

Annex 05

Implementation of Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review, 2016

1. Introduction

In 2016, UNFPA continued its progress in implementing the 2012 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review resolution, individually or jointly with other members of the United Nations Development System. UNFPA also engaged with Member States and the United Nations Development Group in the preparation of the next iteration of the comprehensive policy review, covering the period 2017-2020.

2. Advancing the 2030 Agenda through the 2016 QCPR Resolution

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development underlines the important role and comparative advantage of an “adequately resourced, relevant, effective and efficient United Nations System”. Therefore, the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review was an opportunity for the Member States to provide strategic guidance to the United Nations agencies to operationalize the 2030 Agenda and lay out strategies for supporting Member States to achieve the transformative results envisioned in the 2030 Agenda.

In the context of the 18 month-long dialogue under the United Nations Economic and Social Council on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations Development System convened to inform the next quadrennial comprehensive policy review negotiations, UNFPA contributed to the development of the United Nations Development System background papers that were produced to inform the deliberations of Member States.

3. Translating QCPR into UNFPA Strategic Plans

UNFPA made progress in internalizing and incorporating the quadrennial comprehensive policy review resolutions into its institutional plans and systems. The UNFPA Strategic Plan (2014-17) reflected the 2012 comprehensive policy review priority areas, including sustainable development, poverty eradication, South-South Cooperation, gender equality, and increased efficiency, effectiveness and coherence in programmatic and business operations. The comprehensive policy review mandate related to results-based management is also very well-embraced in the plan as a driver of all the organization’s operations and programmes. In particular, the strategic plan has a robust results framework that includes indicators for monitoring not only the development results but also the implementation of the comprehensive policy review resolution itself.

Moreover, in line with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review requests for increased harmonization and common approaches, the 2014-17 UNFPA Strategic Plan was aligned with those of UNDP, UNOPS, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and the World Food Programme, both in terms of timeframe and structure. The plan also shares with these agencies’ strategic plans common indicators for monitoring the comprehensive policy review resolution.

The quadrennial comprehensive policy review resolution will be carried forward to the development of the next UNFPA Strategic Plan (2018-2021). In this regard, in the submission for approval of this strategic plan to the 2017 Second Regular Session of the Executive Board, UNFPA will include an annex showing how the strategic plan operationalizes and responds to the key provisions and mandates of the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review.

4. Support to mainstream and implement the 2030 Agenda at country level

UNFPA, with its broad country-level presence, is engaged and, in many cases, leads on behalf of the United Nations Country Teams in providing support and policy advice on mainstreaming the sustainable development goals into national development priorities and development plans. Following the broad categories of the United Nations Development Group mainstreaming guide, UNFPA country offices are active in raising public awareness, applying multi-stakeholder approaches, tailoring the sustainable development goals to the national context and, based on our comparative advantage in data, supporting monitoring and reporting of the sustainable development goals. UNFPA supports governments and works collaboratively with the United Nations system and national partners on the issues of demographic dividend, data and capacity development, and inequalities and resilience in the effort to make sure not one is left behind. These priority areas and accelerators are key elements of the 20 new UNFPA country programme documents approved by the Executive Board in September, 2016.

As a co-chair of the United Nations Development Group Programme Working Group, UNFPA spearheaded the development of the new United Nations Development Assistance Framework guidance. The document was recently endorsed by United Nations Development Group and is being rolled out to the countries along with six companion guidance to provide additional materials on specific issues related to the country programming cycle, such as the Theory of Change, Vision 2030, Capacity Development, Monitoring for Results, and Funding to Financing. This corpus of guidance will equip United Nations Country Teams with the required tools to support national efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda.

5. Furthering the “Delivering as One” approach and empowering the Resident Coordinator system

Since the 2013 agreement between United Nations Development Group principals, on the development of a centralized funding modality to support the resident coordinator system based on system-wide cost sharing among all United Nations Development Group members, UNFPA has been committed to ensuring a fully-resourced resident coordinators system and has consistently contributed its full share of the resident coordinator system cost. UNFPA has also been implementing a management and accountability framework, whereby resident coordinators contribute to the performance appraisals of UNFPA country representatives, and contribution to United Nations system-wide coherence is an integral part of the job descriptions of the representatives and UNFPA regional directors.

In response to the 2012 quadrennial comprehensive policy review call for building on best practices and lessons learned from the implementation of the “Delivering as One” approach by a number of countries and providing further guidance on its different pillars, the United Nations Development Group formulated standard operating procedures for countries wishing to adopt the approach. UNFPA led the United Nations Development Group Task Team in preparing the procedures. UNFPA contributed to the preparation and the roll-out of the procedures. UNFPA country offices readily engaged in the adoption of the standard operating procedures at the country level; as of 2016, almost all UNFPA country offices were implementing various elements of the procedures.

UNFPA strongly contributes to leadership on interagency results working groups at the country level. With its broad country-level presence, UNFPA is the third most represented member in United Nations Country Teams, and 93 per cent of the UNFPA country offices, in 2016, chaired interagency working groups.

UNFPA, together with UNDP and United Nations Children's Fund have by far the most chair posts in interagency groups, which serves as a proxy indicator of the leadership role in the United Nations Country Teams.

6. Funding of the Operational Activities of the United Nations for development

In response to the 2012 quadrennial comprehensive policy review, UNFPA developed a resource mobilization strategy for ensuring an adequate level of financial resources to deliver expected results, increased flexibility and predictability of funding flows, and diversification of donor base. UNFPA introduced differentiated approaches to various types of resource partners, ranging from traditional bilateral donors to private sector entities and individuals, and their specific objectives and business models. UNFPA endeavored to diversify its donor base by reaching out to emerging donors and programme country governments, particularly in middle-income countries, to support national ownership and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Fund also undertook efforts to use innovative approaches to engage in partnerships with international financial institutions or multilateral donors and to design public-private arrangements.

The 2012 quadrennial comprehensive policy review also called on the United Nations Development System to define the principles for the concept of critical mass of core resources. Throughout the past four years, in the annual structured dialogues on funding during the Executive Board sessions, UNFPA detailed the principles of critical mass of core resources as commonly agreed upon by UN Funds and Programmes and as being in accordance with its mandate and business model. UNFPA also made significant advances in strengthening mechanisms for transparency and accountability for fund management, both through development of transparency portal for tracking of resources and through its reporting to International Aid Transparency Initiative.

UNFPA actively engaged in high-level discussions with donors on joint funding. UNFPA served as a co-convenor of the United Nations Development Group Fiduciary Management Oversight Group. As a co-convenor, UNFPA facilitated oversight of pooled financing mechanisms and related revisions in the United Nations Development Group funding policies and legal instruments and of the promotion of joint funding approaches and alignment of collaboration with multilateral financial institutions, most notably the World Bank. Furthermore, within the context of full implementation of the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers starting January 2016, UNFPA worked very closely with United Nations Children Fund and UNDP to develop quality assurance tools for the harmonized approach.

7. Enhancing common services and harmonization of business practices

Throughout the current quadrennial comprehensive policy review round, the UN system continued its progress in streamlining common operations. The system made concerted efforts to consolidate operational capacities and harmonize and simplify business processes. UNFPA supported and led the roll-out of the business operations strategy, including the common services packages, and in-country support service consolidation, which has now become an integral part of the new United Nations Development Assistance Framework guidance. The Fund is fully behind joint efforts to consolidate select business processes in shared service centers, such as the Joint Operations Facility in Brazil. In 2016, UNFPA also achieved

climate neutrality for the second year in a row, well ahead of the 2020 deadline suggested by the Secretary-General.

In 2016, UNFPA coordinated common initiatives on behalf of the United Nations system, such as the common accountability and oversight model, vehicle carpooling project, and has taken an active role in other system-wide initiatives, such as the International Aid Transparency Initiative and the definition of common data-sharing standards.

UNFPA is moving forward to mutually recognize other agencies' business processes, a tenet that is now reflected in the new quadrennial comprehensive policy review. As an agency fully embracing innovation, UNFPA is committed to bringing out-of-the-box solutions to the table in order to eliminate duplication, reduce costs and improve the quality of services.

8. Promoting South-South and Triangular Cooperation

UNFPA is a promoter and supporter of South-South and Triangular Cooperation and has accumulated experiences and lessons learned that can be informative for the different partners involved in this cooperation. For instance, in 2014, UNFPA coordinated 100 initiatives that enabled partners in the South to share their knowledge, know-how and experience to address common challenges related to the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action..

To build on this potential, UNFPA established a South-South Project under the Executive Office, with an aim of strengthening the promotion and support of partnerships and of serving as a broker for fostering continuous engagement in collaboration between southern partners to advance unfinished areas of the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda. The South-South projects in 2016 developed a corporate strategy for guiding the South-South work of UNFPA.

The South-South corporate strategy constitutes a flexible model with two concrete pillars, which UNFPA will employ to more strongly and systematically position itself to promote South-South and Triangular Cooperation. The pillars are: a. Systematic work with concerned units, especially regional offices and country offices, providing advice on substantive, methodological and operational matters related to incorporating the cooperation as an integral part of the work of UNFPA; b. Strategic partnerships with southern players to accelerate the cooperation on the 2030 and the Programme of Action agenda with a special focus on the unfinished business. By capitalizing on the work of various field units, the strategy shall optimize efficiency of both initiatives directly and indirectly supported by UNFPA to implement the programme of action and the 2030 Agenda, improving know-how exchange on areas that could strongly benefit from this modality. The Census Centers for Excellence in three African countries (Cape Verde, Senegal, and South Africa) and the academic online training platforms such as those through the partnership between UNFPA and Santa Catarina University (Brazil) to provide scholarships on GBV for civil servants and community workers in the global South are concrete examples of initiatives to be further explored.
