that evaluations took place while guaranteeing the independence and effectiveness of the function. It was important to balance the need for evaluations with available resources in order to ensure their maximum impact.

80. The Director of the UNFPA Evaluation Office highlighted that the Fund played an active role in UNEG both on topics, such as the professionalization of evaluation, and on system-wide and joint evaluation issues. On the 3 per cent funding target, she underlined its aspirational nature, but noted that UNFPA had made significant, gradual progress, despite austerity measures. The Evaluation Office had achieved a number of efficiency gains that allowed it to undertake more evaluations, while relying more on other resources to fund evaluations, a strategy the Fund would continue to pursue. In relation to decentralized programme evaluations, in line with commitments set out in the quadrennial budgeted evaluation plan, UNFPA intended to diversify the range of evaluations to include not only country programmes but also multi-year interventions, aiming to ensure that evaluations focused on key interventions where there was a need for lessons learned exercises and accountability; expenditures were to be captured through the global programming system for better reporting. She highlighted that 20 of 22 country programme evaluations for 2016 were under way. Any shortfall was due to the funding situation, but UNFPA was engaged in finding a solution. She noted that the revised evaluation policy set out the hierarchy of evaluations, broken down broadly into corporate (thematic, institutional, programme and joint) and programme-level evaluations, including regional and country evaluations. She stressed that the 2030 Agenda set out a role for Member States to undertake national-level evaluations in contribution to national reviews and learning, which UNFPA was mandated to support through the 2013 evaluation policy.

81. The Executive Board adopted decision 2016/11: Annual report of the UNFPA Evaluation Office.

UNOPS segment

XIII. Statement by the Executive Director and annual report of the Executive Director

82. The Executive Director of UNOPS, in presenting her annual report 2015 (DP/OPS/2016/2), highlighted UNOPS performance in 2015, when it increased delivery by 16 per cent. She touched on improvements in its effectiveness, including upgrading the enterprise resource planning system to OneUNOPS and a new information and communications system. UNOPS was building resilience into infrastructure planning and developing an integrated systems approach for infrastructure. A recent survey indicated that client and partner satisfaction had risen to 82 per cent in 2015. She drew attention to UNOPS delivery successes with partners in infrastructure projects in Afghanistan, Colombia, Haiti, Kosovo and the Sudan, and in procurement in Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam, not to mention more than 60,000 training activities. UNOPS was also expanding into hosting services.

83. The Executive Director highlighted that just over half of UNOPS partnerships were with United Nations organizations, especially the Department for Peacekeeping Operations, which included human resources services. UNOPS looked forward to being a regular participating member of United Nations country teams, and worked closely with Governments, proposing activities that fell within national development frameworks. She drew attention to UNOPS work in crisis and conflict, working on security, power, logistics and lodging needs of refugees and displaced persons in the Syrian Arab Republic, and reconstruction projects in the State of Palestine (Gaza). In 2016, UNOPS would release its first annual report aligned to the Global Reporting Initiative, the first United Nations organization to do so. UNOPS was in the midterm review process to align its corporate strategy, 2014-2017, to the 2030 Agenda. It would present its new strategy at the second regular session 2016. She stressed the need for the United Nations to explore the potential of private capital for development more actively.

84. Member States expressed appreciation for the continued strong performance of UNOPS and operational efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and fiscal solidity, and its work in peacebuilding, humanitarian and development settings, benchmarking its work against international standards. They commended the work of UNOPS in climate change, disaster risk management and resilience building, and in pursuing innovative solutions, as exemplified by OneUNOPS. They encouraged it to step up its work in the area of gender mainstreaming and to strengthen its operational priorities in its three main areas of focus: sustainable project management; sustainable infrastructure construction; and sustainable procurement.

85. Delegations welcomed the increase of UNOPS operations in low-income and crisis countries to support Governments, civil society and United Nations organizations, often in difficult circumstances. They encouraged it to continue to

improve services to United Nations organizations, in the coordination spirit of the quadrennial review, while engaging bilaterally and multilaterally with partners such as the World Bank and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria in implementing the 2030 Agenda and international agreements, including the Samoa Pathway, and through public-private partnerships. They welcomed UNOPS plans to create a fund to allocate seed capital to attract targeted investments to support infrastructure projects, and its private sector partnerships in promoting sustainability and investments. One delegation requested that UNOPS avoid commenting on national peace efforts in the annual report and adhere to its mandate while respecting national ownership. Other delegations pointed to UNOPS as a trusted and reliable partner, characterized by a streamlined flexible structure.

86. In response, the Executive Director of UNOPS stressed the importance of Board support and directives for improvements. UNOPS was an implementation-focused organization, which, because of its self-financed nature, was able to concentrate on partner needs. Flexibility, speed and quality were at its core, while recruitment and procurement made it possible to scale up or down rapidly. Flexibility allowed UNOPS to explore ways to adapt to local requirements. UNOPS sought to live up to Board expectations on developing corporate processes, and was eager to work with the Board on innovative procurement approaches to sustainable development.

87. The Executive Board adopted decision 2016/12: UNOPS: Annual report of the Executive Director.

Joint segment

XIV. Internal audit and oversight

88. The Director of the Office of Audit and Investigations, UNDP, presented the report on internal audit and investigations ([DP/2016/16](#)); the Director of the Bureau of Management, UNDP, provided the management response. The Director of the Office of Audit and Investigations Services, UNFPA, presented the report on the UNFPA internal audit and investigations activities in 2015 ([DP/FPA/2016/7](#)); the UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) provided the management response. The Director of the Internal Audit and Investigations Group, UNOPS, presented the activity report of the Internal Audit and Investigations Group for 2015 ([DP/OPS/2016/3](#)); and the Deputy Executive Director of UNOPS provided the management response.

UNDP

89. Board members welcomed, in particular, the opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the UNDP framework of governance, risk management and control, and encouraged the Office of Audit and Investigations to include analysis of risks, how management dealt with them and how they informed the overall opinion. Noting progress, they highlighted that the “partially satisfactory” audit rating meant that UNDP had to do more to address governance and risk shortfalls. They encouraged management to strengthen support to audit and investigations, including

allocating timely, sufficient resources to the Office of Audit and Investigations to ensure its mandate. They wished to know if continued resource shortfalls would have an impact on work. They noted the comments of the Audit Advisory Committee on the connection between funding sources and the independence of the Office of Audit and Investigations, and urged management to follow the Committee's advice. Welcoming new UNDP risk management mechanisms, they were keen to learn why and how there had been an increase in satisfactory ratings and a decrease in unsatisfactory ratings. Noting the unsatisfactory audit rating for the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and acknowledging steps taken, delegations urged UNDP to ensure that it implemented all audit recommendations. They requested that UNDP keep the Board informed of efforts to address recurring audit issues related to programme, financial and procurement management and urged it to strengthen both the process for identifying and selecting vendors as well as staff capacity to monitor procurement contracts, and to ensure that procurement cases were submitted to review committees. They were keen to learn of procurement bottlenecks related to the harmonized approach to cash transfers: while recognizing UNDP efforts to address this issue, delegations sought details on the impact of such bottlenecks. They wished to know about UNDP collaboration with the Global Fund's audit office in efforts to produce audits of the funding of UNDP for the Global Fund. They looked forward to reading in future audit reports how UNDP reform of its programming oversight and resource management were progressing. They urged UNDP to prioritize closure of long-standing audit recommendations, and looked forward to learning the reasons for the increase in the number of recommendations that had not been fully implemented. On investigations, delegations requested information on how UNDP and the Office of Audit and Investigations interpreted the increase in the number of investigations, especially new cases. They expressed concern that the Office of Audit and Investigations was taking on more cases while its resources dropped, and questioned why only 15 per cent of cases were actually found to include misconduct. They were pleased, however, that 70 per cent of staff reported to be comfortable reporting misconduct. They looked forward to learning about the UNDP strategy to tackle the high number of cases of procurement fraud, theft and embezzlement, and efforts to recover resources. They stressed the importance of effective fraud protection and response measures, and urged United Nations organizations to intensify efforts to combat fraud system-wide.

UNFPA

90. Board members welcomed, in particular, the opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the UNFPA framework of governance, risk management and control. They encouraged the Office of Audit and Investigation Services to include analysis of risks, how management dealt with them and how they informed overall opinion. They were concerned that a deferral of the audit risk assessment update, owing to resource allocation changes, meant that the Office of Audit and Investigation Services could not maintain its planned audit coverage, which exposed the Fund to significant risk. They were pleased that funding levels for the Office had been reinstated for 2016, welcomed the proposed raise for 2017, and urged UNFPA to ensure adequate funding to address contingencies and unanticipated demands. Furthermore, Board members asked UNFPA to take measures to reduce the 16 per cent vacancy rate in the Office. Noting the "partially satisfactory" audit rating,

delegations encouraged UNFPA to focus on improvements and on implementing long-outstanding recommendations in governance and programme management; they highlighted the recurring recommendations in the areas of inventory, procurement and financial management and managing implementing partners. Those shortfalls and risks pointed to the need for greater due diligence and financial monitoring. Board members noted the positive move to create an enterprise risk management system, although more work was needed; they urged UNFPA to implement and document mitigation measures for each risk. They welcomed the project to improve the internal control framework, and encouraged UNFPA to ensure that all components of the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission were implemented, with links to the three lines of defence. Recognizing management's progress in overseeing country offices and better alignment of their capacity with programme delivery, delegations urged the Fund to improve office management plans and strategic frameworks to create stronger links between organizational priorities, programmes and resources. On the subject of investigations, they were concerned that the Office of Audit and Investigation Services was unable to keep pace with the level of complex, resource-intensive cases and with demand for advisory services, and urged UNFPA to include those topics in discussions on risk management and allocate sufficient resources. Drawing attention to the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on fraud, they urged UNFPA and the other United Nations organizations to intensify efforts in this area.

UNOPS

91. Board members welcomed the risk-based internal audit plan of the Internal Audit and Investigations Group and were pleased with UNOPS responsiveness to audit recommendations, given its overall implementation rate of 98 per cent (2008-2015). They requested information on the increase in internal audit recommendations and the average number of recommendations per audit. They congratulated UNOPS on the steps it had taken to strengthen its risk management programme, and were pleased with the launch of the new enterprise risk planning system. They looked forward to learning of its impact on risk management and internal controls. They commended UNOPS for the number of project audits with a "satisfactory" rating for internal controls, urged senior management to ensure the full completion of outstanding recommendations, and sought further improvement in project management, procurement and finance. They were concerned that the highest number of recommendations continued to be in the area of project management and procurement. With regard to investigations, they felt that the significant rise in cases in 2015 was proof of staff confidence in the Internal Audit and Investigations Group. They were concerned with the persistent financial irregularities, especially regarding procurement fraud, and urged UNOPS to prioritize the implementation of the recommendations on procurement. They recognized the efforts of UNOPS efforts to address misconduct and recover costs, including through awareness-raising and training.

92. In response, the Director of the Office of Audit and Investigations, UNDP, stressed that the Office: (a) was working to foresee risks in a more systematic manner; (b) had absorbed the 4 per cent budget cut in four years by cutting consultant expenditures and travel, noting that further cuts would be to staff and

have an effect on audit coverage; (c) considered that the number of “unsatisfactory” ratings in governance risk management and controls since 2013 did not constitute a trend but rather a fluctuation; (d) held UNDP management and the business unit management responsible for risks identified in Global Fund audits (or any audit) both corporately and at the local level, and worked with the Global Fund to reduce duplication and clarify roles and responsibilities; (e) viewed the increase in fraud cases in 2015 as the result of greater staff trust and more instances of misconduct; and (f) was working with UNDP to be more vigilant in recovering funds lost in fraud and other financial irregularities.

93. The Chief Finance Officer, UNDP, stressed that UNDP: (a) would make every effort to address the “unsatisfactory” ratings, including root causes, having devised a plan to manage risk based on cost and potential impact; (b) considered that the “partially satisfactory” rating was given in a high-risk environment area, but that management would ensure a plan and timeline to tackle the issue; (c) sought to minimize risk because eradicating risk was difficult, given the number of high-risk areas; (d) viewed the increase in fraud and investigation cases as an indication of greater staff trust; (e) had relaunched the fraud prevention strategy and would ensure its implementation in all business areas, working with national partners and through best practices; (f) had put together a cross-sectoral task force to address fraud issues in the light of best practices; (g) was active in revising the harmonized approach to cash transfers and rolling it out, although funding was a key issue; and (h) had made progress in tackling Global Fund subrecipient issues although inventory remained outstanding because it was dependent on national systems.

94. The Director of the Bureau of Management, UNDP, stated that UNDP was: (a) in the process of setting up an organization-wide network of controls throughout its decentralized system; (b) working with United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation to implement all recommendations by the end of 2016; (c) rolling out, with regard to long-term agreements, the global e-procurement system and making improvements to country office services; and (d) focused on fraud prevention measures because UNDP cost recovery efforts took place within a restrained financial environment.

95. The Director of the Office of Audit and Investigations Services, UNFPA, stated that the Office: (a) had made a conscious decision not to conduct an audit risk assessment in 2015 to allow management time to work on structural changes, and would revisit the matter in 2016; (b) had taken all possible action to fill vacancies by the end of 2016; (c) was making every effort to complete cases in a timely manner; and (d) took the recommendations in the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on fraud seriously.

96. The Deputy Executive Director (Management), UNFPA, highlighted that the Fund: (a) was actively working to address the “partially satisfactory” opinion with business units; (b) had made every effort to increase resource allocation to evaluation, oversight and investigation, and would take necessary steps to meet demands in an emergency situation despite the resource situation; (c) was committed to providing ad hoc support for oversight functions, if it became necessary; (d) would address 80 per cent of long-outstanding recommendations by the fourth quarter of 2016; and (e) had taken steps to improve management of inventory and implementation partners.

97. The Director of the Internal Audit and Investigations Group, UNOPS, stated that the Group had: (a) considered that the higher number of average audit recommendations were attributable to greater focus on compliance issues in preparation for the launch of the new enterprise resource planning system, as well as specific audit steps required due to the higher number of audits of small grant projects; (b) focused less on project management and procurement to focus on infrastructure in 2015; (c) emphasized signing memoranda of understanding with donor oversight units to satisfy client requests for information, while respecting the single audit principle of reporting; and (d) conducted two engagements on enterprise resource planning audits related to anti-fraud and cybersecurity in 2015.

98. The Executive Board adopted decision 2016/13: Internal audit and oversight.

XV. Reports of the UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS ethics offices

99. The Director of the Ethics Office, UNDP, presented the activities of the Ethics Office in 2015 (DP/2016/17) and the Director of the Bureau of Management, UNDP, provided the management response. The UNFPA Ethics Adviser presented the report of the Ethics Office 2015 (DP/FPA/2016/8) and the Deputy Executive Director (Management), UNFPA, provided the management response. The Legal Counsel, UNOPS, presented the activities of the Ethics Office in 2015 (DP/OPS/2016/4) as well as the management response.

UNDP

100. Board members commended the UNDP Ethics Office for establishing a culture of ethics and integrity. They congratulated it for the innovative and strategic way that it handled its heavy workload despite persistent office vacancies. The rising number of staff seeking advice was proof of a stronger ethical culture and greater confidence in the Office's work, as confirmed in a recent staff survey: staff indicated a higher level of comfort in reporting misconduct, thanks mainly to the awareness-raising campaign carried out by the Ethics Office and the promotion of a "speak-up" culture supported by senior management to protect staff from retaliation. Delegations appreciated the practical training materials provided by the Ethics Office and noted that many staff sought advice in the wake of UNDP restructuring. Delegations urged UNDP to ensure that structural changes were accompanied by better communications to prevent confusion and suspicion. They were concerned that UNDP had found a substantiated case of whistle-blower retaliation and requested details on how the complainant was protected during the investigation and if disciplinary action had been taken against the retaliator. They urged management to promote an ethical working environment and to foster a culture of speaking up without fear of retaliation. UNDP had to ensure all perpetrators of misconduct were held accountable, and disciplinary action was taken when appropriate. They encouraged management to implement the recommendations of the Ethics Office and to report regularly on outstanding recommendations.

UNFPA

101. Board members applauded the UNFPA Ethics Office for resolving problems before they posed a reputational risk, and urged senior management to ensure that managers had the training and skills to promote a culture of ethics and integrity. They commended the Executive Director for supporting the Ethics Office and setting the tone “at the top”, and encouraged management to foster a speak-up culture without fear of retaliation. They noted the increased requests for the services of the Ethics Office, which reflected greater awareness and confidence in its work and a stronger corporate ethical culture, thanks, in large part, to proactive outreach to country offices. While recognizing the financial constraints limiting the ability of staff of the Ethics Office to travel, they encouraged it to continue to provide strong support to the country offices. They encouraged management to be flexible in managing the overall budget of the Ethics Office so that it could fulfil its mandate and provide services to employees. Delegations were concerned that employees with financial and procurement-related authority were excluded from the financial disclosure programme, which exposed the Fund to risk, and they agreed that the Ethics Office should review the policy and programme for financial disclosure. The fact that managers sought to broaden the categories of staff required to participate showed they understood the purpose of the financial disclosure programme. Delegations were concerned with the first confirmed case of whistle-blower retaliation and noted that reporting of the case underscored the critical role played by a strong Ethics Office. They urged UNFPA to take whistle-blower protection seriously and to ensure that perpetrators of misconduct were held accountable.

UNOPS

102. Board members applauded the commitment of the Ethics Office to informing staff of the purpose, scope and availability of protection against retaliation under the UNOPS ethics policy. Noting the one formal complaint of retaliation in 2015, delegations urged UNOPS to take the issue seriously, ensuring that whistle-blowers were protected from retaliation and perpetrators of misconduct were held accountable. The rise in the number of staff seeking advice on employment-related concerns was proof of confidence in the Ethics Office, thanks mainly to the UNOPS speak-up campaign.

103. In response, the Director of the Bureau of Management, UNDP, drew attention to the key role of the Ethics Office in linking ethics and accountability. He noted that disciplinary action had been taken in the case in question.

104. The Director of the Ethics Office, UNDP, addressing the question on retaliation policy and protective action regarding the case in question, highlighted that the Office had expanded its retaliation policy to include service contract holders. The case in question concerned a service contract holder who, when leaving the organization, received poor references that were false, along with defamatory comments by the manager. The manager in question had been barred from providing references in the future, and a new system was set up to protect the contract holder from being refused employment elsewhere within the United Nations system.

105. The UNFPA Ethics Adviser pinpointed that the quest to improve the financial disclosure programme so it would be fit-for-purpose did not limit the number of staff included. The aim was to ensure the programme was tailored to the needs of

UNFPA and the broader United Nations system. She looked forward to presenting updated details on the ethics programme in 2017.

106. The General Counsel of UNOPS noted that the increased request for advice was largely considered to be a result of the success of the speak-up programme and greater trust in the Ethics Office. He thanked the Board for its support in developing an aspirational focus for ethics and highlighted the constructive joint work among agency ethics offices.

107. The Executive Board adopted decision 2016/14: Reports of the ethics offices of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS.

Annex

Report of the joint meeting of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP (3 June 2016)

A. Working in fragile contexts, inclusive of middle income countries

1. The President of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS opened the joint meeting by welcoming all participants of the Executive Boards of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and the World Food Programme (WFP). He also welcomed the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations.

2. In his opening remarks, the Deputy Secretary-General described the setting of joint United Nations engagements against the backdrop of recent major global agreements such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. He highlighted areas where the United Nations development system needed to collaborate more intensely to construct peaceful societies. Those included: approaching conflict prevention and disaster risk reduction through joint planning and programming, collective leadership and predictable funding; mainstreaming a focus on the most vulnerable and marginalized members of society, especially youth, in all programmes; building national statistical systems and scaling up the use of big data; working vertically within Governments and the United Nations system to join forces; expanding the global and regional use of standard operating procedures, such as those used in the “Delivering as one” approach; and reforming the overarching aid architecture.

3. The Administrator of UNDP and the Executive Director of UNICEF presented the successes and challenges their organizations faced when working in fragile contexts, including in middle-income countries. The Administrator of UNDP stressed that conflict and fragility were the main obstacles to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, which was why together the United Nations system needed to address root causes and prioritize resilience-building. The UNDG MAPS approach, she noted, was the right tool to galvanize system-wide efforts. The Executive Director of UNICEF stressed that, while it was important to focus on fragile States, people had to be at the centre of development and humanitarian work. Better data (disaggregated and innovative), universality (no one left behind) and closer integration of the development-humanitarian nexus (combining work in areas such as poverty, conflict, climate and resource scarcity) would lead to tangible results on the ground. Those challenges were all inseparable, and the response had to be the same.

4. The United Nations Resident Coordinator, Albania, discussed how financing peacebuilding could help to lift least developed countries out of fragility. He drew attention to an emerging consensus on how to tackle crises and build peaceful societies, which included: (a) addressing root causes; (b) practicing conflict prevention in development; (c) driving the principles of sustainable peace throughout the United Nations system; (d) expanding the notion of human rights; (e) bolstering transborder relations; and (f) ensuring predictable funding. In turn, the Subregional Development Coordinator and Head of the Subregional Response

Facility for the Syria Crisis discussed the topic of fragility in a protracted crisis context, focused on building resilience in middle-income countries. He highlighted that field-based evidence demonstrated how shocks could destabilize middle-income countries, setting back hard-won development gains across a region. The inability of current aid architecture to address crises adequately only compounded the situation. However, the UNDG resilience-based development response, combining development and humanitarian in a single platform, was a major advance, in particular for the crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic. The evidence pointed to the need for: (a) new kinds of crisis response; (b) knowledge and technology; (c) predictable and quality funding; and (d) combining responses on all fronts.

5. The presidents of the four Executive Boards, the heads of the six United Nations organizations and members of the Executive Board discussed the opportunities and challenges of working in fragile States, inclusive of middle-income countries. Member States were actively engaged throughout the session and provided a number of comments, most notably that:

- Fragile States and middle-income countries demanded multidimensional, integrated, joint responses, assessments and evaluations to better focus assistance;
- Peacebuilding and resilience required the integration of humanitarian and development efforts;
- Reforming the current aid architecture should be a priority of the United Nations;
- “Fragility” as a concept needed a clearer definition in order to focus on people in every society, including middle-income countries, and not on States;
- Financial and institutional strengthening were key to building resilience in fragile contexts;
- Women and girls played a central role in building resilience in fragile contexts.

6. In conclusion, the Executive Director of UNOPS highlighted that, in addressing fragility, United Nations assistance had to focus on people, not States, in building resilience before a crisis occurred. Innovative forms of financing were needed along with innovative systems for measuring vulnerability in order to allocate funding and support. In that context, the United Nations had a role to play in attracting private sector investment in fragile high-risk contexts.

7. The President of the Executive Board of UNICEF underlined the importance of joint efforts by the entities of the United Nations system in addressing a broader fragility that affected all societies, through a people-focused lens, and in halting its spread. In moving from fragility to resilience, the United Nations system needed to prioritize populations at risk, the marginalized and the vulnerable, and tackle root causes by eradicating poverty and reducing disparities and inequalities.

8. In closing, the President of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS thanked delegations and the six United Nations organizations for their participation in the morning segment of the joint meeting.

B. Big data and the Sustainable Development Goals

9. The President of the Executive Board of WFP welcomed members of the four Executive Boards, the representatives of the six United Nations organizations and the session's guest speaker to the discussion on big data and the Sustainable Development Goals.

10. In his opening remarks, the Executive Director, UNFPA, drew attention to the potential of big data — large data sets that may be analysed to reveal patterns, trends and associations — to provide real-time information, especially during crises. Big data, he noted, also had an impact on people's political and social participation, including awareness-raising on key issues and population mapping. However, tapping into the potential of big data required building not only the capacities of national systems and personnel but also those of the United Nations, a move that demanded changing attitudes towards data collection so that people understood it as evidence.

11. The Executive Director of UN-Women stressed the power of data to provide different social and economic perspectives on issues, in particular with regard to the well-being of women and girls, and to help to inform planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes. Lack of knowledge, she noted, restricted the ability of the international community to respond to and act in crises. It was therefore necessary to improve national statistical data and to use big data to complement traditional data. Given its potential, knowing how to use and deploy data had to be a paramount objective for Governments and the United Nations. She emphasized, however, that big data did not replace the responsibility to know and act.

12. The guest speaker, the Jerry M. Hultin Global Network Professor at New York University's Tandon School of Engineering and Director of The Governance Lab, Beth Simone Noveck, provided a presentation on how to solve public problems with data. She highlighted that the revolution in current thinking about data entailed a shift in emphasis from government to transparency of outputs and a policy of open data, which created not only a data economy but also a "data morality". While practitioners had accepted the evidence-based premise, she noted that the question of how to use data to inform policy remained a challenge. But even when that was achieved, conversation, engagement and partnerships needed to revolve around the data-policy nexus. She drew attention to the role "data collaboratives", such as Twitter or Intel, played in helping to generate new solutions to problems. Phone data, for example, gave a better picture of human movements in Africa than public data, while in New York City phone data was allowing small business owners to pinpoint where to invest. Data alone, however, was not enough, it needed to be cleaned and analysed to be useful. Collaboration and partnerships also helped to ensure untapped talent was being utilized. Privacy and data access issues meant that it was necessary to build "data responsibility" into aid actions. She highlighted that the United Nations was beginning to explore how best to achieve that through collaboration between The Governance Lab, the United Nations Global Pulse and various United Nations organizations. In conclusion, she emphasized that the importance of sharing data — not keeping it to oneself — was key to solving development and humanitarian problems.

13. In response, two Member States intervened and made a number of points, notably that: (a) there was data inequality, wherein some countries and regions had data and the capacity to use it while others did not; (b) cultural attitudes affected data collection and interpretation and could as a result make it unreliable; (c) because the experience of using big data for development and humanitarian activities was still in its early stages, its actual potential remained unclear; (d) ownership and control of databases was problematic, especially when it resided with the private sector, because of its ethical and regulatory implications; (e) people had to be at the centre of big data and be involved in its applications; (f) big data had to serve in building the capacity of national statistical offices to produce data, not overshadow them; and (g) the importance of continuing discussions on big data within the 2030 Agenda.

14. The representative of WFP, addressing the main theme of big data and the Sustainable Development Goals, presented findings from a mobile phone survey that helped to support decision-making at the country level, and the representative of UNFPA explained how satellite imagery was being used to produce population estimates in Afghanistan. Two Member States highlighted that: while disaggregated data was crucial, many countries lacked the capacity to produce it; and United Nations inter-agency data-sharing was good, but too fragmented. They also wished to know the outcome and future of the data innovation labs organized by the United Nations Chief Executive Board for Coordination, and if there was an equivalent approach to the data privacy initiative of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs within the funds, programmes and specialized agencies.

15. On the second theme, “data collection and methods”, UNDP provided a presentation on: (a) how new data sources helped to measure changes in poverty in the Sudan, using satellite images to determine income levels based on electricity consumption and mobile phone usage; and (b) measuring progress against Sustainable Development Goal 16 in Tunisia, using data collected from social media to gauge perceptions of corruption. In turn, UNICEF described how it used mobile phones to identify “risk spots” and possible interventions, for example, in response to the Ebola crisis in West Africa. Member States highlighted their national data collection experiences through social media in helping to identify and address issues, and welcomed related efforts by the United Nations. They stressed the importance of building data collection and disaggregation capacity at the country level, especially for the least developed countries. They drew attention to the North-South technology gap and stressed the United Nations role in leading efforts to determine how big data could serve all people, while respecting the privacy of individuals. They sought details on when and how the United Nations would invest in building big-data capacity or a plan to address it. The Administrator of UNDP, and Chair, UNDG, highlighted the importance of continuous collaboration between United Nations organizations, and pointed to the catalytic role of the United Nations Global Pulse and its collaboration on most big data initiatives presented by United Nations organizations.

16. In summarizing the discussion, the President of the Executive Board of WFP noted the timeliness of the discussion, given the data revolution and the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, as well as the growing importance of evidence-based programming and monitoring and evaluation for results. He stressed, however, the

challenges of building capacity for big data, which many countries still lacked. The potential of the rapidly expanding and diversification of information and communications technology was huge and the United Nations had to harness that power. It was therefore necessary to strengthen national capacity for big data while at the same time establishing a regulatory framework to protect privacy. The United Nations, he suggested, could also serve as a convenor for data collaboratives in the future.

17. In closing remarks, the President of the Executive Board of UN-Women and Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations highlighted the need to: apply a gender lens throughout United Nations work on big data; close the digital gender gap; and protect privacy. He also stressed that while big data did not replace the responsibility of Governments to collect data it could complement it.

18. The President of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS closed the meeting by thanking delegations and the six United Nations organizations for their active participation and fruitful discussion.

Part three
Second regular session 2016

**Held at United Nations Headquarters in New York
from 6 to 9 September 2016**

I. Organizational matters

1. The second regular session 2016 of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS was held at United Nations Headquarters in New York in from 6 to 9 September 2016.

2. The Executive Board approved the agenda and workplan for its second regular session 2016 (DP/2016/L.3), and approved the report of the annual session 2016 (DP/2016/18). The Board approved the draft annual workplan for 2017 (DP/2016/CRP.2) and approved the tentative workplan for the first regular session 2017.

3. Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at the second regular session 2016 appeared in document DP/2017/2, which was available on the [Executive Board website](#).

4. The Executive Board agreed in decision 2016/21 to the following schedule for future sessions of the Executive Board in 2017:

First regular session:	30 January to 3 February 2017
Annual session:	30 May to 9 June 2017
Second regular session:	5 to 11 September 2017

UNDP segment

II. Statement by the Administrator and UNDP funding issues

Statement by the Administrator

5. In her opening remarks to the Executive Board (available on the [Executive Board website](#)), the Administrator of UNDP addressed a series of topics against the backdrop of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the UNDP funding situation. Those topics included UNDP engagement in: major global agendas; United Nations development system reform and the quadrennial comprehensive review of operational activities for development 2016; corporate finances, in particular the status of regular (core) and other (non-core) resources; humanitarian situations across the globe; continued efforts to guarantee transparency and accountability in all areas of work; improving the quality of country programmes; and building a stronger evaluation function and culture throughout the organization.

6. On the global agendas in particular, the Administrator drew attention to UNDP work with United Nations country teams to implement the 2030 Agenda through the UNDG MAPS approach in the following areas: multi-sector planning, statistical capacity strengthening, awareness-raising and partnership-building related to the Sustainable Development Goals. At the national level, she highlighted UNDP collaboration with UNDG partners in inter-agency activities for country-level delivery of the 2030 Agenda, which included, most notably, the global pooled funding mechanism, standard operating procedures and the plans of action of United Nations country teams. UNDP, she noted, was also working with other United

Nations organizations through UNDG to strengthen the quadrennial review 2016 in support of the 2030 Agenda, aimed at drawing on the distinct comparative advantages of each organization. UNDG made numerous proposals on how to improve the quadrennial review 2016, which included closer United Nations system operational integration, a stronger resident coordinator system, and full implementation of the mutual accountability framework, including the firewall.

7. Turning to the 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change, reached at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, she stated that UNDP was focused on helping countries to prepare the implementation of their nationally determined contributions by strengthening institutions, designing mitigation and adaptation actions and improving monitoring. She also highlighted other global events in 2016 in which UNDP was actively involved, including the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants and the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III).

8. Turning to finances, the Administrator drew attention to the following positive trends: UNDP had received an unqualified audit opinion in 2015, marking a decade of clean audit opinions; the proportion of regular resources the organization had spent on institutional costs fell while the share of regular resources for programme activities had increased; and the proportion of management costs fell significantly in the previous two bienniums. Despite this, both core and non-core resources fell in 2015, an ongoing negative trend that UNDP was seeking to offset by broadening its donor base, creating new thematic funding windows, launching the 100 partners campaign and mobilizing programme country contributions. UNDP, she stressed, was firmly committed to transparency and accountability, to providing proof to donors of the impact of their contributions and an incentive for increased core contributions. She noted that in 2016 UNDP was again ranked first in the Aid Transparency Index. Evaluation was, similarly, of central importance for UNDP, whose revised evaluation policy was being submitted for Board approval at the current session.

9. The Administrator also reported on the continued humanitarian work of UNDP in Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen in the areas of livelihoods, employment creation, basic services and support to refugees and internally displaced persons. She noted that UNDP played a key role in advancing the humanitarian-development nexus for the 2030 Agenda, in line with its commitments made under the goals set out in the Grand Bargain on humanitarian financing adopted at the World Humanitarian Summit.

10. Across the board, delegations commended UNDP for its central role in helping countries to mainstream the Sustainable Development Goals into their national planning processes, for promoting developing countries priorities in recent major global agendas and for its leadership of the resident coordinator system. They also welcomed the organization's continued work in crisis settings in support of livelihoods, employment creation, basic services and internally displaced persons, and in advancing the humanitarian-development nexus for the 2030 Agenda.

11. More specifically, some Board members stressed the importance of the organization's Grand Bargain commitments made at the World Humanitarian Summit 2016, and requested an update on UNDP implementation of those commitments, in particular with regard to the priority goals. All United Nations system development organizations, they stressed, should work together with partners to address gaps in the humanitarian response, while they called on Governments to incorporate measures related to refugees and internally displaced persons into their national development strategies.

12. Delegations, however, concentrated most of their comments on the outcome of the financial review, which was the main discussion topic of the session. All intervening delegations expressed acute concern over the continued decline in core resources in 2015, and the ongoing imbalance between core and non-core resources. All major groups of delegations stressed that in order for UNDP to fulfil its mandate under the strategic plan and the quadrennial review, it required stable, predictable, flexible, long-term funding. One group expressed concern that the declining core base — along with the continuing donor trend to earmark funds — would ultimately affect the ability of UNDP to allocate adequate resources to programme countries and to deliver on its mandate on the ground. Delegations across the board sought to step up dialogue with UNDP, within the context of discussions on the new strategic plan, 2018-2021, and the quadrennial review 2016, in order to address the state of declining core.

13. Delegations noted that while reduced management costs, thematic funding windows and the 100 partners' campaign were promising initiatives, they were concerned that contributions through the funding windows remained below target. A number of delegations also emphasized the importance of full cost recovery as a means to offsetting the difficult financial situation, but they cautioned against subsidizing non-core with core resources. A group of Board members stressed that a non-core dependent UNDP would be unable to deliver on its mandate. The group noted that while mobilization of national resources for development had had a positive impact, the modality was voluntary and intended, above all, to boost national ownership.

14. The same group of delegations also underscored the importance of national ownership and the need for programmes to be based on national priorities. The group urged UNDP to ensure that poverty eradication and the reduction of inequalities (with a focus on root causes) remained the priority areas of its development work, underpinning all other activities, in accordance with the strategic plan, 2014-2017, the quadrennial review and major global agendas, including, most notably, the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing or Development, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The group also saw the need to democratize the presence of developing countries on the Board and to ensure a more equitable geographical representation of Member States among the personnel of the United Nations development system.

15. In response, the Administrator of UNDP, addressing the major theme of funding, stressed that UNDP was actively diversifying its funding sources while ensuring the Board that non-core activities were not being subsidized by core resources. UNDP allocated the majority of its core funding for activities in crisis or

disaster-affected countries, and was good at leveraging additional resources by, for example, transferring a percentage of core funds to other areas, such as the needs of middle-income countries. She noted in that regard that there was a substantial gap in outcomes related to democratic governance, gender equality, women's empowerment, early recovery and thought-leadership. She stated that while UNDP responded to the less flexible funding environment through institutional efficiency and economy measures, core resources remained vulnerable to volume reductions and exchange rate fluctuations; she urged Board members in a position to do so to increase contributions. She indicated that the number of contributors through the 100 partners' campaign had dropped in 2015 but was expected to rise in 2016, and expressed the view that the structured funding dialogue was the ideal space to discuss the financial situation. While the thematic funding windows had proven to be a good initiative to improve the quality of non-core activities, flows had not been up to par; the windows she cautioned, however, should not divert funds from core. UNDP efforts to diversify funding included domestic resource mobilization, vertical funds, loan implementation, and the private sector.

16. The Administrator assured the Board that poverty eradication remained the core focus and benchmark of UNDP work, focused on the least developed countries, while UNDP fully supported the small island developing States through the Samoa Pathway. UNDP, she highlighted, played a crucial role in assisting countries to implement the 2030 Agenda at the country level, working in conjunction with United Nations organizations. With regard to the Grand Bargain and the humanitarian-development nexus, UNDP was committed to meeting the agreed targets and to working through the resident coordinator system to design multi-year humanitarian planning against collective outcomes, and to ensuring an inclusive process. UNDP also remained committed to South-South cooperation, working closely with the United Office for South-South Cooperation. UNDP was likewise committed to its leadership of the United Nations development system, a role it hoped the quadrennial review 2016 would confirm. On the quality of country programmes, she highlighted that UNDP hoped to shift the time for the approval of some 50 new programmes from 2017 to the first regular session 2018 in order to ensure that they were fully aligned with the new strategic plan, 2018-2021. In closing, the Administrator stressed the UNDP commitment to the evaluation function and timely implementation of evaluation recommendations, as well as to applying its zero tolerance policy on fraud while continuing to revise the policy to address all recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit.

UNDP funding issues

17. The Director of the Bureau of External Relations and Advocacy, UNDP, and the Director of the Bureau for Management Services introduced the item and provided a presentation on UNDP funding issues, including the following documents: the annual review of the financial situation, 2015 ([DP/2016/20](#)), detailed information relating to the annual review of the financial situation, 2015 ([DP/2016/20/Add.1](#)) and the status of regular funding commitments to UNDP and its associated funds and programmes for 2016 and onwards ([DP/2016/21](#)).

18. Board members welcomed the presentations and updates, but reiterated their concern over the ongoing difficult financial situation. They noted, in particular, that

some 32 per cent of the strategic plan, 2014-2017, remained unfunded. Delegations stated that UNDP was uniquely positioned to lead the United Nations development system, but that the organization had to be prepared to take on increasingly complex challenges and adapt to the new funding reality. A stable, predictable funding base was therefore needed to drive the change required. They appreciated the organization's efforts to mobilize resources through the variety of modalities mentioned in the presentations. They encouraged UNDP to actively pursue pooled funding and, in this context, stressed the importance of strengthening partnerships, outreach and collaboration with other organizations of the United Nations development system, as part of efforts to broaden the donor base, and the need for full cost recovery. The continued drop in core resources was a principal concern, and delegations urged UNDP to continue to engage in the structured dialogue on funding issues with the Board. They cautioned against cross-subsidizing core and non-core resources, and requested more detailed information in future reports on the status of cost recovery, financial volumes and a set of mutually agreed definitions on direct and indirect costs before discussions began on the new strategic plan, 2018-2021.

19. In response, the Chief Financial Officer of UNDP addressed the issue of cost recovery. He noted that the terms of reference of the Board-ordered independent review focused on compliance with the Board-approved policy, which, while progressive in nature, might need revision under the new strategic plan, 2018-2021, in order to reflect the future funding situation. As such, some of the Board's questions might be better answered at the first regular session 2017 when discussions on the new strategic plan would begin. The financing model that would underpin the new strategic plan would incorporate a revised cost-recovery policy developed specifically for that plan, reflecting lessons learned from the previous strategic plan, 2014-2017.

20. The Director of the Bureau of External Relations and Advocacy, UNDP, expressed appreciation for the positive comments on UNDP collaboration at country level, and welcomed announcements of new or renewed financial support, especially to core funding. UNDP, he assured the Board, did not foresee an ineluctable continued drop in core funding and explained that UNDP has faced similar downward trends in the past, which were reversed. UNDP would continue to focus on results and actively seek to adapt its business model to the evolving financial environment.

21. The Executive Board adopted decision 2016/16 on UNDP funding issues.

III. Country programmes and related matters

22. The Associate Administrator of UNDP introduced the item and provided an overview of the 27 country programmes up for Board approval as well as the extensions of four country programmes. The regional directors for Asia and the Pacific, Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, and Latin America and the Caribbean and the deputy regional directors for Africa and for the Arab States presented and elaborated on the country programmes for: Albania, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belize, Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, Eritrea, the Gambia, Guyana, Honduras, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jamaica, the Lao People's Democratic Republic,

Lebanon, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Peru, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Suriname, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago and Viet Nam, the subregional programme document for Barbados and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, as well as the two-year extension of the country programme for Malawi from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2018, the first one-year extension of the country programme for the Sudan from 1 January to 31 December 2017, the second one-year extension of the country programme for Somalia from 1 January to 31 December 2017 and the exceptional third-year extension of the country programme for Libya from 1 January to 31 December 2017.

23. Board members whose country programmes were up for Board review and approval commented on the programmes from the national perspective. They highlighted the participatory process followed in designing the country programmes while stressing the importance of national ownership and needs, and the achievements of their partnerships with UNDP at the country level. A group of delegations expressed reservations about the country programme preparation and approval process, emphasizing that it could be improved. The same group stated that Board members should be informed at the beginning of country programme document preparations so that they could participate accordingly, a move they said which would make the country programme process more comprehensive and transparent.

24. The Executive Board reviewed and approved, in accordance with Executive Board decision 2014/7, the country programme documents for: Albania ([DP/DCP/ALB/2](#)), Bahrain ([DP/DCP/BHR/3](#)), Bangladesh ([DP/DCP/BGD/3](#)), Belize ([DP/DCP/BLZ/3](#)), Brazil ([DP/DCP/BRA/3](#) and Corr.1), Côte d'Ivoire ([DP/DCP/CIV/2](#)), Eritrea ([DP/DCP/ERI/3](#)), the Gambia ([DP/DCP/GMB/3](#)), Guyana ([DP/DCP/GUY/3](#)), Honduras ([DP/DCP/HND/3](#)), the Islamic Republic of Iran ([DP/DCP/IRN/3](#)), Jamaica ([DP/DCP/JAM/3](#)), the Lao People's Democratic Republic ([DP/DCP/LAO/3/Rev.1](#)), Lebanon ([DP/DCP/LBN/2](#)), Mongolia ([DP/DCP/MNG/3](#)), Montenegro ([DP/DCP/MNE/2](#)), Morocco ([DP/DCP/MAR/3](#)), Mozambique ([DP/DCP/MOZ/3](#)), Peru ([DP/DCP/PER/3/Rev.1](#)), Sao Tome and Principe ([DP/DCP/STP/3](#)), Saudi Arabia ([DP/DCP/SAU/3](#) and Corr.1), Seychelles ([DP/DCP/SYC/3](#)), Suriname ([DP/DCP/SUR/3](#)), Thailand ([DP/DCP/THA/3](#)), Trinidad and Tobago ([DP/DCP/TTO/3](#)), Viet Nam ([DP/DCP/VNM/2](#)), and the subregional programme document for Barbados and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States ([DP/DSP/CAR/3](#)).

25. The Board approved the second one-year extension of the country programme for Somalia from 1 January to 31 December 2017, the two-year extension of the country programme for Malawi from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2018, and the exceptional third-year extension of the country programme for Libya from 1 January to 31 December 2017, as contained in document [DP/2016/22](#).

26. The Board took note of the first one-year extension of the country programme for the Sudan from 1 January to 31 December 2017, as contained in document [DP/2016/22](#).

IV. Evaluation

UNDP evaluation policy

27. The President of the Executive Board introduced the item, noting the importance of the evaluation policy and thanking Board members for their active engagement on the topic during the previous year. The President recognized the Independent Evaluation Office, UNDP, as the drafter of the revised policy, and expressed his appreciation to UNDP and the Independent Evaluation Office for bringing to the Board a well-conceived new policy that reflected the views expressed by Board members during its development.

28. The Director of the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP, introduced the UNDP evaluation policy (DP/2016/23) and updated the Board on ongoing reforms to strengthen the decentralized evaluation function. In turn, the Director of the Independent Evaluation Office, UNDP, thanked the President for his leadership in forging consensus on the issue, and presented key aspects of the new policy, including evaluation principles, operational and reporting expectations and new funding thresholds.

29. Members of the Board were united in welcoming the new evaluation policy, which they noted was clear and comprehensive and rooted solidly in the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) norms and standards. They noted that UNDP had in fact a strong evaluation base on which to build on further and create a solid corporate evaluation and learning culture. A group of delegations expressed appreciation that recommendations of the members of the Board were reflected in the new policy, including: (a) resource allocation targets for the evaluation function; (b) management responses that integrated lessons learned and steps to address evaluation recommendations; and (c) the engagement in independent system-wide evaluations, which were key for measuring performance across United Nations organizations, and especially important for tracking progress on the 2030 Agenda. For this, they called for enhanced coordination, exploration of new resource mobilization modalities, clear institutional roles and responsibilities relating to the evaluation function and continued Board-UNDP dialogue on evaluation. They stressed that the management response to evaluation findings was key to better learning, a higher quality evaluation culture and better results on the ground. They looked forward to engaging with the Audit and Evaluation Advisory Committee, which played a central role in advising UNDP management and the Board, at future Board sessions.

30. Delegations focused on the need for adequate resources and staff capacity for the success of the evaluation function, and urged UNDP to prioritize funding allocations to such evaluation. They were pleased to note that the new policy defined funding thresholds needed to ensure success of the evaluation function and the Independent Evaluation Office. They encouraged UNDP to build on its proven strong evaluation culture when developing its new strategic plan, 2018-2021, and to give highest priority to mobilizing additional resources. They noted that the evaluation function was essential for donor confidence and an incentive for increased contributions.

31. Delegations also welcomed the steps undertaken by UNDP to improve the quality of decentralized evaluations, which had been assessed as being weak by the 2014 Evaluation Policy Review. They expected the new evaluation policy to provide further incentives to strengthen the quality and utility of decentralized evaluations, and looked forward to a further update on UNDP efforts undertaken in that regard at the first regular session 2017.

32. On the importance of independent system-wide evaluations, delegations stressed the need to devise a common evaluation approach throughout the United Nations development system, in accordance with the 2030 Agenda. Doing so would require better coordination and cooperation among the evaluation offices of the organizations of the United Nations system, and an exploration of specific new funding opportunities for independent system-wide evaluations. The 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review process offered a prime opportunity for furthering those efforts. Delegations underlined the importance of addressing evaluation recommendations in a timely manner to improve decision-making and reporting. One delegation welcomed the use of specific, measureable, attainable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) indicators, while stressing more was needed to improve data-gathering. Another delegation stated that future revisions should be shared with the Board in advance.

33. In response, the Director of the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP, reiterated that the comments of the delegations fully reflected the spirit in which the new evaluation policy had been drafted. UNDP, he underscored, was committed to effective results-based management to ensure maximum impact against the resources entrusted to it. UNDP was also keen to continuously build its corporate evaluation culture through, among other measures, strengthening evaluation quality and allocating further funding to the evaluation function. He stressed that financial autonomy went hand in hand with functional independence, for which funding benchmarks and guarantees were crucial, and stated that UNDP was committed to the full implementation of the new evaluation policy once it was approved by the Board.

34. The Director of the Independent Evaluation Office, UNDP, reasserted that the comments of the Board aligned fully with what UNDP aimed to achieve through the new evaluation policy, and noted that it was a model for the organizations of the United Nations system as well as for other entities working at the international level.

Report on the implementation of the recommendations of the evaluation of the UNDP contribution to poverty reduction

35. The Director of the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP, presented the report on the implementation of recommendations of the evaluation of the UNDP contribution to poverty reduction ([DP/2016/26](#)).

36. No delegations had interventions under this specific item, but as part of the interventions during the item on the UNDP evaluation policy, two delegations suggested that, rather than narrowly focusing on an “evaluation culture”, it would be better for UNDP to aspire to a robust “learning culture”, one of the main recommendations of the 2013 evaluation of the UNDP contribution to poverty

reduction. They appreciated how UNDP had responded to the Board's request for an update on how the organization had followed up on those recommendations. The Board-UNDP dialogue on evaluation findings, they noted, constituted a best practice. The current report helped the Board to understand how UNDP was working to alleviate poverty and to "leave no one behind", as stated in the 2030 Agenda. They were pleased to note that the strategic plan, 2014-2017, had responded to the recommendations contained in the 2013 evaluation, and they encouraged UNDP to use the 2013 recommendations as a reference when preparing the new strategic plan, 2018-2021.

37. The Director of the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP, had no further comments on the item in response to the intervention of the delegations.

38. The Executive Board adopted decision 2016/17 on the UNDP evaluation policy and the report on the implementation of the recommendations of the evaluation of the UNDP contribution to poverty reduction.

39. The Executive Board deferred discussion of the evaluation of the UNDP contribution to anti-corruption and governance integrity in a development context (DP/2016/24) as well as the management response to the evaluation of the UNDP contribution to anti-corruption and governance integrity in a development context (DP/2016/26) to the first regular session 2017.

UNFPA segment

V. Country programmes and related matters

40. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme) provided an overview of the 21 country programmes presented for Board approval, as well as the extensions of nine country programmes.

41. The UNFPA regional directors for the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, East and Southern Africa, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean and West and Central Africa presented the country programmes for Albania, Algeria, Bangladesh, Brazil, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Eritrea, the Gambia, Honduras, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Peru, Sao Tome and Principe, Thailand and Viet Nam, and the English-speaking and Dutch-speaking Caribbean, as well as the extensions of the country programmes for Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, the Central African Republic, Gabon, Malawi, Mauritania, Senegal and the Sudan.

42. Under the new format for consideration of country programme documents, the in-depth presentation on individual country programmes, including explanations of specific issues of interest to Member States, was done at the informal session that preceded the second regular session.¹ Delegations of the Member States whose country programmes were presented to the Board for discussion and approval commented on the programmes from their respective national perspectives. They

¹ The full statement of the UNFPA Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific is annexed to this report.

highlighted the participatory processes followed in designing the country programmes while stressing the importance of national ownership and the achievements of their partnerships with UNFPA at the country level. The delegate of Morocco noted that his Government had requested the re-establishment of the UNFPA representative post in the country to strengthen the country office and implementation of the new country programme. A number of delegations made comments, which they requested be taken into account in the implementation of the country programme documents.

43. The Executive Board reviewed and approved, in accordance with its decision 2014/7, the country programmes documents for Albania ([DP/FPA/CPD/ALB/4](#)), Algeria ([DP/FPA/CPD/DZA/6](#)), Bangladesh ([DP/FPA/CPD/BGD/9](#)), Brazil ([DP/FPA/CPD/BRA/6](#)), Chad ([DP/FPA/CPD/TCD/7](#)), Côte d'Ivoire ([DP/FPA/CPD/CIV/7](#)), the Democratic People's Republic of Korea ([DP/FPA/CPD/PRK/6](#)), Eritrea ([DP/FPA/CPD/ERI/5](#)), the Gambia ([DP/FPA/CPD/GMB/8](#)), Honduras ([DP/FPA/CPD/HND/8](#)), the Islamic Republic of Iran ([DP/FPA/CPD/IRN/6](#)), Lao People's Democratic Republic ([DP/FPA/CPD/LAO/6](#)), Lebanon ([DP/FPA/CPD/LBN/4](#)), Mongolia ([DP/FPA/CPD/MNG/6](#)), Morocco ([DP/FPA/CPD/MAR/9](#)), Mozambique ([DP/FPA/CPD/MOZ/9](#)), Peru ([DP/FPA/CPD/PER/9](#)), Sao Tome and Principe ([DP/FPA/CPD/STP/7](#)), Thailand ([DP/FPA/CPD/THA/11](#)) and Viet Nam ([DP/FPA/CPD/VNM/9](#)), and the subregional programme document for the English-speaking and Dutch-speaking Caribbean ([DP/FPA/CPD/CAR/6](#)).

44. The Board took note of the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Cabo Verde, the Central African Republic, Gabon, Mauritania and the Sudan, and approved the second one-year extensions of the country programmes for Burkina Faso and Burundi, and the two-year extensions for Malawi and Senegal, as contained in document ([DP/FPA/2016/11](#)).

VI. Statement by the Executive Director and UNFPA funding issues

45. The statement of the UNFPA Executive Director, delivered on his behalf by the Deputy Executive Director (Management) as he was unable to attend the session, highlighted the Fund's ongoing work to support countries in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in transitioning to the Sustainable Development Goals. UNFPA was in the process of developing its new strategic plan, 2018-2021, which would be fully aligned with the 2030 Agenda and the ICPD beyond 2014 agenda, and built on lessons learned and best practices from the previous plan while remaining focused on the plan's vision and strategic direction, known as the "bull's eye". She also reaffirmed the Fund's commitment to coherent implementation, monitoring and reporting with other organizations of the United Nations development system.

46. However, the funding situation, presented in the report on contributions by Member States and others to UNFPA and revenue projections for 2016 and future years ([DP/FPA/2016/10](#)), continued to be critical, with a continued fall in regular resources and ongoing application of austerity measures. Revenue projections for 2016 and 2017 were, in fact, significantly below the resources needed to implement

the strategic plan owing, inter alia, to unfavourable exchange rate fluctuations. As a result, UNFPA would have to make difficult choices that would affect its delivery and its beneficiaries. The resources decline had already affected its capacity to deliver on certain results, and had forced the Fund to lower its budgetary ceilings in all categories of country offices, affecting both development and normative operations.

47. The Fund was actively exploring new financing modalities and opportunities (through the private sector, thematic funds and joint programmes with other United Nations organizations), in particular to ensure the financial health of the UNFPA supplies programme, and it remained committed to ensuring maximum resource accountability, efficiency and effectiveness. However, while the 2015 resource mobilization strategy was bearing fruit, staff resource mobilization capacity was limited; predictable long-term core resources remained the best guarantee that the Fund would be able to carry out its mandate. She called on Member States in a position to do so to step up their contributions to regular resources. UNFPA looked forward to engaging with the Board to improve the financial situation.

48. On the humanitarian front, she highlighted that the Fund was responding to humanitarian crises in more than 56 countries, providing women and girls with sexual and reproductive health and reproductive-rights services, and addressing gender-based violence, building on its commitments at the World Humanitarian Summit and the Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action. The Fund was active, notably in Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, and Yemen, and in response to the Zika virus in Latin America and the Caribbean. UNFPA was also active in building local capacity and training health and protection workers, while strengthening its own crisis surge capacity, having deployed over 100 responders in nearly 20 countries to date in 2016.

49. On family planning, she stated that the Fund was revising its supplies strategy through a new governance model to boost efforts to achieve its goals, including the Family Planning 2020 goals, which now included commitments from 39 countries. Family planning activities were also critical for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals contained in the 2030 Agenda, especially in light of the demographic dividend in many countries and regions. She noted that the Fund would host a side event on the margins of the General Assembly (on 19 September 2016) to offer African leaders a platform to build partnerships for the demographic dividend on the continent. Similarly, the *State of the World Population 2015* report, to appear in October 2016, examined how the future depended on girls at the pivotal age of 10 years.

50. Delegations continued to show strong support for the Fund's mandate, and were encouraged by its achievements in driving the ICPD agenda forward. They welcomed the strides made in implementing the UNFPA strategic plan, 2014-2017, in building the capacity and systems of Governments to include sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights policies and programmes in national budgets and planning, in advocating the rights of adolescents and youth and in strengthening intergovernmental dialogue on the demographic dividend. Board members reiterated the Fund's critical and unique role in fulfilling the 2030 Agenda, leading the way in ensuring access to sexual and reproductive health care and reproductive rights services.

51. Delegations continued to express concern, however, over the ongoing decrease in regular resource funding, which, they noted, was now negatively impacting delivery and the UNFPA presence at the country and regional levels. They encouraged UNFPA to continue its efforts to diversify its funding base, including through the private sector, and to mitigate the impact of exchange rate fluctuations. Some delegations underlined the importance of the annual structured dialogue on funding, which they stressed should be strengthened and institutionalized. Delegations welcomed the online portal, which included information on funding-related data, but sought more thorough analysis of the funding gaps and challenges and how they affected implementation of the strategic plan. They also called for more elaborate risk analysis of unmet financial needs, and suggested that the portal could be developed further in cooperation with other organizations of the United Nations development system.

52. A number of delegations underscored it was the collective responsibility of the Board to ensure that UNFPA reached its full potential in providing countries with the necessary assistance to achieve Board-set priorities, including: (a) UNFPA leading the way on sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, assisting countries in tackling unsafe abortion practices and meeting family planning needs, including in emergencies and protracted crises; and (b) pressing ahead with reform of the UNFPA supplies programme to improve financial sustainability, supply chain management and in-country last-mile delivery. They also supported the recommendations of the thematic evaluation on UNFPA support to family planning, including implementation through a human-rights based approach.

53. Delegations stressed that the Fund, as well as the United Nations development system overall, had to demonstrate that it was making the best use of funds spent. Transparency and accountability were therefore vital for donor confidence, along with reassurance and proof that misconduct and fraud were being dealt with swiftly and robustly. They sought a clear, action-oriented response to the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on fraud prevention. Some delegations indicated that UNFPA should combine capacities for greater impact and mobilize resources together with other United Nations development system organizations through global thematic funds, pooled funds and joint programmes. Such efforts should also benefit from a cost-benefit analysis and be assessed from an aid effectiveness perspective. They requested details on cost recovery in future reports, guided by the quadrennial review recommendation for a harmonized methodology, in order to ensure transparency in core resource allocations. Delegations also drew attention to the key role UNFPA played in the upcoming quadrennial review 2016 discussions.

54. Board members expressed strong support for the Fund's work in humanitarian settings to provide sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights services that also addressed gender-based violence. They applauded the Fund's commitment to the "Grand Bargain" at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, and looked forward to learning how the Fund would implement, prioritize and address challenges related to its commitments. One delegation reiterated its concern about the Fund's decision not to fully fund or replenish the emergency response fund and the humanitarian response reserve, and urged management to devote adequate resources to the two funds. A number of countries stressed the fragility of their populations and development gains in the face of demographic changes, disease and

climate change, and urged UNFPA to step up its regional support, buttressed by a more equitable enabling international environment.

55. In response, UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management), welcomed delegations' comments on the centrality of the Fund's mandate in achieving the Goals, and reaffirmed that the "bull's eye" remained the focus on the Fund's work, as per its strategic plan, 2014-2017. The funding situation, however, jeopardized the solid gains made at country level over the years; for its part, UNFPA was focused on ensuring the effective use of its available resources both for programme and operational activities, through austerity measures and by closely reviewing the Fund's priorities against the bull's eye. She noted, in response to the report of the Joint Inspection Unit report, UNFPA efforts to address the issue of fraud, the response for which was available on the Unit's website. UNFPA welcomed the suggestions for the web portal, transparency, the structured dialogue, cost recovery and resource mobilization gaps, as well as on making improvements to the supplies programme both internally and externally, to which UNFPA was committed. She stated that the Fund shared the concerns of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) regarding its regional issues, adding that the new subregional programme, presented for Board approval, sought to mobilize additional resources. The Fund's difficult financial situation and the related austerity measures, she acknowledged, were having a negative effect on the region, but UNFPA was committed to maintaining its presence there.

56. On the humanitarian front, she thanked Member States for their continued support for the overall role of UNFPA in humanitarian situations, particularly in preventing sexual and gender-based violence. She noted that UNFPA had allocated \$4 million in the emergency fund and retained \$1 million in the humanitarian response reserve. The implementation rate of the emergency fund currently stood at around 50 per cent. UNFPA still had to collect about 35 per cent of the pledges to regular resources made to UNFPA for 2016. She stressed that, in view of the funding situation, the organization would make full use of existing allocations in the emergency fund and use \$1 million in addition (from the humanitarian response reserve) to meet immediate needs of countries. UNFPA aimed to replenish the humanitarian response reserve once the pending funds pledged had been received.

57. The Director of the Division of Communications and Strategic Partnerships, UNFPA, stressed that the Fund was making every effort to mitigate the continued drop in regular resources through the UNFPA resource mobilization strategy, which was already bearing fruit. UNFPA, he noted, welcomed the proposed three types of funding analysis for future reports, focused on funding gaps, risk analysis and benefit analysis. Since instituting country-specific targets in 2015, 68 per cent of non-core resources were coming from national-level fundraising. He highlighted that while UNFPA resource mobilization capacity remained limited, the Fund had made good progress. In 2015, UNFPA funds were hit hard by exchange rate fluctuations while 2016 figures were projected to be much lower, although affected more by declining donor contributions. He noted that a quarter of the Fund's income came from its participation in joint programmes with other organizations of the United Nations system. On the website, UNFPA would soon have online a donor-specific web portal providing details of donor contributions against results. The Fund, he stressed, keenly welcomed continued structured dialogues on funding.

58. The Director of the Division of Management Services, UNFPA, noting the Fund's measures to mitigate foreign exchange losses, highlighted that UNFPA outsourced its treasury activities to UNDP and used the same instruments as UNDP to protect its buying power at the beginning of the fiscal year. Those instruments focused essentially on regular resources, and UNFPA continually monitored the situation together with UNDP. He highlighted that the Fund's actions to immediately transfer funds to United States dollars upon receipt reduced the level of risk and that early payment of contributions would always mitigate the risk of currency fluctuation. On cost recovery, the effective rate for UNFPA was 7 per cent, taking into account thematic trust funds and Government cost-sharing, in accordance with the approved harmonized methodology in decision 2013/9. The financial impact of indirect recovery waivers for 2014-2015 was minimal, below \$200,000. Similarly, the number of legacy agreements, which were declining over time, had minimal effect against the original 8 per cent benchmark (in decision 2013/9), totalling some \$1.2 million for the two-year period. UNFPA, he noted, had adopted a number of measures to implement the Board-approved cost recovery methodology, although direct cost recovery remained a challenge. He assured the Board that the Fund was ready to work with other United Nations organizations to address the recommendations of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit.

59. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme) reiterated that the rights-based approach was one of the cornerstones of the UNFPA "bull's eye". In line with the 2030 Agenda, UNFPA was targeting the most vulnerable. She highlighted examples of UNFPA worked at country level to reach the most vulnerable, including through family planning and a new set of guidelines for their implementation that promote the use of the rights-based approach. The country programmes now included a compact of commitment that aligned the outcome results to the 2030 Agenda. The UNFPA communications strategy also articulated the rights-based approach for inclusion in all areas of the Fund's work. She stressed that UNFPA had a "choice not chance" policy that emphasized a non-coercive approach to family planning that included a gamut of options for couples.

60. The Executive Board adopted decision 2016/18 on UNFPA funding issues.

VII. Evaluation

61. The Director of the Evaluation Office, UNFPA, presented the thematic evaluation of UNFPA support to family planning, 2008-2013 ([DP/FPA/2016/CRP.5](#)), including annexes, which was followed by the management response to the thematic evaluation ([DP/FPA/2016/CRP.6](#)) from the UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme).

62. Board members welcomed the findings of the comprehensive thematic evaluation, whose timing, they noted, was key in developing the new strategic plan, 2018-2021, and in operationalizing the 2030 Agenda. Delegations recognized UNFPA as the global leader in family planning in the evaluation period 2008-2014, during which it had ensured effective delivery of supplies and universal access to contraceptives and family planning within a sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights context, including in crisis and conflict situations. They also

recognized the fundamental role of the UNFPA supplies programme in achieving Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda related to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights. They highlighted, however, that UNFPA would have to make important strategic decisions that prioritized and enhanced national ownership and sustainability. They welcomed the reforms the Fund had begun to implement and looked forward to their full implementation in order to ensure that commodities were reaching end-users in the most effective and efficient ways, building on lessons learned and evidence-based programming. The same group of delegations also recognized UNFPA for its work in supporting the Global Finance Facility's "Every Woman, Every Child" initiative, and they looked forward to the Fund's engagement at country level.

63. Another group of delegations expressed satisfaction with the generally positive outcomes of the thematic evaluation, but would have preferred a more concise, focused report, and they requested that updates be provided in a shorter form. They recognized the Fund's significant contributions to strengthening reproductive health commodity security and contraceptive supply chains. Those UNFPA activities, they stressed, played a central role in achieving the 2030 Agenda and the Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health. They commended the Fund's leadership and commitment on family planning grounded in a human-rights based approach and the achievement of Family Planning 2020, but stressed the importance of gender equality, with a focus on the most marginalized, youth, adolescents and women, particularly adolescent girls. They expressed strong support for the UNFPA supplies trust fund, which was key for furthering support for family planning. They supported integration approaches to the supplies programme, including through a robust country-support model, and encouraged the Fund to continue to support the strengthening of family planning in national health systems and to promote effectiveness and efficiency. They suggested that the Fund further scale up its engagement with the country-led Global Finance Facility and country investments in order to address gaps in family planning. They also encouraged UNFPA to continue working closely with local governments and partners to mainstream family planning in projects and programmes and to broker partnerships, as part of efforts to address culturally sensitive family planning issues.

64. One delegation would have preferred a broader family planning methodology that also addressed the contributions of family planning to socioeconomic development, while cautioning against using language in reports implying that Governments were "accountable" to UNFPA.

65. In response, the Director of the Evaluation Office, UNFPA, welcomed the assertion of delegations that the high quality of the evaluation report was useful for Board proceedings and for policy and programme planning. She noted that the Evaluation Office shared the outcomes of evaluations broadly, taking into account Board comments and decisions. On questions related to rights-based approaches and the needs of vulnerable groups, she highlighted that the report had addressed those issues, and added that in 2018 UNFPA would submit the results of a meta-evaluation of the Fund's contribution to meeting the needs of vulnerable and marginalized groups to the Board. On the length of the report, she noted that the Evaluation Office had begun in 2015 to produce 5,000-word briefs to address that issue, adding that evaluation reports were nevertheless technical in character and details were often required to convey a full picture. That said, the Evaluation Office

actively worked to reduce the size of its reports. In response to the call for a broader methodological scope in the report, she highlighted that because the Evaluation Office had confined itself to addressing the period 2008-2013, it was unable to take into account broader socioeconomic issues that were only coming to the fore in 2016. On accountability, she stressed that the evaluations in general focused on the role of UNFPA, and did not in any circumstance suggest that Member States were being held to account.

66. UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme) welcomed the comments on the UNFPA supplies programme, and assured delegations that the Fund always prioritized national ownership and transparent evidence-based planning and programming, principles that UNFPA would strengthen in the new strategic plan, 2018-2021. She reiterated the Fund's commitment to partnerships and to mainstreaming the gender component in all areas of its work.

67. The Director of the Division for Communication and Strategic Partnerships, UNFPA, highlighted the importance of continued, strengthened partnerships to ensure ownership of initiatives with all stakeholders. On the contribution to socioeconomic development, he suggested that the focus should be on how the Fund's assistance in its areas of comparative advantage would lead to socioeconomic improvement.

68. The Director of the Programme Division, UNFPA, assured delegations that the Fund's strategic focus, in accordance with the "bull's eye", was on youth, adolescents, and especially adolescent girls, as the central element of family planning and reproductive health, particularly in countries most in need.

69. The Executive Board was unable to reach consensus on the draft decision on the thematic evaluation of UNFPA support to family planning, 2008-2013 ([DP/FPA/2016/CRP.5](#)), and its annexes, and decided to defer further discussion and decision to the first regular session 2017.

70. In the subsequent discussion, one delegation expressed a difference with the course of action proposed by the President of the Board on the procedural aspect of the deferral of the draft decision, on the grounds that the existing text could not form the basis for any new negotiation. Several delegations raised concerns that the inability of the Board to reach consensus on decisions would jeopardize the effectiveness of the Board. The President of the Board reminded delegations that it was their responsibility as Board members to work together to resolve differences and reach consensus.

UNOPS segment

VIII. Statement by the Executive Director and midterm review of the strategic plan, 2014-2017

71. In her statement to the Board, the Executive Director of UNOPS, presented the results of the midterm review of the UNOPS strategic plan, 2014-2017 ([DP/OPS/2016/5](#)), as well as the annual statistical report on the procurement activities of United Nations system organizations ([DP/OPS/2016/6](#)). The review

showed how UNOPS was contributing to each of the Sustainable Development Goals through its assistance to partners, and pointed to the organization's strong management results and solid financial performance. UNOPS delivery had risen, on average, 13 per cent a year, while management expenses had remained stable or had declined. The review indicated that partner satisfaction was higher than ever, at 82 per cent, and UNOPS staff engagement was well above external benchmarks for high-performing international organizations. UNOPS, she stressed, continued to invest in new technology to innovate and streamline its business processes, and was driven to deliver the highest quality services to its partners.

72. Turning to the 2030 Agenda, she noted that UNOPS priority areas, currently and in the future, focused on building new infrastructure (through infrastructure investments and resilience planning) — one of the most important prerequisites for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, addressing humanitarian crises and building resilience — and excelling in solid and transparent procurement services, which could yield enormous returns on a global scale and help to fight corruption. In the future, she highlighted, domestic resources would outweigh official development assistance in driving achievement of the Goals, and the United Nations would co-finance development with the private sector. UNOPS, for its part, was stepping up promotion of public-private partnerships while engaging catalytically with financial institutions in “de-risking” projects for private investment. In all those efforts, she stated, UNOPS remained focused on procurement, project management, human resources and financial management and infrastructure.

73. Board members commended UNOPS for its continued strong performance and its achievements against its strategic plan, 2014-2017, as demonstrated in the midterm review. They welcomed the record amount of aid, greater effectiveness and high partner satisfaction, while commending the organization for working in some of the most difficult settings where most organizations did not have a presence. Delegations expressed appreciation for UNOPS engagement in fragile States and in the least developed countries, focused on social and environmental impacts, and especially on the most vulnerable populations, including through public-private partnerships. Delegations, furthermore, commended UNOPS for seeking innovative ways to engage and mobilize the private sector and financial institutions, and to promote public-private partnerships. Furthermore, delegations not only expressed support for UNOPS involvement in public-private partnerships, but also strongly supported its deeper engagement with investors through its social impact investing initiative.

74. Delegations encouraged UNOPS to continue to strengthen and target its operational priorities, focusing on its three pillars — sustainable project management, sustainable infrastructure construction and sustainable procurement — while maintaining a strong capacity-building component. One delegation requested a briefing on evidence-based infrastructure planning. Delegations welcomed UNOPS procurement activities, but, given its associated risks, requested that the organization ensure well-defined delegations of authority and oversight mechanisms, especially for procurement of services of implementing partners. Overall, they expressed appreciation for the United Nations development system's increased procurement of services from developing country suppliers, especially those in transition and the least developed countries. The UNOPS procurement approach, it was noted, had helped to boost transparency and efficiency while

lowering costs, and delegations looked forward to continuing progress. Delegations requested that the forthcoming management plan clearly define the UNOPS mandate, taking into account actual capacity to provide services. Delegations urged UNOPS to continue to collaborate with and improve services to the United Nations development system at all levels, in line with the quadrennial review.

75. Board members looked forward to in-depth dialogue with UNOPS on strategies moving forward, while one delegation anticipated further discussions on the full-time, rapidly deployable United Nations Standby Team of Mediation Experts. It encouraged UNOPS to provide information on how it would follow up on common programming principles (such as human rights-based approaches and gender equality). Delegations also recommended that future dialogue with the Board include discussion on how UNOPS (a project-based organization) could deliver in accordance with the integrated United Nations system-wide 2030 Agenda approach, and how it viewed its role in the United Nations reform agenda and relevant division of labour. They encouraged UNOPS to further develop its scorecard in devising its new strategic plan, 2018-2021. There was a request for UNOPS to provide Board members with a road map of the new strategic plan, 2018-2021, and to include partners in its development.

76. In response, the Executive Director of UNOPS, thanking delegations for their continued strong support, reiterated that UNOPS had developed a series of support functions that benefited partners so that they could concentrate on their core mandates. UNOPS would continue to develop its specialized services in response to ongoing demand because they not only helped partners to deliver more and better but also helped the United Nations development system to “Deliver as one”. UNOPS, she underscored, in its pursuit to drive excellence, focused on devising services that enhanced the quality, speed and cost efficiency of development programmes. Because the UNOPS mandate focused on infrastructure and procurement, Board support for its work in those areas was crucial. The integrated plan and design of infrastructure, she noted, was key to driving and delivering on the 2030 Agenda. In particular, in the area of infrastructure, partnering with the private sector was important, since without its participation it would be impossible to achieve the 2030 Agenda. In this regard, the United Nations system would advance the principles of sustainable development and maintain commitment to the core United Nations values. Stating that UNOPS was committed to transparency in all areas, especially procurement, she noted her readiness to expound on the results of the statistical review covering the entire United Nations development system. UNOPS, she stressed, worked best in fragile settings and in the least developed countries, providing specialized services under difficult circumstances. But it was also active in middle-income countries, an area it wished to explore further. UNOPS, she assured, would work closely with the Board and reflect its demands in designing the new strategic plan, 2018-2021.

77. The Executive Board adopted decision 2016/19 on the midterm review of the strategic plan, 2014-2017.

78. The Executive Board adopted decision 2016/20 on the annual statistical report on the procurement activities of the United Nations system, 2015.

Joint segment

IX. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

79. The Director, Bureau for Management Services, UNDP, introduced the report of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on joint procurement activities ([DP/FPA/OPS/2016/1](#)). The Director of the Office of Sourcing and Operations, UNDP, the General Counsel and Officer-in-Charge of the New York office, UNOPS, and the Chief of the Procurement Services Branch, UNFPA, presented the report's focus areas and main conclusions from their organizational perspectives.

80. A group of delegations commended UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS for their increased efforts to establish innovative joint procurement activities, which had led to significant cost savings, more efficient procurement processes and the provision of high quality goods and services. They recognized the key role of the procurement network of the UNDG High-level Committee on Management in that area, and encouraged the Copenhagen-based United Nations offices to take a lead on procurement reform and best practices and to disseminate them throughout the United Nations system. They looked forward to the upcoming system-wide commodity study, and encouraged the three organizations to use the study's findings in their procurement work. They commended the organizations for leveraging the procurement services of other United Nations organizations, but noted that the volume (at \$92 million) remained modest. Delegations encouraged the three organizations to explore opportunities for collaboration at country, regional and global levels, and to provide greater detail on the values of efficiency savings achieved across sectors and commodity categories and on how they were being reinvested in poverty reduction measures.

81. Noting procurement's high-risk nature, the delegations urged UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to ensure solid controls and oversight mechanisms while welcoming recent reforms to the United Nations Global Marketplace, which automatically screened vendors against an established sanctions list. They also welcomed the increased use of long-term agreements, encouraged the three organizations to expand their use and urged them to work together early on to aggregate demand and coordinate approaches in order to influence and develop markets and achieve maximum advantage from economies of scale and volume discounts. The delegations also welcomed the innovative approach that the United Nations organizations had taken to identify non-United Nations partners for joint collaboration, as well as collaborative approaches among the organizations of the United Nations development system. They encouraged United Nations country teams to pursue the Delivering-as-One modality as a prime mover of joint procurement. They called on the organizations to systematically report on joint procurement activities and savings to the Board, and to use the report's findings to apply lessons learned and build on progress.

82. In response, the General Counsel and Director of the Legal Group, UNOPS, expressed appreciation for the advice and encouragement of the delegations. UNOPS, as the entity responsible for coordinating procurement reporting among the organizations, as contained in the annual statistical report on the procurement activities of United Nations system organizations ([DP/OPS/2016/6](#)), was focused on

improving procurement reporting. He noted that the organizations had made much progress, despite the learning curve, and had achieved a level of data confidence that was now allowing them to tackle analytical aspects, as demonstrated in the report submitted to the Board at the session. UNOPS, he indicated, would share that approach with the procurement network of the UNDG High-level Committee on Management to forge a path forward for future reports.

83. The Chief of the Procurement Services Branch, UNFPA, addressing the modest volume of procurement services provided to United Nations organizations, stressed that there were areas in which UNFPA could not collaborate, especially in the light of the “lead agency” concept. The Fund, he highlighted, was the only United Nations organization purchasing reproductive health commodities, whereas UNICEF, for example, bought vaccines, an area in which UNFPA could not participate. The proposed study would help to identify areas where the organizations could collaborate on procurement. He stressed that guaranteeing adequate and enhanced controls for procurement, with stronger risk management measures, was a top priority for all three organizations. The High-level Committee on Management procurement network, he pointed out, was working closely with UNDG to determine how the organizations could support country offices in implementing joint procurement by using the common rules, policies and processes that the network had put in place.

84. The Director of the Bureau for Management Services, UNDP, stressed that UNDP was also committed to using the same procurement tools designed by the High-level Committee on Management’s procurement network, and indicated that he would share the Board’s commitments and suggestions with the Committee, ensuring that the issue was dealt with at both the Committee and the UNDG levels. He noted that the United Nations system-wide approach was driving current level of progress. He echoed that the organizations had reached a level of data confidence that would spur progress even further.

85. The Executive Board took note of the report of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on joint procurement activities ([DP/FPA/OPS/2016/1](#)).

X. Follow-up to the Programme Coordinating Board Meeting of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

86. The Executive Board decided to defer discussion of this item on the report on the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the Programme Coordinating Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS ([DP/2016/27-DP/FPA/2016/11](#)) to the first regular session 2017.

XI. Field visits

87. The two rapporteurs presented their respective reports to the Board: (a) the report of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Executive Board field visit to Guinea ([DP/FPA/OPS/2016/CRP.1](#)); and (b) the report of the joint field visit of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP to

Kyrgyzstan ([DP/FPA/OPS-ICEF-UNW-WFP/2016/CRP.1](#)). The Regional Director of the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa and the Chair of the undg regional team for Europe and Central Asia presented remarks on the field visits to their respective regions. In addition, the Resident Coordinator for Kyrgyzstan, a guest speaker, further elaborated on the visit from the country team and national perspective.

88. In their general comments, Board members stressed the usefulness of the field visits in giving them first-hand experience of the work of United Nations development organizations on the ground and in helping them to understand their positioning at the country level in collaboration with Governments and their partners. They saw the field visits as an excellent way to share experiences and lessons learned. They also highlighted the importance of United Nations system coherence in programme delivery at county level, building on their different comparative advantages.

89. The Executive Board took note of the report of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Executive Board field visit to Guinea (DP-FPA-OPS/2016/CRP.1).

90. The Executive Board also took note of the report of the joint field visit of the Executive Boards of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP to Kyrgyzstan ([DP/FPA/OPS-ICEF-UNW-WFP/2016/CRP.1](#)).

XII. Other matters

Joint dialogue with the principals of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on advancing the humanitarian-development nexus within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

91. The session included a special event: a joint dialogue between the Executive Board and the Executive Director, UNOPS, the Deputy Executive Director (Management), UNFPA, the Deputy Executive Director (Programme), UNFPA, the Director for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP, and the Director for Crisis Response, UNDP, on the topic, “The 2030 Agenda: Advancing the Humanitarian-Development Nexus”. The presentation and discussions focused on four main questions: (a) how implementation of the 2030 Agenda allowed for a more comprehensive, joint approach by humanitarian and development actors and how it looked in practice; (b) how UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS viewed their readiness to advance the commitment to action; (c) how addressing large movements of refugees and migrants linked with commitments made in the 2030 Agenda to “leave no one behind” and the role of development actors; and (d) what major shifts were needed to finance results against collective and humanitarian outcomes.

92. Board members welcomed the discussion and underlined the need to reflect development perspectives in humanitarian planning and implementation. Progress to date had not been sufficient in tackling humanitarian-development obstacles, due, in part, to underfunding. Governance of humanitarian-development integration was key and should build on the commitments made in the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and at the World Humanitarian Summit. Board members noted that they should also have greater oversight in forging a single humanitarian-development framework. Humanitarian activities were characterized as distinct from development in that they had an international legal underpinning, which should not be open to negotiation,

and interventions often addressed both humanitarian and development needs. The 2030 Agenda also addressed humanitarian and disaster needs, which had to be integrated into Board and agency planning. From the donor perspective, it was important to view humanitarian and development work as interrelated. Key to success was building national and local capacity for the long term. Delegations sought clarification on whether further incentives or guidance were needed to integrate the humanitarian-development nexus. The need for that integration and the need to address people's basic needs had become acute during migrant and refugee movements from crisis-affected areas. There was strong support for joint analysis, multi-year planning, transparency and innovation. The quadrennial review was a key normative driver in helping to integrate the humanitarian-development nexus.

93. Panel members stressed that the United Nations could not resolve the humanitarian and migrant crisis alone. Given the amount of funding needed to address humanitarian crises, the role of the private sector was crucial, along with effective use of official development assistance, strong governance and an independent resident coordinator. A fundamental shift was needed from project-based funding to more flexible demand-based, unearmarked, innovative funding so that humanitarian and development actors could adapt their programmes to changing needs and risk levels through a multi-year approach, as noted at the World Humanitarian Summit. They also highlighted the importance of data analysis in meeting the needs of the most vulnerable and "leaving no one behind". On migrants and refugees, there was the need to create local job opportunities and generate hope. Country-level best practices offered a rich source that donors and Member States could build on at low cost. The 2030 Agenda purposely utilized language denoting "convergence" between the humanitarian and development dimensions, which implied joint planning and implementation. At the country level, the resident coordinators/humanitarian coordinators integrated all development and humanitarian partners in planning and implementation. There was the need, however, to respect both the humanitarian and development "spaces", which could not be merged, and to focus on root causes. There was also the need to prioritize burden-sharing in addressing the migrant and refugee crisis, thereby avoiding unrealistic solutions to deport or absorb such populations.

Address by the Chair of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) Staff Council

94. In his statement to the Board, the Chair of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS/UN-Women Staff Council touched on a number of topics, including transparency, adherence to principles, human rights of "non-staff" and equal pay for equal work, audit reports, legality of the use of "non-staff", issues with the retirement age, delays in pension payments, performance and career development, the importance of having the Ombudsperson of the United Nations funds and programmes address the Board, the use of compensation packages and respect for the principles of international civil service.

95. In their management responses, the Director of the Bureau for Management Services, UNDP, the Director of the Division for Human Resources, UNFPA, and the General Counsel and Director of the Legal Group, UNOPS, respectively,

underscored the good working relationships each organization had with the Staff Council and the measures each was taking to address staff concerns.

96. In the sole intervention, one delegation stated that while the Board could not directly take steps to address staff issues, Board members expected the United Nations organizations and the Staff Council to act in accordance with the principles and values laid out in the Charter of the United Nations.

97. The Executive Board took note of the statement by the Chair of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS/UN-Women Staff Council.

Annex**Statement of the UNFPA Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific made at the informal consultation on UNFPA country programme documents on 25 August 2016**

The Asia Pacific region, the most populous and diverse in the world, is home to the very wealthy and the very poor, as well as numerous ethnic and religious groups, and it is the most disaster prone region in the world. We can see a range of population trends across the region, with countries at different stages of the demographic transition: some are seeking to attend to the needs of a growing youth population, while others endeavour to reap the demographic dividend, and still others struggle to meet the challenges of a rapidly aging population. Despite the diversity, there are regional trends relevant to most countries.

A positive trend seen region-wide is the significant reduction in maternal deaths over the past 15 years, with the maternal mortality ratio going down 64 per cent, from 353 per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 127 per 100,000 live births in 2015. However, over 83,000 women still die each year from causes related to pregnancy and child birth. Moreover, national averages often mask a lack of access to high-quality sexual and reproductive health services for excluded and marginalized communities, such as those living in remote rural areas or in urban slums, migrants, internally displaced people and refugees, indigenous people and ethnic and religious minorities. Complications in pregnancy and childbirth continue to be a leading cause of death among adolescent girls. Of grave concern is the prevalence of violence against women and girls. Empowering youth to participate in decision-making about their own lives and their communities is another challenge faced by countries in the region. Countries at a more advanced stage in the demographic transition struggle to ensure that the growing elderly population is ensured a life of dignity.

Countries in the region have embraced the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and efforts are underway to adapt the Sustainable Development Goals to national priorities — an effort that UNFPA supports as part of a United Nations system-wide collaboration. Strengthening data generation, analysis and use is central to this effort.

Bangladesh

Bangladesh has achieved dramatic advances in the health and education of its people while promoting economic growth that has lifted the country into lower-middle-income-country status. Particularly noteworthy is the expansion of sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning, and the consequent reduction of maternal mortality. On the other hand, inequality has grown, and 5,200 women continue to die each year as a result of pregnancy and childbirth. Three out of five girls are married before they are 18 years, and a staggering 87 per cent of married women have experienced gender-based violence. One of the most densely populated countries in the world, Bangladesh ranks twentieth in the global vulnerability index and is the fifth most natural disaster-prone country in the world.

In line with national priorities, in its ninth country programme, UNFPA will contribute to the Government's commitment to women's and girls' rights, particularly to increase family planning, skilled birth attendance and emergency obstetric and newborn care, eliminate child marriage and prevent violence against women and girls. UNFPA will provide high-level technical expertise to help interpret population and sociodemographic data, towards reaping the demographic dividend through investments in adolescents and youth, who make up 30 per cent of the population. We will also support the Government in the analysis and use of data to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, while eliminating exclusion and discrimination. UNFPA will also contribute to disaster preparedness and response, ensuring that the needs of women, girls and young people are taken into account.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

UNFPA has collaborated with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea over the past 30 years in its effort to improve the quality of life of its people. This has contributed to significant increases in access to contraceptives and skilled birth attendance, which, in turn, have contributed to important reductions in maternal deaths, with the maternal mortality ratio declining from 85.1 to 65.9 per 100,000 live births over the past six years. UNFPA has supported national population surveys that have produced essential data to inform policies and programmes. The country continues to face a protracted, underfunded humanitarian crisis, and is ranked 39 out of 191 countries at risk of disasters, according to the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Index for Risk Management. This situation has affected health infrastructure and the quality of services, particularly in the most disaster-prone districts.

International sanctions, particularly those related to procurement of non-expendable equipment and supplies and international banking transactions, have disrupted programme implementation on several occasions, including during 2016. UNFPA will continue to work with the Government and other United Nations agencies to address this issue in a manner that is fully in accordance with the Security Council resolutions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

In line with the Government's priorities, UNFPA will focus its new country programme for 2017-2021 on the following areas: (a) increasing national capacity to deliver comprehensive maternal health and integrated sexual and reproductive health services; and (b) strengthening national capacity to produce, analyse and disseminate high-quality, disaggregated population data. UNFPA engagement in the country will focus on the national level. Among other things, UNFPA will provide technical assistance to develop and implement an equitable, rights-based national strategy on sexual and reproductive health and will improve the quality of midwifery skills by providing training in medical colleges as well as in-service training. Through life-saving interventions, such as the provision of reproductive health and midwifery kits, essential drugs and medicines, UNFPA aims to help ensure 350,000 safe deliveries each year.

UNFPA will provide technical assistance to help the Government to conduct the 2018 national population and housing census, in line with international standards, by establishing an international advisory panel. Building on good practices from the 2008 census and the 2014 social, economic and demographic

health survey, UNFPA will work with the Government to ensure the consistency of national data for policy and programme development and implementation. UNFPA international staff members will accompany the census process from the conception of the project to its finalization. They will undertake independent field visits for quality assurance and work with the staff of the Central Bureau of Statistics, the national agency responsible for census, during data entry and processing, to review raw data sets for internal consistency and validation of the data, with the possibility of requesting additional tabulations. UNFPA will also provide, as necessary, additional theme-based analyses, including on gender, ageing and sociodemographic profiles, written by international experts, in line with the mandate of the Central Bureau of Statistics.

UNFPA will monitor programme implementation against baseline data through regular field visits to gather qualitative and quantitative information from the target provinces.

Islamic Republic of Iran

The health system of the Islamic Republic of Iran is one of the most robust in the world, drawing its strength from its well-established primary health-care system. Its impact can be seen in the low level of maternal mortality (19.7 per 100,000 live births in 2014). Since 2014, the health sector has undergone significant expansion, from rural-based primary health care to universal services in urban and rural areas. The country has experienced a so-called “youth bulge” over the past decade. One third of the total population is between 15 and 29 years of age. This youthful population presents an opportunity to harness the demographic dividend and to accelerate socioeconomic development. Nevertheless, the country also has an ageing population, accompanied by economic, social and health-related challenges, which it aims to address. The Islamic Republic of Iran is seeking to improve the availability and analysis of disaggregated data for effective long-term planning and policymaking on population and development issues.

The sixth country programme will support the efforts of the Government to utilize the demographic window of opportunity for social and economic benefit. UNFPA will advocate for evidence-informed policies and action plans to address population dynamics, including ageing. The country programme will continue to focus on ending preventable maternal deaths, including in humanitarian emergencies. Support will be provided to enhance midwifery policies, institutionalize a national maternal death surveillance system and generate evidence to identify and address inequalities, thereby enhancing national sexual and reproductive health policies.

Lao People’s Democratic Republic

The Lao People’s Democratic Republic has halved its national poverty rate over the past two decades. The gender equality gap has narrowed across all levels of education enrolment, but girls still encounter challenges accessing and completing secondary education owing, partly, to one of the highest rates of early marriage in the region. One in three women marries before the age of 18 and one in five women of reproductive age gives birth before the age of 18. The maternal death ratio has

declined dramatically, from 905 per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 197 per 100,000 live births in 2015. At the same time, the high maternal mortality ratio and high adolescent fertility rate, combined with high rates of violence against women, point to persistent gender inequality. The country has 49 officially recognized ethnic groups and a young population age structure, with nearly 60 per cent of the population estimated to be younger than 25 years. Investing in appropriate education, skills and knowledge for young men and women, including on sexual and reproductive health, can contribute to benefits the Lao People's Democratic Republic may gain through its demographic bonus.

In the sixth country programme, UNFPA will focus its collaboration on reducing maternal mortality and increasing youth participation. In particular, UNFPA will provide technical assistance to enhance implementation of the National Family Planning Action Plan, the Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health Strategy and the Midwifery Improvement Plan, as part of the organization's support to universal health coverage. UNFPA places a special emphasis on the sexual and reproductive health and rights of adolescents and youth, including their access to contraception and gender-sensitive comprehensive sexuality education. The programme will provide policy advice on the prevention of violence against women and girls, drawing on the gender-based violence prevalence study recently undertaken with UNFPA support. To support the country's national development priorities as well as its integration into the economic community of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, UNFPA will support the generation of evidence and research to ensure that decision-making contributes to sustainable social and economic development, particularly for young people and ethnic minorities.

Mongolia

Mongolia has made great strides in improving the health of women and girls and guaranteeing their rights. It was one of only nine countries in the world to achieve and surpass the target of a 75 per cent reduction in maternal mortality by 2015. Mongolia's gender inequality index decreased from 0.401 in 2005 to 0.325 in 2014; today more women (27 per cent) attain tertiary education than men (17 per cent). The youth development index is higher than the global average, although the country has scored lower in political and civil participation. Nearly 88.3 per cent of domestic violence victims are women, with 40 per cent of them young women, between the ages of 15 and 34, who are more unlikely to report such incidents. The country recently took legislative action to criminalize domestic violence.

The sixth country programme will focus its collaboration on issues of youth and gender equality. UNFPA will support the improvement of the legal framework for youth-friendly health services and collaborate in the development of State policies on health and on youth, the fifth National Reproductive Health Programme and the National Programme on Youth Development. UNFPA will also support the formulation of gender-responsive life skills education and comprehensive sexuality education standards for secondary and tertiary schools, technical and vocational education centres and life-long education centres. National platforms for youth participation will be strengthened and expanded to ensure the voices of adolescents and youth, particularly girls, are included in national laws, policies and programmes. UNFPA will support the establishment of formal mechanisms for this purpose at national and subnational levels.

The gender programme will advocate for sufficient allocation in the State budget and the effective implementation of laws and policies, including the revised law on domestic violence. UNFPA will support the establishment of effective monitoring and accountability mechanisms for national protection systems to deliver on obligations, including under the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the universal periodic review, and will focus, in particular, on advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights, and preventing and responding to violence against women and girls, including in emergency situations.

Thailand

Thailand has achieved pioneering advances in human development over the past decades. It has built a universal health coverage system, which covers nearly 100 per cent of the population, and has succeeded in achieving high levels of access to sexual and reproductive health, including family planning. As a result, Thailand has seen significant drops in the fertility rate as well as the maternal mortality ratio. However, beginning in the early part of this century, the adolescent birth rate increased sharply. This suggests that young people face serious obstacles to sexual and reproductive health services and lack information to responsibly exercise their rights in this sphere of life. Thailand passed the Adolescent Pregnancy Act to address this issue. At the same time, Thailand is going through a rapid transition to ageing society, and has taken important policy measures to address this challenge.

Under the 11th country programme, UNFPA will support Thailand to implement the Adolescent Pregnancy Law, aiming to halve the number of unintended adolescent births over the next five years. Through policy dialogue and advocacy, UNFPA will help national institutions and systems to promote youth participation and to advance adolescent reproductive health and rights, including the provision of youth-friendly services and comprehensive sexuality education in the schools. Within the framework of the 12th National Economic and Social Development Plan, UNFPA will support the analysis and utilization of data toward promoting evidence-based policymaking on population-related issues, including adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights, youth empowerment, gender equality and ageing. Emphasis will be placed on reaching the most vulnerable populations, including those in the southern region, migrants and ethnic minorities.

Viet Nam

Viet Nam has made impressive gains in human development, achieving or surpassing many of the Millennium Development Goals, significantly reducing maternal mortality and expanding access to family-planning services within the context of rapid economic growth. The country hopes to build on these successes to further improve national capacity to undertake evidence-based policy and programme development and implementation, address emerging inequalities, advance human rights and achieve equitable and sustainable development.

Nearly one third of the population of Viet Nam are young people. To take full advantage of this demographic opportunity, the country will need to advance comprehensive youth development, including access to sexual and reproductive

health information and services and youth participation in national policies and programmes, while addressing, at the same time, the challenge of a rapidly ageing population. While Viet Nam has achieved important advances in gender equality, discriminatory practices and stereotypes persist. Nationwide, up to 60 per cent of women aged between 18 and 60 years have experienced domestic violence. Hence, the legal framework and law enforcement need to be further strengthened with the active engagement of civil society.

Under the ninth country programme, UNFPA will undertake participatory and evidence-based advocacy for rights-based national laws, policies and programmes on adolescents and youth development. UNFPA will focus on adolescent sexual and reproductive health information and services, the promotion of youth participation in policymaking and comprehensive sexuality education, and will support the development of multisectoral services aimed at preventing gender-based violence with the active participation of civil society.

UNFPA will collaborate in the strengthening of national policies on population and development, sexual and reproductive health and human rights, based on an improved national evidence base and its effective utilization to integrate population dynamics into national development policies. By focusing on youth development, gender equality and the better use of population data, including on emerging issues such as internal migration and climate change, UNFPA seeks to help the country to address the present needs and demands of its population, while at the same time ensuring adequate preparation for the future. This will be an important contribution to the efforts of the country to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Annex I**Decisions adopted by the Executive Board in 2016****Contents****First regular session 2016
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2016/1

Evaluation of the UNDP contribution to mine action and management response

The Executive Board

With regard to the evaluation of UNDP contribution to mine action (DP/2016/4) and the management response thereto (DP/2016/5):

1. *Takes note* that the evaluation has found that UNDP has been a valuable participant in the global mine action effort, helping national Governments to establish and manage their mine action programmes;
2. *Notes* the evaluation report's conclusions and recommendations, and the management response.

28 January 2016

2016/2

Recommendations of the Board of Auditors

Reports of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors for 2014

UNDP: Report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors, 2014

UNFPA report on the follow-up to the report of the United Nations Board of Auditors for 2014: Status of implementation of recommendations

UNOPS: Report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors for the year 2014

The Executive Board

1. *Welcomes* the unqualified audit opinions issued by the United Nations Board of Auditors for all three organizations for 2014;
2. *Recognizes* the high-risk environments in which UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS as well as their implementing partners operate, and requests the entities to continue to take appropriate measures to strengthen the mechanisms for fraud prevention, control and risk assessment, including through the effective application of operating procedures for fraud prevention;

With regard to UNDP:

3. *Takes note* of the report (DP/2016/6) on the actions taken by UNDP and the United Nations Capital Development Fund and the further actions planned to implement the recommendations of the Board of Auditors for the financial period that ended on 31 December 2014;
4. *Notes* the progress made by UNDP in addressing the top eight audit-related management priorities for the 2014-2015 biennium;
5. *Encourages* ongoing management efforts by UNDP and the United Nations Capital Development Fund in the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors for the year ended 31 December 2014 and prior years, in line with target implementation dates;

6. *Also encourages* UNDP to continue to strengthen programme management, oversight and reporting, including by improving programme quality, in particular at country level, and to monitor the effectiveness of measures taken in that regard;

7. *Further encourages* UNDP to continue its efforts to enhance oversight and management of implementing partners, including ensuring compliance with UNDP policies and procedures, and assurance requirements, and urges UNDP to closely monitor implementation of the revised harmonized approach to cash transfers framework;

8. *Encourages* the continued efforts of UNDP to uncover and prevent procurement irregularities and other fraudulent practices and improve actions for recovery of funds, and underscores the importance of protecting whistle-blowers and ensuring that whistle-blower protections are both robust and well known to all staff members;

9. *Notes* the implementation of structural change, urges UNDP to take all necessary measures to finalize the development of a formal benefit realization plan, and further emphasizes the need to continue to address any concerns of staff related to structural change implementation;

With regard to UNFPA:

10. *Takes note* of the report (DP/FPA/2016/1) on the actions taken by UNFPA and the further actions planned by the organization to implement the recommendations of the Board of Auditors for the financial period that ended on 31 December 2014;

11. *Encourages* UNFPA to continue monitoring the implementation by all units of the new internal electronic systems for managing workplans and analysing information, including by tracking the effectiveness of such systems in improving delivery, performance management and approaches to risk;

With regard to UNOPS:

12. *Takes note* of the report (DP/OPS/2016/1) on the actions taken by UNOPS and the further actions planned by the organization to implement the recommendations of the Board of Auditors for the financial period that ended on 31 December 2014;

13. *Acknowledges* that because many of the recommendations require long-term attention, UNOPS will need to work beyond the financial year 2015 to successfully implement them.

28 January 2016

2016/3

Overview of decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its first regular session 2016

The Executive Board

Recalls that during its first regular session 2016, it:

Item 1
Organizational matters

Elected the following members of the Bureau for 2016:

President: Mr. Zohrab Mnatsakanyan (Armenia)
Vice-President: Ms. Bénédicte Frankinet (Belgium)
Vice-President: Mr. Mamadi Touré (Republic of Guinea)
Vice-President: Mr. Khiane Phansourivong (Lao People's Democratic Republic)
Vice-President: Mr. Tumasie Blair (Antigua and Barbuda)

Adopted the agenda and approved the workplan for its first regular session 2016 ([DP/2016/L.1](#));

Approved the report of the second regular session 2015 ([DP/2016/1](#));

Adopted the annual workplan of the Executive Board for 2016 ([DP/2016/CRP.1](#));

Approved the tentative workplan for the annual session 2016;

Agreed to the following schedule for the remaining sessions of the Executive Board in 2016:

Annual session 2016: 6 to 10 June 2016
Second regular session 2016: 6 to 9, 12 September 2016.

UNDP segment**Item 2**
UNDP country programmes and related matters

Approved the following country programmes in accordance with decision 2014/7:

Africa: Ethiopia ([DP/DCP/ETH/3](#)), United Republic of Tanzania ([DP/DCP/TZA/2](#));

Arab States: Iraq ([DP/DCP/IRQ/2](#) and Corr.1), Syrian Arab Republic ([DP/DCP/SYR/3](#));

Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States: Azerbaijan ([DP/DCP/AZE/4](#));

Latin America and the Caribbean: Argentina ([DP/DCP/ARG/3](#)), Uruguay ([DP/DCP/URY/3](#)).

Took note of the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Brazil, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Trinidad and Tobago from 1 January to 31 December 2016, and for the Dominican Republic, Ghana and Ukraine from 1 January to 31 December 2017, as already approved by the Administrator ([DP/2016/3](#)).

Approved the two-year extension of the country programme for the Philippines from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2018 ([DP/2016/3](#)).

Item 3
Evaluation

Adopted decision 2016/1 on the evaluation of the UNDP contribution to mine action (DP/2016/4) and management response (DP/2016/5).

UNFPA segment

Item 4
UNFPA: Country programmes and related matters

Approved the following UNFPA country programmes in accordance with decision 2014/7:

Ethiopia (DP/FPA/CPD/ETH/8); Iraq (DP/FPA/CPD/IRQ/2); Syrian Arab Republic (DP/FPA/CPD/SYR/8 and Corr.1); United Republic of Tanzania (DP/FPA/CPD/TZA/8); and Uruguay (DP/FPA/CPD/URY/3);

Approved the second one-year extensions of the UNFPA country programmes for Algeria and Yemen, and the two-year extension of the country programme for the Philippines (DP/FPA/2016/2);

Took note of the first one-year extension, approved by the Executive Director, of the country programme for Ghana (DP/FPA/2016/2).

UNOPS segment

Heard the UNOPS Executive Director give a statement.

Joint segment

Item 6
Recommendations of the Board of Auditors

Adopted decision 2016/2 on the recommendations of the Board of Auditors related to the following reports: *UNDP*: Report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors, 2014 (DP/2016/6); *UNFPA*: Follow-up to the report of the United Nations Board of Auditors for 2014: Status of implementation of recommendations (DP/FPA/2016/1); and *UNOPS*: Report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors for the year 2014 (DP/OPS/2016/1).

Also held the following briefings, informal consultations and special events:

UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS

Joint briefing on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

UNDP

Informal dialogue on UNDP funding (core funding and thematic funding windows)

UNFPA

Special event entitled: “Partnerships for addressing maternal and child health and realizing the demographic dividend: African faith-based organizations in the lead”

Informal consultation on the midterm review of the UNFPA strategic plan, 2014-2017.

28 January 2016

2016/4

Midterm review of the UNDP strategic plan, 2014-2017, and annual report of the Administrator

The Executive Board

1. *Recalls* its decisions 2013/11 on the cumulative review and annual report of the Administrator on the UNDP strategic plan: performance and results for 2008-2012; 2013/27 on UNDP strategic plan, 2014-2017; and 2015/7 on the annual report of the Administrator on the implementation of UNDP strategic plan, 2014-2017;
2. *Takes note* of the midterm review of the UNDP strategic plan, 2014-2017, including the annual report of the Administrator for 2015 ([DP/2016/9](#)), and its annexes;
3. *Welcomes* the alignment of UNDP work with the strategic plan, 2014-2017, and the results achieved at mid-point;
4. *Also welcomes* new analysis of the percentage of country offices achieving their cumulative milestones, requests further reporting in the 2017 annual report of the Administrator on changes in the percentages of country offices meeting or exceeding their cumulative milestones, and also requests UNDP to continue to improve the quality of data, analyses and evaluations used to measure country office performance and the linkages between global-level outcomes and country-level results;
5. *Notes with appreciation* that most gender indicators have exceeded their milestones, urges UNDP to take action and report where results on gender equality fall behind broader results, and encourages UNDP to further support gender mainstreaming efforts and the shift towards more transformative interventions;
6. *Concurs* that the vision and expected results of the strategic plan, 2014-2017, are generally well aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals;
7. *Welcomes* the commitment by UNDP to further bolster its institutional performance through the implementation of a substantial agenda of work in 2016-2017, as described in paragraph 84 of the report of the Administrator on the midterm review of the strategic plan, 2014-2017 ([DP/2016/9](#));
8. *Decides* that changes proposed by UNDP in annexes 7 and 8 to the report of the Administrator on the midterm review of the strategic plan, 2014-2017 ([DP/2016/9](#)) will need further consultations with Member States, including in the context of the preparation of the next strategic plan;

9. *Expresses concern* over the continued downward trend of resources, particularly core resources, which constrains the ability of UNDP to ensure global development effectiveness and to maintain funding for the programme budget;
10. *Requests* UNDP to provide, in the next annual report, some further analysis on the relationship between financial resources invested and results achieved;
11. *Also requests* UNDP to start early preparations for the next strategic plan, in full consultation with the Executive Board, taking fully into account the outcome of the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of United Nations operational activities for development and lessons learned from the midterm review, and to present a road map at the 2016 second regular session of the Executive Board for the consultations planned in the preparation of the next strategic plan;
12. *Notes with appreciation* the collaboration with other United Nations funds and programmes during the preparation of the midterm review and encourages further dialogue and engagement during the preparation of the next strategic plan to enhance complementarity, coherence and effectiveness in support of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals;
13. *Welcomes* the format of the annual report that combines annual progress as well as a cumulative review of the implementation of the strategic plan, requests the Administrator to continue to use this format for the annual report to be presented at the annual session of 2017, and further requests the Administrator to submit the UNDP strategic plan, 2018-2021, at the 2017 second regular session of the Executive Board.

10 June 2016

2016/5

Midterm review of the UNDP integrated budget, 2014-2017

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the midterm review of the institutional component of the integrated budget, 2014-2017;
2. *Also takes note* of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the midterm review of the UNDP integrated budget 2014-2017;
3. *Emphasizes* that the integrated budget consists of both an institutional and a programmatic component, and requests UNDP to ensure that future reporting equally covers both components;
4. *Recalls* Executive Board decision 2013/28, in which the Board noted the need to maintain adequate resource levels of the Office of Audit and Investigation, the Ethics Office, and the Evaluation Office and requested that budget allocations to them based on their workplans that are approved by or submitted for information to the Executive Board be presented as distinct line items;
5. *Recalls* Executive Board decision 2015/16, which emphasized that regular resources are the bedrock of UNDP and essential to maintaining the multilateral, neutral and universal nature of its mandate and to carry out its work, and in this regard, encourages UNDP to further mobilize these resources while continuing to

mobilize other resources to respond to the needs of all programme countries, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable;

6. *Recognizes* that government cost-sharing constitutes a voluntary funding mechanism that strengthens national ownership as well as contributes to the achievement of country programmes, and, in that regard, underlines the need to take the special characteristics of government cost-sharing into account when considering mechanisms to incentivize less restricted/earmarked other resources funding, while ensuring the alignment of such resources to the strategic plan;

7. *Recalls* Executive Board decision 2013/28 in which the Board approved appropriations from regular resources for the institutional component of the integrated budget, 2014-2017;

8. *Recognizes* that UNDP has incorporated the results-based budgeting approach in its integrated budget, and requests UNDP to provide information on major items of expenditure under post and non-post resources in future reports on the integrated budget and to improve analysis of variances between expenditures against planning estimates;

9. *Welcomes* the reduction of management costs as a proportion of the institutional component of the integrated budget and encourages continued action to achieve progress on the existing targets in this area;

10. *Acknowledges* progress made by UNDP in cost alignment through implementation of the cost-recovery policy, notes that UNDP should make further progress, and encourages UNDP contributors to adhere to the aspects of the cost-recovery policy approved by the Executive Board in decision 2013/9;

11. *Recalls* its decision 2013/9 and looks forward to the findings of the external and independent assessment of the consistency and alignment of the cost-recovery methodology with General Assembly resolution [67/226](#);

12. *Encourages* UNDP to work with other United Nations system entities to ensure an integrated approach to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development;

13. *Requests* UNDP, in consultation with UNFPA, UNICEF and UN-Women, as appropriate, to incorporate relevant lessons learned from the integrated budget, 2014-2017, in the preparation of the integrated budget for 2018-2021.

10 June 2016

2016/6

Annual report on evaluation (UNDP)

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the summary ([DP/2016/13](#)) and of the full annual report;
2. *Requests* UNDP to address the issues raised;
3. *Looks forward* to reviewing the new UNDP evaluation policy at the next session of the Executive Board;

4. *Notes with concern* the decrease of the budget of the Independent Evaluation Office, and urges management to provide sufficient resources consistent with the levels established by the Board in the multi-year budget and to make timely allocations of such resources to the Independent Evaluation Office and decentralized evaluation functions to ensure that they can carry out their work effectively;
5. *Notes* the steps taken by UNDP management to improve the quality of the decentralized evaluation function, and urges UNDP management and the Independent Evaluation Office to continue to take steps to strengthen the quality of decentralized evaluation, including strengthening capacities at regional service centres and country levels, as well as the quality assurance chain throughout the organization;
6. *Requests* UNDP to ensure that future annual reports on evaluation more clearly analyse results and implemented activities with reference to the approved annual workplan of the Independent Evaluation Office;
7. *Approves* the programme of work and budget for the Independent Evaluation Office for 2016 and for 2017 (proposed).

10 June 2016

2016/7

United Nations Capital Development Fund: Integrated annual report on results for 2015 and midterm review of the strategic framework, 2014-2017

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the results achieved by the United Nations Capital Development Fund in 2015 and the positive position of the Development Fund in a changing development finance landscape;
2. *Notes* that the midterm review of its strategic framework, 2014-2017, confirms the continued strong performance of the Development Fund against set targets, and in that regard welcomes the revised integrated results and resources matrix;
3. *Recognizes* the strategic positioning of the Development Fund in developing innovative programmes and partnerships with the public and private sectors, particularly linked to domestic resource mobilization, in support of poor households, small businesses and underserved regions, and notes the strong relevance of the Development Fund innovations and “last mile” finance models for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Plan, the Istanbul Programme of Action and other relevant international agreements;
4. *Also recognizes* the four-window funding architecture of Development Fund as an appealing option for other resources (non-core) contributions, as well as the critical role of regular resources;
5. *Expresses concern* that regular resources remain far short of the \$25 million threshold agreed to in the strategic framework to ensure the presence of the Development Fund and innovative financing models in at least 40 least developed

countries, and notes with concern that, as a result, the number of least developed countries supported by the Development Fund fell from 33 in 2013 to 31 in 2015;

6. *Recommits* to supporting the work of the Development Fund over the next two years, including through encouraging Member States to fully fund regular resource requirements;

7. *Recognizes* that a reliable base of regular resources is required, in accordance with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system, to ensure that the Development Fund maintains its ability to innovate, so that it can leverage additional resources and enable follow-on investment, including through domestic resource mobilization for local development, and aware of the importance of guaranteeing its presence in up to 40 least developed countries as called for in decision 2014/2;

8. *Encourages* the Development Fund to continue exploring new ways to raise and use innovative sources of financing, consistent with its mandate to achieve greater development impact for the least developed countries;

9. *Calls on* Member States in a position to do so to contribute to the Development Fund regular resources to ensure that it can reach the target of \$25 million per year in regular resources;

10. *Welcomes* the format of the annual report that combined annual progress as well as a cumulative review of the strategic framework, and requests the United Nations Capital Development Fund to continue to use this format at the annual session of 2017.

10 June 2016

2016/8

United Nations Volunteers: Report of the Administrator

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the results-oriented biennial report of the Administrator (DP/2016/15);

2. *Expresses appreciation* to all United Nations Volunteers and United Nations Online Volunteers mobilized by the United Nations Volunteers programme (UNV) for their outstanding contributions to peace and to development globally during the 2014-2015 biennium, especially the 83 per cent of United Nations Volunteers from countries of the global South, who represent a significant South-South contribution;

3. *Commends* UNV for the midterm results and achievements of its strategic framework, 2014-2017;

4. *Welcomes* UNV support to programme countries and United Nations organizations in their efforts towards peace and development through the integration of volunteers and volunteerism;

5. *Requests* that UNV build on the progress made in pursuing forward-looking and innovative approaches and partnerships to developing volunteer solutions for sustainable development challenges in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable

Development, including collaboration with partners such as academia, civil society, the private sector and others;

6. *Commends* UNV for its active involvement in the development of the 2030 Agenda, and in particular welcomes the role of UNV in the implementation of the plan of action to integrate volunteering into peace and development policies and programmes for the next decade and beyond, in line with General Assembly resolution [70/129](#);

7. *Requests* UNV to consult regularly with Member States and relevant partners, at a regular informal consultation of the Executive Board, on the plan of action to ensure that the efforts of multiple stakeholders are leveraged for more people to use volunteerism as a vehicle to engage in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals;

8. *Welcomes* the UNV midterm approach of maintaining an ambitious approach to strategic targets, noting that although full achievement across all result targets represents a significant challenge, these elevated targets continue to strategically orient UNV and are critical to both the development impact and financial sustainability of UNV in the long term;

9. *Notes* the UNV midterm financial analysis and results for 2014-2015, specifically the importance of regular resources, provided by Members States to UNV through UNDP, to the UNV operational base to deliver its core mandate;

10. *Reaffirms* the crucial role of the Special Voluntary Fund as an indispensable component of UNV resources, providing seed funding for innovative projects, and calls upon all development partners in a position to do so to contribute to the Fund.

10 June 2016

2016/9

Midterm review of the UNFPA strategic plan, 2014-2017, and annual report of the Executive Director

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the three documents that make up the report of the Executive Director ([DP/FPA/2016/2](#) (Part I)), including the relevant annexes available on the UNFPA website;

2. *Welcomes* the findings, as contained in the report and in the revised integrated results framework ([DP/FPA/2016/2](#) (Part I), annex 1), as important steps in aligning the UNFPA strategic plan, 2014-2017, to the ICPD beyond 2014 global review and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

3. *Also welcomes* the progress achieved during 2014-2015 in implementing the UNFPA strategic plan, while recognizing the challenges for its further implementation, and also welcomes the commitment of management to maintaining the strategic focus of the organization;

4. *Approves* the revised integrated results framework of the strategic plan, 2014-2017 ([DP/FPA/2016/2](#) (Part I), annex 1) and subsequent revisions of the global and regional interventions, and encourages all countries to assist UNFPA in reaching the

total figure for regular and other resources for the remainder of the strategic plan period, including through multi-year pledges;

5. *Notes with appreciation* the reporting on results and performance analysis in the annual report of the Executive Director, and requests UNFPA to provide further information on lessons learned and actions to improve programming;

6. *Stresses* the importance of regular resources for the effective implementation of the strategic plan, and encourages countries to increase their contributions to the regular resources of UNFPA;

7. *Requests* UNFPA to start early preparations for the next strategic plan, in full consultation with the Executive Board, taking fully into account the outcome of the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of United Nations operational activities for development and lessons learned from the midterm review, and to present a road map at the 2016 second regular session of the Executive Board for the consultations planned in the preparation of the next strategic plan;

8. *Notes with appreciation* the collaboration with other United Nations funds and programmes during the preparation of the midterm review, and encourages further dialogue and engagement during the preparation of the next strategic plan so as to enhance complementarity, coherence and effectiveness in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals;

9. *Welcomes* the format of the annual report that combines annual progress as well as cumulative review of the implementation of the strategic plan, and requests the Executive Director to continue to use this format for the annual report, to be presented at the annual session of 2017, and further requests the Executive Director to submit the UNFPA strategic plan, 2018-2021, at the 2017 second regular session of the Executive Board.

10 June 2016

2016/10

Midterm review of the UNFPA integrated budget, 2014-2017

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the midterm review of the UNFPA integrated budget, 2014-2017 ([DP/FPA/2016/3](#)), submitted in conjunction with the midterm review of the UNFPA strategic plan, 2014-2017 ([DP/FPA/2016/2](#) (Part I));

2. *Also takes note* of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the midterm review of the UNFPA integrated budget, 2014-2017 ([DP/FPA/2016/4](#));

3. *Acknowledges* the organization's containment of costs, in light of revised revenue projections, as evidenced by the revised lower appropriations requested for institutional budget and global and regional interventions;

4. *Welcomes* UNFPA efforts to align costs with the harmonized cost classification framework approved by the Executive Board, thereby presenting a budget that more accurately reflects the activities performed within the organization;

5. *Recognizes* that UNFPA has incorporated the results-based budgeting approach in its integrated budget, and requests UNFPA to improve analysis of variances between expenditures against planning estimates;
6. *Takes note* of the information on cost recovery contained in the report, and urges UNFPA and its contributors to fully adhere to the cost-recovery policy approved by the Executive Board in decision 2013/9, including the recovery of indirect costs and charging direct costs arising from the implementation of projects and programmes funded from other resources;
7. *Recalls* its decision 2013/9, and looks forward to the findings of the external and independent assessment of the consistency and alignment of the cost-recovery methodology with General Assembly resolution [67/226](#);
8. *Requests* UNFPA, in consultation with UNDP, UNICEF and UN-Women, as appropriate, to incorporate relevant lessons learned from the integrated budget, 2014-2017, in the preparation of the integrated budget for 2018-2021;
9. *Takes note* of the assessment of ways to enhance results-based budgeting in the preparation of the proposed integrated budget for 2018-2021;
10. *Approves* the revised gross estimates for the institutional budget 2014-2017 in the amount of \$609.9 million, and notes that these estimates include \$150.4 million for cost recovery from other resources;
11. *Recalls* its decision 2015/3 on scaling up UNFPA humanitarian response funding, stresses the importance of the funding arrangements contained therein, and looks forward to the UNFPA report on its humanitarian response funding at the first regular session 2017.
12. *Approves* the revised estimates for global and regional interventions 2014-2017 in the amount of \$231.5 million;
13. *Decides* that the appropriated amount should be used to achieve the results of the strategic plan that are linked to those resources;
14. *Encourages* UNFPA to work with other United Nations system entities to ensure an integrated approach to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development.

10 June 2016

2016/11

Annual report of the UNFPA Evaluation Office

The Executive Board

Part A: Annual report on evaluation for 2015

1. *Takes note* of the annual report on the evaluation function at UNFPA ([DP/FPA/2016/5](#)), including the Evaluation Office workplan for 2016 (annex I), and the management response to the report;
2. *Reaffirms* the role played by the evaluation function in UNFPA and the relevance of the principles set out in the revised evaluation policy ([DP/FPA/2013/5](#)),

and reiterates the importance of adequate resource allocations for evaluation, including from other resources for non-core-funded programmes;

3. *Welcomes* the improvements in the quality of decentralized evaluations, and encourages UNFPA to continue to strengthen capacities and to allocate adequate resources, as appropriate, for decentralized monitoring and evaluation;

4. *Takes note* of the progress in the implementation of the recommendations presented in the 2015 report, and encourages UNFPA to take further action to ensure their full implementation;

5. *Requests* the Evaluation Office to report in 2017 on the state of the evaluation function at UNFPA.

Part B: Thematic evaluation of UNFPA support to population and housing census data to inform decision-making and policy formulation 2005-2014

6. *Takes note* of the thematic evaluation of UNFPA support to population and housing census data to inform decision-making and policy formulation, 2005-2014, and the management response to the report;

7. *Welcomes* the findings and conclusions of the thematic evaluation, especially the recognition of the important role of UNFPA in supporting census within the United Nations system and with national statistics offices, and the significant contribution that UNFPA support provided to the 2010 census round;

8. *Recognizes* the importance of the work of UNFPA in supporting countries to undertake the 2020 round of census and to build the capacity to generate and use such data, as well as civil registration and vital data for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, and stresses the need for countries and other partners to extend the necessary support to position the organization in this regard;

9. *Notes* that a number of strategic issues raised in the report require continued attention and follow-up by management, and welcomes the fact that UNFPA management has already implemented a number of the recommendations set forth in the report;

10. *Requests* UNFPA to fully take into account the recommendations of the thematic evaluation in its strategic and operational response, and to include an update on progress at the annual session 2017.

10 June 2016

2016/12

United Nations Office for Project Services: Annual report of the Executive Director

The Executive Board

1. *Welcomes* the annual report of the Executive Director and appreciates the value added brought by UNOPS to partners, as an innovative, cost-effective and forward-leaning organization;

2. *Takes note with appreciation* of the successful implementation of the “oneUNOPS” enterprise resource planning system as well as the attendant

incorporation of management of personnel benefits and entitlements, treasury operations and investment of cash and other liquid instruments based on recommendations of the Investment Committee;

3. *Encourages* UNOPS to continue its efforts to facilitate partnerships between the public and private sectors in the realm of sustainable social impact investments, with strong emphasis on the mandated areas of UNOPS such as infrastructure development, procurement and project management, and in this context, welcomes the intention of UNOPS to make appropriate corporate structural adjustments with a view to mitigating potential reputational risks and financial liabilities, and in line with relevant best practices and international standards on governance and transparency;

4. *Notes* the healthy financial position of UNOPS and supports the creation of a seed capital fund aimed at utilizing a portion of UNOPS operational reserves to make targeted contributions to early-stage investment projects in UNOPS mandated areas, with a view to leveraging high-impact transformational initiatives in countries with a United Nations field presence, in collaboration with like-minded donors and investors and fully in line with the strategic priorities of the respective Governments and the United Nations coherence agenda.

10 June 2016

2016/13

Internal audit and oversight

The Executive Board

1. *Welcomes* the progress of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS in addressing audit-related management issues in 2014;
2. *Notes with appreciation* efforts to implement outstanding audit recommendations from previous reports;
3. *Welcomes* the inclusion of a limited audit opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the organizations' frameworks of governance, risk management and control systems in the annual reports of the respective internal audit functions;
4. *Notes* the partially satisfactory ratings for UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS, *requests* the respective internal audit functions to include a rationale supporting their opinion in future reporting, and urges management of each agency to continue and intensify efforts to strengthen the functioning of their governance, risk management and control frameworks;
5. *Notes with concern* that the audits of UNDP and UNFPA flag a number of areas of recurring weaknesses, including on programme management, procurement, governance and financial management, appreciates information provided by management on efforts to address these weaknesses, and urges management to continue and intensify efforts to address these issues and provide further information on the impact of the measures they have taken.

With regard to UNDP:

6. *Takes note* of the report on internal audit and investigations (DP/2016/16), its annexes and the management response;

7. *Expresses its continuing support* for strengthening the internal audit and investigation functions of UNDP;
8. *Notes with concern* the low levels of defrauded funds reported in investigations as recovered, welcomes efforts to identify the obstacles that are hindering recovery, urges UNDP to do all it can to ensure timely recovery of defrauded funds, welcomes the organization's work on anti-fraud systems and processes, and urges UNDP to prioritize this work;
9. *Notes with concern* that procurement continues to be a recurring audit issue and accounts for nearly one third of complaints received by the investigations unit, and urges UNDP to address this as a matter of priority and inform the Board on all progress made;
10. *Takes note* of the annual report of the Audit Advisory Committee and the management response thereto;
11. *Notes with appreciation* the increased organizational transparency generated by the systematic disclosure of UNDP internal audit, as per the UNDP policies for the disclosure of audit reports issued by the Office of Audit and Investigation, in accordance with decision 2012/18 of the Executive Board;
12. *Notes* the number of unsatisfactory rating reports of UNDP internal audits,* welcomes the steps already taken by UNDP, concerned UNDP country offices and the United Nations Office of South-South Cooperation to fully implement all recommendations contained in all unsatisfactory ratings reports, taking into account the need to clarify management relationships and reporting lines, and ways of improving transparency, accountability, effectiveness and efficiency, and looks forward to an update at the next annual session 2017.

With regard to UNFPA:

13. *Takes note* of the report on internal audit and investigation activities in 2015 ([DP/FPA/2016/7](#)), including its annexes, the annual report of the Audit Advisory Committee ([DP/FPA/2016/7/Add.1](#)) and the management response to the two reports ([DP/FPA/2016/CRP.2](#));
14. *Expresses its continuing support* for the strengthening of the audit and investigation functions at UNFPA and for the provision of appropriate and sufficient resources to discharge their mandate;
15. *Notes with concern* the complaints of pharmaceutical product diversion, and urges UNFPA to continue its efforts to strengthen accountability, including through oversight of inventory management and implementing partners, and to report to the Board on these efforts in future sessions;
16. *Notes* the progress made to establish an enterprise risk management system, and urges UNFPA to further strengthen risk management processes by ensuring that risk mitigation actions are defined and implemented in a timely manner;
17. *Acknowledges and supports* the engagement of the Office of Audit and Investigation Services in joint audit and investigation activities.

* UNDP Office of Audit and Investigation, at website: audit-public-disclosure.undp.org.

With regard to UNOPS:

18. *Takes note* of the annual report of the Internal Audit and Investigations Group for 2015 and the management response thereto;
19. *Also takes note* of the progress made in implementation of audit recommendations, including those that are more than 18 months old;
20. *Further takes note* of the annual report of the Audit Advisory Committee for 2015, in line with Executive Board decision 2008/37;
21. *Notes with concern* that project management and procurement continue to be two of the functional areas with the highest rates of recommendations issued, and urges UNOPS to address this as a matter of priority;
22. *Also notes with concern* the persistent evidence of financial irregularities, particularly with regard to procurement fraud, and urges UNOPS to continue efforts to deter, detect and prevent fraud and to strengthen efforts to recuperate all financial losses.

10 June 2016

2016/14

Reports of the ethics offices of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS

The Executive Board

1. *Welcomes* the reports of the ethics offices of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS ([DP/2016/17](#), [DP/FPA/2016/8](#) and [DP/OPS/2016/4](#));
2. *Also welcomes* efforts by UNDP, UNFPA, and UNOPS to promote a speak-up culture;
3. *Notes* the progress made by the UNDP, UNFPA, and UNOPS ethics offices and the role of their recommendations to management in strengthening the ethical culture, including training and innovative methods, to raise ethics awareness and protection against retaliation;
4. *Expresses concern* regarding instances of whistle-blower retaliation, and notes that both UNDP and UNFPA had one confirmed case each of retaliation;
5. *Requests* the annual ethics office reports of all organizations to include, when substantiated cases of whistle-blower retaliation are found, information regarding steps taken to protect complainants from further retaliation during the investigation and remedies provided to victims of proven retaliation;
6. *Encourages* management to hold all found responsible for misconduct accountable, and encourages management to include data in the annual report on disciplinary and/or administrative action taken, including for those who engaged in retaliation;
7. *Urges* senior management to ensure that all managers, both current and future, have the necessary training and conflict resolution skills to promote a culture of ethics and integrity and the management skills to proactively respond to workplace disputes;

8. *Recognizes* that in-person training and advice is critical to enabling the ethics offices to fulfil their mandates and provide protection from retaliation, and welcomes the innovative programmes undertaken in order to provide remote services at a reduced cost;

9. *Also recognizes* the reduction in core resources, and urges management to continue exercising flexibility over the ethics office budgets to ensure they can continue to provide independent and effective in-person services;

10. *Encourages* the ethics offices of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to continue to provide management with advice and recommendations, and urges management to continue to work together with the ethics offices to implement the recommendations and to report to the Board on implementation of these recommendations and outstanding recommendations from previous years.

10 June 2016

2016/15

Overview of decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its annual session 2016

The Executive Board

Recalls that during its annual session 2016, it:

Item 1

Organizational matters

Adopted the agenda and approved the workplan for its annual session 2016 ([DP/2016/L.2](#));

Approved the report of the first regular session 2016 ([DP/2016/7](#));

Approved the tentative workplan for the second regular session 2016.

UNDP segment

Item 2

Annual report of the Administrator

Adopted decision 2016/4 on the midterm review of the UNDP strategic plan, 2014-2017, and annual report of the Administrator ([DP/2016/9](#), [DP/2016/9](#) and Add.1 and 2).

Item 3

Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

Adopted decision 2016/5 on the midterm review of the UNDP integrated budget, 2014-2017 ([DP/2016/10](#)) and the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

Item 4
Gender in UNDP

Was presented with the annual report of the Administrator on the implementation of the UNDP gender equality strategy in 2015 ([DP/2016/11](#)).

Item 5
Human Development Report

Took note of the update on the *Human Development Report* consultations.

Item 6
UNDP country programmes and related matters

Approved the following country programmes in accordance with decision 2014/7:

Africa: Mauritius ([DP/DCP/MUS/4](#)) and South Sudan ([DP/DCP/SSD/2](#));

Took note of the extensions of the country programmes for Burundi, Cape Verde, the Central African Republic, Gabon and Mauritania, already approved by the Administrator ([DP/2016/12](#));

Approved the second one-year extensions of the country programmes for Burkina Faso and Yemen and the two-year extension of the country programme for Senegal ([DP/2016/12](#)).

Item 7
Evaluation

Adopted decision 2016/6 on the annual report on evaluation ([DP/2016/13](#)) and management response.

Item 8
United Nations Capital Development Fund

Adopted decision 2016/7 on the United Nations Capital Development Fund: Integrated annual report on results for 2015 and midterm review of the strategic framework, 2014-2017 ([DP/2016/14](#)).

Item 9
United Nations Volunteers

Adopted decision 2016/8 on United Nations Volunteers: Report of the Administrator ([DP/2016/15](#)).

UNFPA segment**Item 10**
Annual report of the Executive Director

Adopted decision 2016/9 on the midterm review of the UNFPA strategic plan, 2014-2017, and the annual report of the Executive Director ([DP/FPA/2016/2](#) (Part I));

Adopted decision 2016/10 on the midterm review of the UNFPA integrated budget, 2014-2017 ([DP/FPA/2016/3](#)).

Item 11

UNFPA country programmes and related matters

Approved the following country programme in accordance with decision 2014/7:

South Sudan ([DP/FPA/CPD/SSD/2](#)).

Item 12

Evaluation

Adopted decision 2016/11 on the annual report of the UNFPA Evaluation Office ([DP/FPA/2016/5](#)) and the thematic evaluation of UNFPA support to population and housing census data to inform decision-making and policy formulation, 2005-2014.

UNOPS segment

Item 13

Annual report of the Executive Director

Adopted decision 2016/12 on United Nations Office for Project Services: Annual report of the Executive Director ([DP/OPS/2016/2](#)).

Joint segment

Item 14

Internal audit and oversight

Adopted decision 2016/13 on internal audit and oversight, which included the UNDP report on internal audit and investigations ([DP/2016/16](#)), the UNFPA report on internal audit and investigation activities in 2015 ([DP/FPA/2016/7](#)) and the UNOPS report of the Internal Audit and Investigations Group for 2015 ([DP/OPS/2016/3](#)).

Item 15

Reports of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS Ethics Offices

Adopted decision 2016/14 on the reports of the ethics offices of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS ([DP/2016/17](#), [DP/FPA/2016/8](#) and [DP/OPS/2016/4](#)).

Also held the following special events, briefings and informal consultations:

UNFPA

Special event: Thirteenth Rafael M. Salas Memorial Lecture, given by Mr. Jakaya Kikwete, former President of the United Republic of Tanzania, on 6 June 2016.

UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS

Executive Board briefing on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

10 June 2016

2016/16**UNDP funding issues***The Executive Board*

1. *Takes note* of documents [DP/2016/20](#), [DP/2016/20/Add.1](#) and [DP/2016/21](#);
2. *Notes* the importance of regular resources, which remain the bedrock of UNDP support to programme countries, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable, and to the coherence and effectiveness of the United Nations development system;
3. *Notes with serious concern* the continuing decline in contributions to regular resources, as well as other resources, and the increasing imbalance between regular and other resources;
4. *Takes note* of the efforts of UNDP to further diversify its donor base and to mobilize additional resources;
5. *Reiterates* the need to avoid the use of regular resources to subsidize activities financed by other resources, and reaffirms that the guiding principle governing the financing of all non-programme costs should be based on Executive Board decision 2013/9;
6. *Highlights* the importance of stable and predictable contributions to regular resources, and notes the need to enhance the quality, predictability and alignment of contributions to other resources to the strategic plan, 2014-2017 (including through new funding windows), which comprise an important complement to the regular resource base;
7. *Recalls* the importance of funding predictability, timeliness of payments and adherence to multi-year pledges to avoid liquidity constraints in regular resources;
8. *Urges* donor countries and other countries in a position to do so that have not yet provided their contributions to regular resources for 2016 to do so as early as possible, and encourages those countries in a position to do so to consider making multi-year pledges for future years;
9. *Welcomes* the continued dialogue of Member States with UNDP on funding issues, including how to facilitate a shift from highly earmarked resources to regular resources, or less restricted/earmarked resources, and urges Member States to prioritize the provision of regular resources and other resources that are flexible, predictable, less earmarked and aligned to the outcomes of the strategic plan, 2014-2017;
10. *Requests* UNDP, in the context of the structured dialogue on financing, to further explore incentives and mechanisms to encourage donor countries and other countries in a position to do so to increase and prioritize regular resources contributions to facilitate a shift to less restricted other resources, aligned to the strategic plan, and to broaden the donor base and attract new sources of funding, including through new approaches to resource mobilization and new forms of support from diversified sources;
11. *Also requests* UNDP to continue and strengthen structured financing dialogues with Member States throughout the year, in accordance with decision 2015/16;

12. *Underscores* the importance of UNDP engagement in United Nations pooled financing mechanisms in the context of collaborative implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
13. *Requests* UNDP, in collaboration with other relevant funds and programmes, to present to the Executive Board, in accordance with decision 2013/9, all requested information on cost recovery in time to be included in the consultations on the strategic plan, 2018-2021, and the integrated budget, 2018-2021, at its annual session 2017;
14. *Notes* that currency fluctuations can affect the resource levels of UNDP, and requests UNDP to continue to report to the Executive Board on its work to address the impact of currency fluctuations and to continue to monitor the work of other international organizations in this regard in order to ensure that its currency management remains optimal;
15. *Recognizes* that government cost-sharing constitutes a voluntary funding mechanism that strengthens national ownership and contributes to the achievement of country programmes, and, in that regard, underlines the need to take the special characteristics of government cost-sharing into account when considering mechanisms to incentivize less restricted/earmarked other resources funding, while ensuring the alignment of such resources to the strategic plan.

9 September 2016

2016/17

UNDP evaluation policy and report on the implementation of the recommendations of the evaluation of the UNDP contribution to poverty reduction

The Executive Board

With regard to the revised UNDP evaluation policy (DP/2016/23),

1. *Takes note* of the revisions made to the evaluation policy, and recognizes that this policy draws on the voluntary, professional norms and standards developed by the United Nations Evaluation Group, responds to pertinent recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit and addresses perceived shortcomings identified in the 2014 evaluation review (in accordance with decision 2010/16);
2. In its role as custodian of the evaluation function, adopts the revised evaluation policy, and requests UNDP to prioritize resource allocations to the evaluation function, including meeting the funding targets defined in the policy set out in document [DP/2016/23](#), subject to the availability of funds, to ensure that the evaluation system of UNDP is sufficiently funded;
3. *Urges* UNDP to move expeditiously in implementing the identified new measures, including planned actions to strengthen the quality and utility of decentralized evaluations, and encourages UNDP to collaborate with other agencies on quality assurance of decentralized evaluations;
4. *Requests* UNDP, during the first regular session of the Executive Board in 2017, to organize an informal meeting to present an update on the progress in the

efforts to improve the quality and utility of decentralized evaluations, including presenting a timetable for action;

5. *Requests* the UNDP Administrator, in consultation with the Independent Evaluation Office, to include in the regular reporting to the Board at the annual session in 2017, information on measures taken to improve the decentralized evaluations, including measures to avoid conflicts of interest and to ensure the impartiality of decentralized evaluations;

6. *Requests* that the UNDP Independent Evaluation Office report annually to the Executive Board on the achievement of actions set out in the evaluation policy, and that it conduct an independent review of the evaluation policy for the consideration of the Executive Board in 2019;

With regard to the report on the implementation of the recommendations of the evaluation of the UNDP contribution to poverty reduction (DP/2016/26),

7. *Welcomes* the report (DP/2016/26), in particular information on how the present strategic plan responds to the recommendations contained in the evaluation of the UNDP contribution to poverty reduction (DP/2013/3);

8. *Underscores* the importance of effective follow-up to the recommendation for UNDP to improve means and incentives for effective utilization of lessons from past experiences;

9. *Expects* that the evaluation of the UNDP strategic plan and global and regional programmes to be presented at the annual session 2017 will reflect on the changes that UNDP has made in its poverty programming under the current strategic plan, 2014-2017, taking into account the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation (DP/2013/3).

9 September 2016

2016/18

UNFPA funding issues

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the report on contributions by Member States and others to UNFPA and revenue projections for 2016 and future years (DP/FPA/2016/10);

2. *Emphasizes* that regular resources are the bedrock of UNFPA and essential to maintaining the multilateral, neutral and universal nature of its mandate and to carrying out its work, and encourages UNFPA to further mobilize these resources while continuing to mobilize supplementary resources for thematic funds and programmes;

3. *Notes* that currency fluctuations can affect the resource levels of UNFPA, and requests UNFPA to continue to report to the Executive Board on its work to address the impact of currency fluctuations and to continue to monitor the work of other international organizations in this regard in order to ensure that its currency management remains optimal;

4. *Recalls* decision 2016/10 on the importance of scaling up UNFPA humanitarian response funding, and looks forward to the UNFPA report on this issue at the first regular session 2017;
5. *Calls on* UNFPA to strengthen the structured dialogues on financing, in accordance with the Executive Board decisions 2014/25 and 2015/18 and in line with General Assembly resolution [67/226](#), paragraph 46, and to include an analysis of funding gaps and their implications for the integrated results framework;
6. *Encourages* all Member States to increase their contributions to regular resources, and also encourages countries in a position to do so to make contributions during the first half of the year and to make multi-year pledges in order to ensure effective programming;
7. *Requests* UNFPA to further explore incentives and mechanisms to encourage donor countries and Member States in a position to do so to increase and prioritize regular resources contributions, to facilitate a shift to less restricted other resources, aligned to the strategic plan, and to broaden the donor base and attract new sources of funding, including through new approaches to resource mobilization and new forms of support from diversified sources;
8. *Emphasizes* that UNFPA needs strong political and increased financial support as well as predictable regular resources in order to enhance its assistance to countries, fully integrate the agenda of the International Conference on Population and Development into national development strategies and frameworks, achieve the internationally agreed development goals and support countries in advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
9. *Requests* UNFPA, in collaboration with other relevant funds and programmes, to present to the Executive Board, in accordance with decision 2013/9, all requested information on cost recovery in time to be included in the consultations on the strategic plan, 2018-2021, and the integrated budget, 2018-2021, at its annual session 2017.

9 September 2016

2016/19

Midterm review of the UNOPS strategic plan, 2014-2017

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the contributions made by UNOPS to the operational results of Governments and United Nations and other partners over the 2014-2015 biennium;
2. *Recognizes* the management results achieved, which confirm the viability of its unique demand-driven business model;
3. *Welcomes* the intent to more clearly state the UNOPS purpose, including the proposed calibration of the UNOPS vision, mission and contribution goals;
4. *Recognizes* the increasing demand for UNOPS contributions to:
 - (a) The efficient, effective expansion of implementation capacity for sustainable development, including in the most fragile situations;

(b) Mobilization of resources for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including from the private sector;

5. *Encourages* the UNOPS ambition to enhance use of internal and external data to further focus its execution and account for strategy implementation.

9 September 2016

2016/20

Annual statistical report on the procurement activities of the United Nations system, 2015

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the annual statistical report on the procurement activities of the United Nations system, 2015 ([DP/OPS/2016/6](#));
2. *Appreciates* the contributions of the United Nations entities which have provided the information necessary to compile the annual statistical report, and encourages all entities of the United Nations to participate in contributing to this important procurement report;
3. *Also appreciates* the transparency under which the report is made available to the public by UNOPS and, now, for the first time, published as an online report through the United Nations Global Marketplace;
4. *Further appreciates* the continuous improvements made to the report every year by UNOPS, ensuring relevance and current focus, such as this year's analysis on the least developed countries;
5. *Welcomes* the trend towards greater procurement volumes from countries with economies in transition, developing countries and the least developed countries, and encourages UNOPS and other United Nations entities to continue to achieve greater value for money and to take further measures for the purpose of increasing procurement from countries with economies in transition, developing countries and the least developed countries;
6. *Encourages* discussions, to the extent possible, on the scope of how to systematically report on joint procurement activities and savings in order to help formalize the increasing emphasis on collaborative procurement, increase visibility of the agencies' successes in this respect and ensure adherence to commitments to the principles of transparency.

9 September 2016

2016/21

Overview of decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its second regular session 2016

The Executive Board

Recalls that during its second regular session 2016, it:

Item 1

Organizational matters

Adopted the agenda and workplan for its second regular session 2016 (DP/2016/L.3);

Adopted the report of the annual session 2016 (DP/2016/18);

Agreed to the following schedule of future sessions of the Executive Board in 2017:

First regular session: 30 January to 3 February 2017

Annual session: 30 May to 9 June 2017

Second regular session: 5 to 11 September 2017

Approved the draft annual workplan of the Executive Board for 2017 (DP/2016/CRP.2) and adopted the tentative workplan for the first regular session of 2017.

UNDP segment

Item 2

UNDP funding issues

Adopted decision 2016/16 on UNDP funding issues.

Item 3

Country programmes and related matters

Took note of the first one-year extension of the country programme for the Sudan (DP/2016/22);

Approved the second one-year extension of the country programme for Somalia, the two-year extension of the country programme for Malawi and the exceptional third one-year extension of the country programme for Libya (DP/2016/22);

Reviewed and approved, in accordance with Executive Board decision 2014/7, the country programme documents for:

Africa

Côte d'Ivoire (DP/DCP/CIV/2), Eritrea (DP/DCP/ERI/3), the Gambia (DP/DCP/GMB/3), Mozambique (DP/DCP/MOZ/3), Sao Tome and Príncipe (DP/DCP/STP/3) and Seychelles (DP/DCP/SYC/3);

Asia and the Pacific

Bangladesh (DP/DCP/BGD/3), the Islamic Republic of Iran (DP/DCP/IRN/3), the Lao People's Democratic Republic (DP/DCP/LAO/3Rev.1), Mongolia (DP/DCP/MNG/3), Thailand (DP/DCP/THA/3) and Viet Nam (DP/DCP/VNM/2);

Arab States

Bahrain (DP/DCP/BHR/3), Lebanon (DP/DCP/LBN/2), Morocco (DP/DCP/MAR/3) and Saudi Arabia (DP/DCP/SAU/3 and Corr.1);

Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States

Albania ([DP/DCP/ALB/2](#)) and Montenegro ([DP/DCP/MNE/2](#));

Latin America and the Caribbean

Barbados and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (subregional programme document) ([DP/DSP/CAR/3](#)), Belize ([DP/DCP/BLZ/3](#)), Brazil ([DP/DCP/BRA/3](#) and Corr.1), Guyana ([DP/DCP/GUY/3](#)), Honduras ([DP/DCP/HND/3](#)), Jamaica ([DP/DCP/JAM/3](#)), Peru ([DP/DCP/PER/3/Rev.1](#)), Suriname ([DP/DCP/SUR/3](#)) and Trinidad and Tobago ([DP/DCP/TTO/3](#)).

Item 4

Evaluation

Adopted decision 2016/17 on the UNDP evaluation policy and the report on the implementation of the recommendations of the evaluation of the UNDP contribution to poverty reduction.

UNFPA segment

Item 5

Country programmes and related matters

Took note of the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Cabo Verde, the Central African Republic, Gabon, Mauritania and the Sudan; and approved the second one-year extensions of the country programmes for Burkina Faso and Burundi, and the two-year extensions of the country programmes for Malawi and Senegal ([DP/FPA/2016/11](#)).

Reviewed and approved, in accordance with Executive Board decision 2014/7, the country programme documents for:

Africa

Chad ([DP/FPA/CPD/TCD/7](#)), Côte d'Ivoire ([DP/FPA/CPD/CIV/7](#)), Eritrea ([DP/FPA/CPD/ERI/5](#)), the Gambia ([DP/FPA/CPD/GMB/8](#)), Mozambique ([DP/FPA/CPD/MOZ/9](#)), and Sao Tome and Principe ([DP/FPA/CPD/STP/7](#));

Arab States

Algeria ([DP/FPA/CPD/DZA/6](#)), Lebanon ([DP/FPA/CPD/LBN/4](#)) and Morocco ([DP/FPA/CPD/MAR/9](#));

Asia and the Pacific

Bangladesh ([DP/FPA/CPD/BGD/9](#)), the Democratic People's Republic of Korea ([DP/FPA/CPD/PRK/6](#)), the Islamic Republic of Iran ([DP/FPA/CPD/IRN/6](#)), the Lao People's Democratic Republic ([DP/FPA/CPD/LAO/6](#)), Mongolia ([DP/FPA/CPD/MNG/6](#)), Thailand ([DP/FPA/CPD/THA/11](#)) and Viet Nam ([DP/FPA/CPD/VNM/9](#));

Eastern Europe and Central Asia

Albania ([DP/FPA/CPD/ALB/4](#));

Latin America and the Caribbean

Brazil ([DP/FPA/CPD/BRA/6](#)), Honduras ([DP/FPA/CPD/HND/8](#)), Peru ([DP/FPA/CPD/PER/9](#)) and the subregional programme for the English-speaking and Dutch-speaking Caribbean ([DP/FPA/CPD/CAR/6](#)).

Item 6

UNFPA funding issues

Adopted 2016/18 on UNFPA funding issues.

Item 7

Evaluation

Decided to defer a decision on the thematic evaluation of UNFPA support to family planning (2008-2013) to the first regular session 2017.

UNOPS segment

Item 8

United Nations Office for Project Services

Adopted decision 2016/19 on the midterm review of the UNOPS strategic plan, 2014-2017;

Adopted decision 2016/20 on the annual statistical report on the procurement activities of the United Nations system, 2015.

Joint segment

Item 9

Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

Took note of the report of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on joint procurement activities ([DP/FPA/OPS/2016/1](#)).

Item 11

Field visits

Took note of the report of the Executive Board field visit to Guinea ([DP/FPA/OPS/2016/CRP.1](#));

Took note of the report of the joint field visit of the Executive Boards of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP to Kyrgyzstan ([DP/FPA/OPS-ICEF-UNW-WFP/2016/CRP.1](#)).

Item 12

Other matters

Took note of the statement by the Chair of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS/UN-Women Staff Council;

Held the following briefings:

Briefing on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

Briefing on the road map of the UNDP strategic plan, 2018-2021;

Briefing on the road map of the UNFPA strategic plan, 2018-2021.

Annex II

Membership of the Executive Board in 2016

(Term expires on the last day of the year indicated)

African States: Benin (2018), Cameroon (2018), Chad (2018), Guinea (2017), Libya (2017), Malawi (2018), Uganda (2018), the United Republic of Tanzania (2016).

Asia-Pacific States: China (2016), India (2017), the Lao People's Democratic Republic (2018), Nepal (2016), the Republic of Korea (2018), Samoa (2018), Yemen (2017).

Eastern European States: Armenia (2016), Belarus (2018), Montenegro (2016), the Russian Federation (2017).

Latin American and Caribbean States: Antigua and Barbuda (2017), the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (2017), Cuba (2016), Ecuador (2016), Haiti (2018).

Western European and other States (WEOG):* Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United States of America.

* WEOG has its own rotation schedule, which varies every year.

