



United Nations

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 2024***

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Note

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Part one

First regular session 2024

**Held at United Nations Headquarters in New York
from 29 January to 2 February 2024**

I. Organizational matters

1. The first regular session 2024 of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS was held in person at United Nations Headquarters from 29 January to 2 February 2024.
2. The Executive Board adopted the agenda and workplan for its first regular session 2024 ([DP/2024/L.1](#)), as orally amended, and approved the report of the second regular session 2023 ([DP/2024/1](#)). The Board approved the annual workplan for 2024 ([DP/2024/CRP.1](#)).
3. Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at the first regular session 2024 appeared in document [DP/2024/9](#), which was available on the Executive Board website.

Statement by the President of the Board

4. In his opening remarks, the President of the Board appreciated the important work of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS staff despite challenging circumstances, and paid tribute to the 152 members killed in Gaza. He described 2024 as beginning with unprecedented devastation, division and instability, where the Sustainable Development Goals have fallen off track. In reinvigorating international cooperation in the spirit of global solidarity and common goods, the United Nations needed to step up as the key actor towards uplifting the lives of people everywhere. The Executive Board had an important responsibility in guiding United Nations organizations to produce results, mobilize resources and ensure optimum utilization. He stressed reversing the redirection of funds from development initiatives, raising awareness to increase contributions to the regular budget and exploring new financing. He urged a continued emphasis on results, including through the midterm reviews of the UNDP and UNFPA strategic plans. He called on the Board to continue to strive for enhanced transparency and accountability; streamlining and institutionalizing improved practices of the last few years which could help prevent future risks. He described 2024 as crucial for multilateralism, with the world owing the next generations a better future.

Joint segment

II. Recommendations of the Board of Auditors

5. The Assistant Administrator and Director, Bureau of Management Services, UNDP, presented the report on the status of implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors, 2022 ([DP/2024/3](#)). The officer-in-charge, United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), presented the report on the implementation of the recommendations of the United Nations Board of Auditors, 2022 ([DP/2024/4](#)). The Deputy Executive Director, Management, UNFPA, presented the report on the implementation of the recommendations of the United Nations Board of Auditors, 2022 ([DP/FPA/2024/3](#)). The Chief Financial Officer ad interim and Director of the Finance Group, UNOPS, presented the report on the implementation of the recommendations of the United Nations Board of Auditors, 2022 ([DP/OPS/2024/1](#)).
6. A group of delegations welcomed the unqualified audit opinions that all four entities received for 2022 while noting room for improvements. It encouraged the Board of Auditors to provide a summary of key findings and recommendations to enhance transparency and assurance. It stressed the importance of enhancing risk management and internal controls; encouraged including a statement of internal

controls in financial statements; and called for enhanced interaction with the Executive Board on enterprise risk management and risks of strategic importance. For UNDP, it appreciated implementation of the majority of recommendations and noted a successful transition in the reform of the United Nations development system. UNDP should maintain its central role in the United Nations development system, including through further strengthening its integrator function. On UNCDF, it said that all 2022 recommendations were of high priority, with the majority relating to enterprise risk management, and pointed to weaknesses in governance, risk and internal controls. On UNFPA, noting the recommendations on supply chain management, it emphasized adequate resources to address recommendations and minimize risks. On UNOPS, it expressed concern on the low implementation rate of outstanding recommendations, deficiencies in project and grant management, project portfolio risks and issues on budgeting and pricing. It strongly encouraged a faster implementation pace and increased efforts to retrieve missing funds from the Sustainable Investments in Infrastructure and Innovation initiative.

7. A delegation raised concerns about declining core contributions to UNDP; noted that UNFPA rejected a Board of Auditors recommendation on the reporting line of the Oversight Advisory Committee at UNFPA; and requested clarifications on staffing levels in the UNOPS internal audit and investigation group.

8. The Assistant Administrator and Director, Bureau of Management Services, UNDP, said it had not fully established the cost benefit of a statement of internal controls. With respect to its integrator function, as provided in United Nations development system reform, UNDP had made continuous progress and investments to further strengthen its capacity to formulate and provide integrated development solutions and effectively respond to country demands. In this respect, UNDP would continue to review, update and refine its internal strategies and processes to perform efficiently and effectively. The officer-in-charge, UNCDF, appreciated the reference to high-priority recommendations and emphasized progress. The Deputy Executive Director, Management, UNFPA, said that the supply chain management unit recovered costs through project fees; expanded resources had recently been approved. He stressed that the independence of the Oversight Advisory Committee was in line with best practices at other United Nations entities. The Chief Financial Officer ad interim and Director of the Finance Group, UNOPS, said the organization continued to implement the comprehensive response plan with significant milestones and progress that would be presented to the Board of Auditors. She described a comprehensive review of cost recovery and a plan for digital transformation and clarified current staffing numbers in the Internal Audit and Investigation Group.

9. The Executive Board adopted decision 2024/1 on the reports of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Capital Development Fund, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Office for Project Services on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors, 2022.

III. Follow-up to the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board meeting

10. The Director, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP and the Deputy Executive Director, Programme, UNFPA presented the Joint UNDP and UNFPA report on the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the Programme Coordinating Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (DP-FPA/2024/1). The Director of the New York office of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) provided remarks.

11. A group of delegations welcomed significant gains in the global fight against HIV and AIDS but stressed more must be done. Progress was stagnant for key populations, especially transgender people. It stressed a whole-of-society approach, including by harnessing the collective assets of UNDP and UNFPA to reduce stigma, tackle discrimination and address human rights issues. It took note of the issues facing the Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS, as described in the recent Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment review of the UNAIDS Secretariat and the capacity assessment of the joint programme; stressed adequate resources for the joint programme secretariat and co-sponsors; and asked how evaluations would be used to strengthen ongoing work and collaboration. It expressed appreciation for a broad spectrum of results achieved by UNDP and UNFPA and called on both entities to expand and deepen partnerships with affected communities while continuing to safeguard HIV-specialized staff.

12. A delegation stressed that progress on HIV depended on recognizing diverse populations and unique needs and appreciated UNDP and UNFPA as crucial partners in supporting countries to reach the 10-10-10 targets and in reaching those left behind. It noted that the HIV response should be adequately resourced and driven by data, and called on Member States to increase funding, particularly to the UNAIDS Secretariat and co-sponsors, as well as to remove punitive laws and policies and address stigma and discrimination.

13. The Deputy Executive Director, Programme, UNFPA, welcomed supportive comments on redressing inequalities, the criticality of data-driven responses and the availability of resources, and pointed to a forthcoming new corporate strategy on HIV, sexually transmitted infections and sexual health that was centred on an integrated approach. The Assistant Administrator and Director, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP, said evaluations and assessments would be used to evolve and adapt the joint programme in line with the evolving context. The Director of the New York office of UNAIDS appreciated the collective commitment and efforts of UNDP and UNFPA.

14. The Executive Board took note of the joint report.

IV. Field visits

15. A member of the field visit to Senegal introduced the Report of the joint field visit of the Executive Boards of UNDP, UNFPA, UNOPS, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the World Food Programme (WFP) to Senegal (DP/FPA/OPS-ICEF-UNW-WFP/2024/1). The Head of Delegation for the Executive Board field visit to Uruguay presented a summary, pending a forthcoming report. The visit covered work on social protection, innovative financing for development, procurement, information systems, disability rights and inclusion, and the energy transition, among other issues. He described clear successes in teamwork and cooperation as well as needed improvements in integrating data and learning.

16. A delegation stressed the value of field visits to understand how decisions in New York impact on country level work and operations. It suggested reviewing the format to allow a freer exchange of opinions and emphasized substantive preparation for each visit. Representatives of all regional groups should take part to build knowledge.

17. A delegation stated that the link between field visits and formal Board sessions was less clear. The trend of seemingly limiting participants to bureau members

constrained involvement by countries usually not nominated for membership in the bureau. He suggested revisiting the guidelines for organizing visits of the Board.

18. The Executive Board took note of the report on the field visit to Senegal and the presentation on the field visit to Uruguay.

UNDP segment

Statement by the UNDP Administrator and interactive dialogue

19. The UNDP Administrator (speech available on the UNDP website) described 2023 as a profound year of disruption, with the world experiencing a poly-crisis – extraordinary conflict, natural disasters, economic and financial shocks and increased polarization. For its part, UNDP remained a steady and reliable partner with its presence in 170 countries. Many instruments that UNDP had developed from working in crises – from stabilization to early recovery to reconstruction responses – gave the organization the confidence to step forward. The Administrator called for the Executive Board’s engagement and continued support to find ways, in collaboration with the United Nations family, to realize the ambitions of the humanitarian, peace and development nexus, and to respond in ways that reflected the needs of people in crisis settings.

20. As the world looked forward to 2024, UNDP represented a significant part of what communities, countries and the international community could hold on to. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was needed more than ever, and UNDP remained deeply invested in helping countries realize the development promise and the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda. UNDP remained laser-focused on the future of development as endorsed in its strategic plan. The upcoming midterm review was a moment to test the plan’s validity, relevance and response to an ever-evolving world. The capacity to pivot quickly while not losing sight of the UNDP mandate would be a critical litmus test. UNDP would continue to focus on countries and communities most left-behind as well as on those with the means to change development trajectories. UNDP remained an essential connector between the grass roots and the highest platforms for global policymaking, including the General Assembly and Group of 20.

21. UNDP was investing in key frontiers where development was evolving very rapidly, with emerging possibilities and risks. One example was digitalization. UNDP supported rapid investment in digital ecosystems and digital public infrastructure with a rights-based lens on data and data protection. Another area was addressing climate change and the green transition, which were increasingly mainstreamed in development decision-making, and demonstrating how the world can still work together, notably through the recently agreed loss and damage fund. UNDP focused on finance for development to expand space for investment and reinforce how helping others to invest was a rational response. UNDP worked on public revenue for countries to invest in their own national development. It also worked on leveraging and multiplying the scope for private sector investment for capital markets. The Administrator described initiatives on governance through the lens of leaving no one behind and going beyond the ballot box. UNDP remained deeply committed to supporting fair, transparent and credible elections as well as to working on justice and human rights.

22. As a public institution, UNDP was investing in managerial effectiveness, accountability and innovations. The Administrator described UNDP as an institution with its “feet on the ground and eyes on the future”. The Accelerator Labs, the Sustainable Finance Hub, the Chief Digital Office and the new Sustainable Energy

Hub were just some illustrations of how UNDP invested in competencies for the future of development. UNDP addressed risk management, accountability and oversight frameworks to live up to the highest standards. It was also ranked as one of the most transparent institutions. Its new enterprise resource platform in its first year processed over 1.12 million payments and created 15,000 projects across agencies. UNDP handled the payroll for over 44,000 United Nations staff.

23. UNDP remained extremely conscious of its mandate and the resources entrusted to it. The Administrator emphasized that UNDP was unequivocally committed to the independence of its oversight offices; delegates should have every confidence in their ability to operate independently. He described UNDP's three lines of defense. The first line of defense was the project managers as risk owners; the second line monitored and oversaw risk; and the third line was the independent offices. On recent claims about the Funding Facility for Stabilization in Iraq, he emphasized that when UNDP was asked to operate in crisis and complex environments, there was no zero risk. This, however, in no way diminished the responsibility of managers or excused unacceptable actions; UNDP would pursue every instance where it could demonstrably prove corruption has occurred. He reminded delegates that thousands of people at UNDP delivered transparent, accountable, lifesaving, developmentally focused services every day in difficult contexts. He concluded by emphasizing UNDP's commitment to stay and deliver and bring the focus of development cooperation back to people. The promise of development and the promise of working together was extraordinarily important. UNDP in 2024 remained part of that promise.

24. A Vice-President of the Executive Board suggested frank dialogues on different obstacles, noting the shrinking margin of progress in middle-income countries and much needed structural changes. Climate action was essential and required international solidarity. A key concern was to mainstream a rights-based approach in all activities, including in digitalizing public services. The Vice-President called for not just leaving no one behind but for moving forward together.

25. A group of delegations noted great concern about the development outlook; gains could be lost. Collective action was required to salvage the Sustainable Development Goals, going beyond current efforts and delineated by political action and development finance. The group encouraged UNDP to enhance activities on affordable clean energy, provide practical inputs to address structural deficiencies in the international financial architecture, and work with all development actors to ensure continued engagement with States in crisis.

26. Delegations thanked the Administrator for a comprehensive report that highlighted critical areas needed to address development challenges. They emphasized investment in human security and resilient development to break the cycle of fragility, and called for addressing poverty and inequality as fundamental to forging a new social contract. They emphasized their appreciation for UNDP's work on climate change and operationalizing the humanitarian, development, peace nexus, and encouraged UNDP's continued collaboration on metrics going beyond gross domestic product (GDP). Delegations expressed concern about declining resources and appealed for the continued core funding of UNDP. They applauded UNDP's efforts to reduce its administrative costs and commended UNDP for its excellent cooperation at country level, citing examples of UNDP support to mobilizing domestic resources and the digitalization of tax services. Delegations also highlighted the value of UNDP in empowering and equipping countries with best practices and international experiences.

27. Delegations asked about ways to improve triangular and South-South cooperation. They called for more investment in productive sectors while highly appreciating work to foster inclusive economic growth and resilience. They lauded

contributions to digitalizing public services, strengthening the ecosystem for inclusive development finance and supporting green energy transitions. Delegations encouraged UNDP to strategically seek partnerships with the private sector to maximize the impact of work on digitalization, asked for more information on civil society partnerships and expressed support for work on gender-responsive fiscal policies and tax reforms.

28. Delegations underlined the organization's crucial role as an integrator and accelerator of inclusive and sustainable development, and encouraged UNDP to enhance its integrator role in materializing the humanitarian, development, peace nexus approach. Given its critical role, UNDP should continue to collaborate with other multilateral stakeholders, including within the United Nations system to bolster its effectiveness. Several delegations stressed that risks must be addressed and mitigated and said that recent allegations of corruption in Iraq were a major concern. They thanked the Administrator for proactively addressing the issue, requested continued information and transparency, and questioned how UNDP would further strengthen systems to prevent corruption and misconduct. A delegation appreciated the commitment to operating in high-risk environments while upholding robust risk management practices, and asked how UNDP ensured that a risk-averse culture did not hinder effective operations.

29. Delegations recognized positive efforts to improve management effectiveness and translate the UNDP strategic plan into concrete actions to help developing countries better cope with a volatile external environment. A delegation asked for more detailed information on progress under the funding windows. Delegations described the Summit of the Future as an opportunity to fulfil financing commitments, reform the multilateral financial system, enhance the fairness of the digital and energy transitions, and make the United Nations development system fit for purpose.

30. In response, the Administrator described financing as the lifeblood of advancing development. UNDP, through its work on integrated national financing frameworks and SDG insights, offered tools to governments to review the full spectrum of public, private, domestic and national finance and make budget decisions with the greatest return on investment. He also referred to support to governments to increase domestic revenue through improving tax systems and highlighted the contributions of UNDP to mobilizing private investment through capital markets. The Administrator explained the organization's continued commitment to supporting initiatives that created investment ecosystems, built enabling policy environments and enhanced capacities to attract private capital at scale.

31. UNDP had invested heavily in greater efficiencies, gaining three cents on every dollar, but focusing mainly on a transactional and efficiency agenda could limit consensus and the value of the United Nations in development cooperation. It was a moment to find balance in addressing accountability and defining a development agenda that was not just articulated in targets and indicators but in practical responses to development concerns. He looked to the Summit of the Future to be bold in articulating effective cooperation despite differences.

32. The Administrator described improved risk management, including an enhanced policy, a risk appetite statement and guidance, updated risk categories, a chief risk officer, clarified risk management roles and responsibilities of all personnel, strengthened project-level risk assessment guidance, and dashboards to track and manage risk. UNDP had increased the protection of whistleblowers and invested in ethics.

33. He underlined the significant demand for support on digital and technology as well as climate change and green transitions as a development challenge. On the most scalable opportunities, he said these were in technology and financing. He ended by

reminding delegations that the stabilization facility in Iraq had been an extraordinary success. Weaknesses would be carefully addressed. But these should not overshadow the achievement of the Government and international community coming together at a moment of extraordinary disruption and creating a programme unlike any that came before.

V. Human Development Report

34. The Director, Human Development Report Office provided an update on the forthcoming 2024 edition of the report. He described three layers of uncertainty that would guide a series of the reports over the next few years. The 2024 report would look at polarization and how to break through gridlocks preventing people from coming together within and across countries. The following report would consider how digital transition was shaping prospects for human development. A subsequent report would delve into advancing human development in the Anthropocene. He described findings from the 2024 report, including links between perceptions of insecurity and political extremes as well as lower levels of trust.

35. The Director said that consultations to create the report were regional and thematic, involving hundreds of experts, policymakers, civil society advocates and members of the public at large. Other Human Development Report Office publications have recently included reports on gender social norms and multidimensional poverty. He stressed how the idea of going beyond GDP was something that animated work on metrics in the Human Development Report Office from its inception. An innovative new Human Climate Horizons platform would provide information on human development into the future, showing how climate change might affect different indicators.

36. A delegation asked for clarification about the theme of polarization. It said the report offered a good example of providing science-based, peer reviewed information to make better decisions. On beyond GDP, myriad variables impacted development and could not just be averaged out. The Human Development Report had demonstrated how UNDP can act as a think tank and provide state-of-the-art information on development.

37. The Director responded that polarization was not new but digital drivers were. The report would take a step back and focus not just on technology but on human choices, including around using technology. The office continued to invest in disaggregating the Human Development Index, including through the use of satellite images and by training artificial intelligence algorithms.

38. The Executive Board took note of the update on the Human Development Report consultations.

VI. UNDP country programmes and related matters

39. In his statement to the Executive Board, the Associate Administrator, UNDP presented nine new country programmes for approval and three for extension, including: the country programme documents for Bhutan, Brazil, Cambodia, the Gambia, Guinea, Madagascar, Mauritius, the Philippines and Seychelles; the third one-year extension of the country programmes for Sudan; and the second one-year extension of the country programme for Ukraine. He informed the Board of the first one-year extension of the country programme for Cuba.

40. The regional directors for Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean provided details from a regional perspective.

41. The Executive Board approved, in accordance with its decision 2014/7, the country programme documents for Bhutan ([DP/DCP/BTN/3](#)), Brazil ([DP/DCP/BRA/4](#)), Cambodia ([DP/DCP/KHM/5](#)), the Gambia ([DP/DCP/GMB/4](#)), Guinea ([DP/DCP/GIN/4](#)), Madagascar ([DP/DCP/MDG/5](#)), Mauritius ([DP/DCP/MUS/5](#)), the Philippines ([DP/DSP/PHL/4](#)) and Seychelles ([DP/DCP/SYC/4](#)).

42. The Executive Board approved the third and second one-year extensions of the country programmes for Sudan and Ukraine, respectively, as presented in document [DP/2024/5](#). It took note of the first one-year extension of the country programme for Cuba as approved by the UNDP Executive Director.

VII. UNDP evaluation

43. The Director, Independent Evaluation Office, presented the evaluation of UNDP support to the digitalization of public services ([DP/2024/6](#)). The Director, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP, presented the management response to the evaluation of UNDP support to the digitalization of public services ([DP/2024/7](#)).

44. A group of delegations described culturally sensitive and relevant digital programmes in the financial, judicial, governance, health, social protection and other sectors as encouraging. Yet the digital divide in some regions was wide and growing, with underdeveloped digital infrastructure the main factor. The group suggested that UNDP support a cross-border digital flows mechanism accounting for different levels of digital readiness, data maturity, and legal and regulatory environments, as well as regional data infrastructure to host advanced data-driven technologies. There were further opportunities to tap into South-South cooperation in information technology.

45. A group of delegations said it was inspired by the approach to advance digitalization to reach the Sustainable Development Goals and modernize UNDP. UNDP was a convener and catalyser of inclusive digital public infrastructure and accelerated digital delivery, and played an important role in digitalizing public services. It encouraged UNDP to further promote open digital solutions, mobilize operational capacity, coordinate closely with stakeholders such as the World Bank and UNICEF, and continue working with a risk-informed and human rights-based approach. The group expected further improved quality in decentralized evaluations, monitoring and learning as fundamental to trust in UNDP and the regular inclusion of relevant stakeholders in all stages of evaluations.

46. A group of delegations said the many positive conclusions of the evaluation underscored the profound interplay between digitalization, public governance and sector development. A whole-of-government approach had not progressed significantly in countries at the early stages of digital development, however. It encouraged UNDP to integrate its support into broader public sector reforms and structured development partnerships. It said that digitalization programmes have often lacked strong embedding in local government structures, hindering the last mile digitalization of public services. Furthermore, an inclusive approach appeared to suffer from weak operationalization and inadequate mechanisms for monitoring the digital needs of vulnerable groups. On the need to better address data security and digital privacy, it asked for information on actions taken.

47. A delegation described how UNDP had supported digital development through digital literacy, engagement of the private sector and a digital platform to help citizens cope with higher energy costs. Another delegation urged UNDP to continue efforts to close the gender digital divide, to coordinate with other actors to prevent duplicated

efforts, and to integrate cybersecurity in work on data privacy and legal identity management.

48. The Director, Independent Evaluation Office, responded to questions on strengthening the evaluation function by noting continued support for decentralized evaluations and plans to expand regional expertise. The Director, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, confirmed that UNDP would work closely with partners to avoid duplication and to facilitate South-South and triangular cooperation. UNDP had a strong commitment to both digitalization for governance and the governance of digitalization. The Chief Digital Officer, UNDP, described a close partnership with the International Telecommunication Union. He highlighted localizing tools such as digital readiness assessments, and early results from efforts to enable financing for digital transformation. UNDP had been developing a guide on data privacy legislation and was beginning work on governance and policy frameworks linked to cybersecurity.

49. The Director, Independent Evaluation Office, offered a brief update on the upcoming review of the evaluation policy of UNDP. It would be carried out by external consultants, cover all aspects of the policy and include a benchmarking exercise against comparable organizations

50. The Executive Board adopted decision 2024/2 on UNDP evaluation.

UNFPA segment

Statement by the UNFPA Executive Director

51. In her opening remarks (see the UNFPA website), the UNFPA Executive Director stressed how advancing sustainable development amid unprecedented challenges starts with women and girls. Gender equality was the cornerstone. Thirty years ago, the world adopted the Programme of Action at the groundbreaking 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, setting the standard for people-centred development. Ever since, UNFPA had worked to deliver a more just, prosperous and peaceful world that puts human rights, including the right to plan one's own family, at the centre of development. She described progress, such as a 34 per cent decline in maternal mortality and a doubling in the number of women using modern contraception. Yet maternal mortality remains a global crisis and highlights stark disparities in health care. One woman in three will experience violence during her lifetime.

52. With 2030 around the corner, the Executive Director urged faster, more inclusive progress. The thirtieth anniversary of the Programme of Action was a chance to celebrate hard-won gains, rally new allies and push for greater action. She described events to mark the anniversary, including global dialogues on youth, demographic diversity and sustainable development, and technology and innovation.

53. As UNFPA galvanized momentum, it was looking inward to assure that it delivered more and better. The midterm review of the strategic plan and integrated budget, 2022–2025 was identifying implementation gaps and making plans to course correct, as needed. UNFPA was strengthening its capacity to identify emerging trends and threats and to plan and adapt accordingly, including through co-chairing the Lancet Commission on twenty-first century threats to global health.

54. UNFPA had prioritized optimization of its headquarters through two organizational changes: integrating the complementary functions of the current Policy and Strategy Division and the Technical Division into one new division, and relocating this division and the independent evaluation office to Nairobi, Kenya in

the coming years. This would create greater opportunities for worldwide knowledge-sharing, capacity-building, visibility, and South-South and triangular partnerships. UNFPA would maintain a robust presence in New York to engage effectively with Member States. She described the relocation decision was based on extensive studies and consultations undertaken over several years. It was financially prudent, with an expectation to recoup one-time cost expenditures in three years.

55. The Executive Director welcomed the new UNFPA evaluation policy, and a multi-year costed evaluation plan for 2024 through 2027 with a strong focus on humanitarian performance. On UNFPA funding overall, preliminary data showed sound performance in 2023 despite increasing pressure on core funding and growing humanitarian needs. For the seventh year in a row, UNFPA surpassed the \$1 billion mark, with total funding estimated at over \$1.4 billion for 2023. The ratio of core to non-core slipped to 27 per cent, however. She stressed that any reduction from a major donor or from exchange rate volatility could result in the failure to meet core targets, underlining the need for a pronounced change in financing.

56. The Executive Director described success in creating a more diverse, inclusive and respectful workplace, and making staff security and safety a top priority. UNFPA had reinforced measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment and prioritized investment in oversight offices. The Office of Audit and Investigation Services had invested heavily in a survivor-centred approach to investigations and expanded its investigative expertise. She concluded by appealing to Board members to do everything possible to help UNFPA weave a more equitable, prosperous and sustainable future, for women, girls and people everywhere.

57. The Regional Director, Asia and the Pacific, UNFPA, provided highlights on advances and challenges and changes in the operating environment due to climate change and demographic shifts. He described extensive needs in crises, including Afghanistan and Myanmar.

58. Three Executive Board Vice-Presidents delivered remarks. They appreciated the excellent results and said they were taking note of the optimization process and its impact on staff. Decisions taken 30 years ago must find new ways to achieve success; the thirtieth anniversary was a chance to renew political commitment and speed up action. They stressed the importance of investing in young people and safeguarding the health and rights of women and girls in crises, and pointed to UNFPA leadership role in fostering innovative solutions to expand access to modern family planning, make pregnancy and childbirth safer, and empower girls and young people. The growing pushback against the rights of women and girls and their bodily autonomy made it more important than ever to stand up for sexual and reproductive health and rights. They asked how UNFPA was engaging with feminist civil society networks in the Global South and how donors could support a strong alliance to counter the anti-gender movement.

59. In a statement, a group of delegations expressed support for the UNFPA headquarters optimization and welcomed the move of key functions to Nairobi. A group of delegations recognized compelling reasons to recalibrate the organization's global footprint and align human resources to Africa as the region with the largest share of UNFPA spending. The group stressed transparency, trust and meaningful consultation, and called for a succinct, timely summary of issues related to effectiveness, coordination, engagement in intergovernmental negotiations and support to other regions.

60. Delegations welcomed the revised evaluation policy and called for strengthening country-specific evaluation. They emphasized a robust programme liaison branch in New York with relevant expertise at the senior level and stated that

the relocation should not negatively impact the normative role of UNFPA or results at the country level.

61. Delegations underlined how demographic trends in global health, climate change and innovative technologies should guide future actions. They underscored universal access to tools guaranteeing the safe use of technology; systematic action on sexual and reproductive health in all phases of humanitarian responses; and a comprehensive women, peace and security perspective to safeguard the rights of women in conflict zones. They described the 2024 session of the Commission on Population and Development as key to reaffirming the Cairo agenda. The session had significant potential to offer solutions to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and could be a crucial input for the Summit of the Future. They welcomed the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit and looked for reflections on how to take them forward.

62. In response, the Executive Director described the challenges from the growing need for humanitarian services even as development was part of the answer to peaceful solutions. UNFPA responded to government priorities and sought to change attitudes across societies and economies. Building new alliances and talking with people who may not always agree would be important to put women and girls at the centre of development. The thirtieth anniversary was a chance to try harder to find common ground and make the fundamental ideas of population dynamics and demographics understandable to the regular person.

63. The upcoming organizational changes drew on extensive analysis and engagement with staff and had a long lead time. Over 80 per cent of positions had already been matched against current staff; all human resources processes would be fair and transparent for all staff, with special attention paid to general service staff, whose jobs could not be transferred. Normative work and engagement in New York would remain a top priority. She appreciated the continued guidance.

64. UNFPA was currently enhancing its collaboration with the private sector and international financial institutions to promote a global agenda that genuinely included and fully integrated women and girls. Specific endeavours to strengthen ties with the Global Financial Facility were aimed at positioning not only the United Nations but also ensuring seamless engagement among sector stakeholders in addressing issues related to sexual and reproductive health and rights, given the increasing involvement of the Global Financial Facility in this area.

65. The Executive Director reported that UNFPA was getting closer to 100 Member State donors contributing to core. In response to crises, UNFPA was working with the Inter-agency Standing Committee and Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs on assuring that gender-based violence in emergencies remained integral to protection, something that women's groups everywhere were demanding.

66. On demographics and fertility rates, UNFPA did not shy away from explaining that nowhere in the world has ordering women to do something related to their fertility met with success in increasing or decreasing the number of children they have. UNFPA teams have developed evidence on how technology facilitated gender-based violence affected women and girls while emphasizing that technology can also be beneficial.

67. The Deputy Executive Director, Management, UNFPA, noted that a fact sheet on organizational changes was being prepared and would be shared. Both internal and external experts found that the divisions being moved mostly interacted with country and regional offices instead of other headquarters divisions. He described an active risk register that was being monitored. The Deputy Executive Director, Programme, stressed the need for an amplified voice for women, youth, social movements and

others in implementing the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development. The Director, Programme Support Division described efforts to diversify resources with the private sector, international financial institutions and programme countries, and the development of a strategy for innovative financing, including a strategic investment facility. The Director, Humanitarian Response Division described the importance of the Humanitarian Trust Fund in enabling rapid responses to crises in Afghanistan, Sudan and Ukraine.

VIII. UNFPA evaluation

68. The Director, Independent Evaluation Office, presented the UNFPA evaluation policy ([DP/FPA/2024/1](#)) and the multi-year costed evaluation plan, 2024–2027 ([DP/FPA/2024/2](#)).

69. A group of delegations stated that the renewal of the UNFPA evaluation policy came at the right time, reflecting necessary adjustments. It supported proposed changes, including coordination with other oversight functions, reporting lines for decentralized evaluations and coverage of all evaluation types. It appreciated the recalculated evaluation function funding target and supported a proposed phased approach towards an evaluation pooled fund. The group asked about country and regional office capacities to enhance the relevance and quality of decentralized evaluations, and steps to minimize disruptions from the optimization plan.

70. A group of delegations noted the effort to balance flexibility and predictability while making evaluations adaptive, innovative, independent, impartial and rigorous. It supported efforts to align the evaluation policy with treaties and other instruments widely adopted by Member States, adding that national context and values, laws, policies and institutional frameworks should guide implementation. A decentralized approach had potential to improve programme implementation through early detection of performance and implementation gaps, and could enhance capacities to conduct country-level evaluations. In line with the evaluation norm of national evaluation capacity, creating opportunities for experience and knowledge-sharing upon the request of governments would enhance performance, along with the alignment of evaluation activities with government planning cycles and evaluation mechanisms. The group asked for more information on how artificial intelligence would be used to gather reliable data and produce analysis, given the prevailing digital divide.

71. In response, the Director, Independent Evaluation Office, described a two-tier strategy to strengthen country and regional office evaluation capacities. New staff teams were dedicated to decentralized evaluation and humanitarian evaluation. Enhanced guidance would support multiple kinds of evaluations as would new forms of interregional learning. A gradual approach to implementing the policy would start with a focus on higher-value agreements with more potential for learning and accountability. He stressed strengthening national evaluation capacities and alignment as key, and described how work with new technology must be consistently ethical and responsible. Work with artificial intelligence would build on a strategy to reap benefits while minimizing risks. He indicated that the relocation of the office would open new opportunities to collaborate with other United Nations organizations on joint and system-wide evaluations.

72. The Deputy Executive Director, Management offered a management response, stating that the relocation was based on compelling evidence and aimed at better delivery for women and girls. He referred to a survey finding that evaluation colleagues spent 74 per cent of their time collaborating with partners outside New York; much of the rest of their time involved engaging with colleagues who would

also relocate. He reiterated that the entire process was being closely managed and monitored by senior management. The Deputy Executive Director, Programme thanked delegates for supporting the evaluation function as a critical source of knowledge for programmes.

73. The Executive Board adopted decision 2024/3 on UNFPA evaluation.

IX. UNFPA country programmes and related matters

74. The Deputy Executive Director, Programme presented an overview of new UNFPA country programme documents for Brazil, Bhutan, Cambodia, the Gambia, Guinea, Madagascar, Nicaragua, Papua New Guinea and the Philippines, and a third one-year extension for Sudan.

75. The regional directors for Asia and the Pacific, East and Southern Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and West and Central Africa provided details from their regional perspectives.

76. The Executive Board approved, in accordance with its decision 2014/7, the UNFPA country programme documents for: Bhutan ([DP/FPA/CPD/BTN/8](#)), Brazil ([DP/FPA/CPD/BRA/7](#)), Cambodia ([DP/FPA/CPD/KHM/7](#)), the Gambia ([DP/FPA/CPD/GMB/9](#)), Guinea ([DP/FPA/CPD/GIN/9](#)), Madagascar ([DP/FPA/CPD/MDG/9](#)), Nicaragua ([DP/FPA/CPD/NIC/10](#)), Papua New Guinea ([DP/FPA/CPD/PNG/7](#)) and the Philippines ([DP/FPA/CPD/PHL/9](#)).

77. The Executive Board approved the third one-year extension for Sudan ([DP/FPA/2024/4](#)).

UNOPS segment

X. Statement by the UNOPS Executive Director

78. In his opening remarks (available on the UNOPS website), the UNOPS Executive Director described the outstanding work of UNOPS colleagues in challenging development, humanitarian and peace and security environments. In Gaza, this included delivering fuel to enable humanitarian responses in critical sectors such as health, food, water, sanitation and hygiene. In the over 85 countries where it works, UNOPS was dedicated to delivering meaningful action, including in particularly conflict-affected or fragile contexts such as Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Ukraine and Yemen.

79. The Executive Director described the year 2023 as about continuing important work to rebuild trust with partners and communities following the mismanagement crisis. The Executive Board support in developing a comprehensive response plan to address the recommendations of the two independent third-party reviews to strengthen internal controls had been crucial. UNOPS had tirelessly implemented the recommendations in connection with the comprehensive response plan that was guiding the internal management reform efforts of UNOPS. Through its robust and effective implementation of the plan, UNOPS had made strides in restoring trust, even as it delivered \$2.7 billion worth of projects in 2023. Of 43 original recommendations put forward by the independent third-party reviewer, 32 were completed by the end of 2023, 7 more would be completed in 2024, 1 would continue until 2027 and another was led by the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs. Two recommendations were not operationalized as UNOPS closed down the workstream connected with the former Sustainable Investments in Infrastructure and Innovation initiative A follow-

up independent review confirmed commitment to the ongoing implementation of the comprehensive response plan.

80. The restated strategic plan 2022–2025 placed a strong emphasis on expanded capacity for implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, with organizational culture reform a critical step forward. Achievements included internal reorganization, new senior recruitment and transformation initiatives. A new culture unit supported reforms on long-standing issues around people management, accountability, leadership approaches and ways of working. UNOPS was focusing on evidence, insights and learning; strengthening capacity to develop, sign and deliver quality projects and programmes; ensuring that processes and information systems were fit for purpose and were integrated and leverage digitalization; reviewing the policy framework and revising financial regulations and rules while strengthening the risk management framework; and ensuring transparent management for net-zero revenues. The organization had worked hard to distribute excess reserve funds to over 250 partners; of a total of \$124 million, it had received instructions for \$98 million, which was distributed by the end of 2023.

81. The Executive Director thanked the Executive Board for leadership and guidance on the reform agenda and new project engagements, and for helping to improve the organization while it continued to serve people in need. He reiterated a full commitment to reforms but stressed the need to overcome the implementation gap at a moment of poly-crisis. He concluded by calling for more focus on UNOPS activities and practical solutions for peace, sustainable development and climate action.

82. The Chief of Staff, UNOPS, provided additional details on progress on the comprehensive response plan, stressing it was driving management reform transformation, and clarifying that the recommendation that would continue until 2027 involved a multi-year initiative on process innovation and digitalization. The Chief Financial Officer, ad interim, delivered a brief statement on the UNOPS proposal to handle undistributed excess reserves. UNOPS had recommended extending the timeline of the refund exercise until 31 December 2024 to settle the majority of cases and drive overall performance from almost 80 to more than 95 per cent. The Director of the People and Culture Group delivered a brief statement on UNOPS organizational culture, touching on key aspects of United Nations principles and values, such as diversity and inclusion, commitment to sustainability, professionalism and results orientation. Strategic cultural transformations have been underway through reforms covering accountability, processes and investment in people.

83. A Vice-President of the Executive Board highlighted the essential nature of trust in institutions and encouraged UNOPS to continue fully executing the recommendations of the comprehensive response plan. An effective flow of information on progress was important. Efforts relating to the reimbursement of excess reserves should continue, accompanied by informing the board on progress.

84. A group of delegations recognized the role of UNOPS in capacity-building, project implementation, creative resource mobilization and technical assistance. UNOPS should not be discouraged from implementing its mandates and pursuing innovations. It commended the dual approach of corrective actions and work to reorient the strategic plan 2022–2025. It looked forward to a portfolio that helped programme countries, including in maximizing their ability to attract new flows of development funding. The group appreciated measures to strengthen the ethics office and the creation of the Deputy Executive Director position for management and policy, risk and compliance. On plans to present proposals for revised regulations and

rules at the Board's second regular session in 2024, it encouraged timely and necessary Member State consultations.

85. A group of delegations stated that UNOPS was heading in the right direction, but the reform work was not complete. While the timeframe to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals was decreasing, and there was clear demand for UNOPS services, transparency and trust must be the foundation for moving forward. The UNOPS portfolio should remain within its mandate. The group looked forward to a fully elaborated strategy on organizational culture, stressing the need for staff consultations. Reforming organizational culture and building trust would depend on accountability, underscoring the crucial importance of fitting consequences for all individuals found guilty of any form of misconduct.

86. A delegation noted progress on refocusing UNOPS towards its original mandate but reiterated the importance of the enhanced mobilization of resources for infrastructure development and a greater focus on capacity-building in procurement and project management services. This would help bring back lost trust among different stakeholders, in addition to ensuring the independence and oversight capacity of UNOPS.

87. A delegation encouraged UNOPS to assess hidden and underlying risks and suggested further strengthening the oversight role of the Executive Board. Another delegation emphasized developing a clear workplan with measurable milestones to enhance the organizational culture and implement new and efficient working methods. A delegation requested more detailed information on the information technology transformation strategy. It predicted growing demand for infrastructure services but expressed concern over a continued lack of technical expertise in bankable infrastructure projects, welcoming further clarification of the role of UNOPS. Delegations repeatedly stressed fulfilling all aspects of the comprehensive response plan and the recovery of all funds. One delegation called for making UNOPS the model for an organizational culture that attracts the best talent, delivers high-quality projects and restores unconditional trust across all partners.

88. In response to delegations, the Executive Director stressed a commitment to keeping Board members informed as crucial to the reform agenda and restoring trust. He welcomed a dual approach to reform and delivery; everything that UNOPS did was based on its mandate and strategic plan, with a stringent engagement acceptance modality. He indicated that UNOPS was eager to partner with members of the Board and other organizations to play a role in infrastructure. On bankable projects, UNOPS would work only on the demand side and support other organizations and developing countries in gaining technical assistance and building capacity. He appreciated a positive reaction to the organizational culture strategy and emphasized ongoing interactive dialogues with personnel. UNOPS had in some cases gone beyond what was planned, such as in developing a code of conduct and looking towards improved performance management systems.

89. The Director, People and Culture Group, described next steps in reshaping the organizational culture to align with United Nations values and norms. A third-party organization would help design ways forward; further steps would entail developing tools, policies and performance management systems. The Chief of Staff highlighted work on risk management, including specific frameworks for anti-bribery and corruption, an integrated risk and compliance group, training on risk management skillsets for mission-critical roles, and the integration of risk assessment into strategy, budgeting and target-setting processes, among others.

90. The Executive Board adopted decision 2024/4 on the comprehensive response plan in response to the recommendations of the two independent third-party reviews on UNOPS, decision 2024/5 on UNOPS organizational culture, and decision 2024/6

on UNOPS distribution of excess reserves to paying entities: UNOPS proposal on the alternative use of undisbursed funds.

XI. Other matters

Address by the Chairperson of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS/UN-Women Staff Council

91. The Executive Board heard a presentation by the chairperson of the UNDP, UNFPA, UNOPS and UN-Women Staff Council. Given losses among United Nations personnel, he reminded delegations of the responsibility to ensure their safety and security. Recent efforts to improve staff engagement, such as the UNDP employee listening architecture, were welcome but unmanageable workloads have become a serious concern. At UNOPS, improvement in overcoming a culture of fear was happening more slowly than expected. He described how the council was participating in the headquarters optimization process at UNFPA, noting ongoing efforts to make the process people-centred, fair and transparent. Staff were extremely concerned about potential organizational risks related to the transition; a risk analysis and clear matrix of success were recommended. The Staff Council welcomed the review of the use of non-staff personnel and related contractual modalities to address ongoing challenges to appropriate use.

92. A group of delegations commended the dedication of United Nations staff amid multiple crises. It said that creating a safe, inclusive, welcoming, enabling and open working environment was not easy but should remain a collective goal. It encouraged taking all measures to ensure that working for the United Nations was a positive experience, free from discrimination, racism, sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment or any other form of oppression or mistreatment. It asked about collaboration across United Nations staff councils; steps the council takes to support more inclusive, safe and open organizational cultures; and whether support for the council was sufficient.

93. A delegation expressed hope that engagement with the staff council would become a permanent agenda item. It asked for an update on the council's extension of representation to non-staff.

94. The council chairperson welcomed making engagement with the Board a regular agenda item. He described system-level collaboration across three federations of staff councils and associations in the United Nations. The staff council participated in diversity, equity and inclusion as well as gender equality initiatives, and had seen significant engagement with management and an openness to discussing policy issues. He stressed that involvement in change processes needed to happen early. The council had developed a modality where non-staff could become associate members but had been informed that this contradicted staff rules; it was a "space" that was not yet settled. He described significant internal solidarity between staff and non-staff, and underlined that it was not satisfactory to have 70 per cent of the workforce without representation.

95. In response, the officer-in-charge, Office of Human Resources, UNDP, confirmed that creating a working environment that was inclusive, respectful, and free from fear and any form of harassment and discrimination remained a key priority, including in a new diversity, equity and inclusion strategy. A speak-up culture programme was successfully piloted. UNDP was proactively engaging with offices and teams that did not do well in a recent staff survey to define root causes and better responses. Other steps included strengthened leadership accountability and avenues for staff to share views on leadership. On a new non-staff contractual modality, she

described detailed guidelines for use and continued feedback that drove recent policy changes.

96. The Director, Division of Human Resources, UNFPA, referred to regular meetings with the staff council and allocating one position to it that could not be realigned, retrenched or moved away. She expressed appreciation for concerns about ongoing changes but suggested these would create new opportunities and position UNFPA more strongly. Human resources teams were working hard to provide career coaching and remained particularly mindful of the concerns of general service staff who cannot be relocated under staff rules.

97. The Director, People and Culture Group, UNOPS, described several initiatives to cultivate a more positive organizational culture and affirmed the commitment to supporting the people management competencies of managers. A forthcoming Joint Inspection Unit report would be pivotal in balancing staff contracts and individual contractor agreements, given the nature of how UNOPS operates. UNOPS had begun revamping its whistleblower mechanism. Senior management had repeatedly encouraged the formation of local personnel associations. Staff representatives participate in dedicated forums to address concerns, foster dialogue and promote a culture of openness.

Adoption of the tentative workplan for the annual session 2024

98. During the adoption of the tentative workplan for the annual session 2024, a group of delegations, referring to the inclusion of an agenda item on the third-party assessment of the governance and oversight functions of the Executive Boards, indicated the need for an in-depth consideration of the recommendations contained in the report, so that all members were given sufficient time and opportunity to conduct necessary consultations for their effective participation. The group noted the responsibility of the Board in carefully reflecting on the implications of those recommendations related to the structure and functions of the Board, and that these discussions were framed by and contributed to the fulfilment of the mandate of the General Assembly: providing intergovernmental support to and supervision of the activities of each fund or programme in accordance with the overall policy guidance of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, in accordance with their respective responsibility as set out in the United Nations Charter, and to ensure responsiveness to the needs and priorities of recipient countries.

99. The group called for member-driven, phased, inclusive and balanced intergovernmental discussions on this issue at the annual session.

Part two

Annual session 2024

**Held at United Nations Headquarters in New York
from 3 to 7 June 2024**

I. Organizational matters

1. The annual session 2024 of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS was held from 3 to 7 June 2024.
2. The Executive Board approved the agenda and workplan for its annual session 2024 ([DP/2024/L.2](#)) and approved the report of the first regular session 2024 ([DP/2024/8](#)).
3. Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at the first regular session 2024 appeared in document [DP/2024/9](#), which was available on the Executive Board website.
4. The Executive Board agreed in decision 2024/23 on the following schedule for future sessions of the Executive Board in 2024:

Second regular session 2024: 26 August to 29 August 2024.

Statement by the President of the Board

5. The President of the Board began by expressing gratitude to colleagues of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS for carrying out their important work with dedication and courage amid unprecedented events setting back progress on the Sustainable Development Goals. In complex circumstances, the annual session of the Executive Board provided a platform to collectively chart the course forward and empower organizations to deliver more successfully and efficiently. The President highlighted the midterm reviews of the strategic plans of UNDP and UNFPA as pivotal to assess progress and challenges, improve implementation and develop future strategic plans. Dialogues on the midterm reviews of the integrated resource plans and budgets would be equally important, including to bolster the mobilization and efficient use of resources. The President welcomed the session's thematic discussion with the Executive Director of UNOPS and other panellists. Other important items included a discussion of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) report on the review of governance and oversight of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF and UN-Women ([JIU/REP/2023/7](#)).

Joint segment

II. Update on the implementation efforts on the repositioning of the United Nations development system

6. The UNDP Associate Administrator, UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) and the UNOPS Deputy Executive Director (Delivery and Partnerships) updated the Board on progress on General Assembly resolution [72/279](#) on the implementation efforts on the repositioning of the United Nations development system, including the reform checklist.
7. A group of delegations said the United Nations working together was the only way to provide an effective offer tailored to each country. The group called on United Nations entities to increase collaboration and joint programming, moving towards integrated approaches. The group urged improvement in four areas: implementing the management and accountability framework; reducing compartmentalization in programming and planning; closer information sharing with resident coordinators; and applying dual reporting more consistently.
8. A delegation highlighted the role of resident coordinators and their increasingly supportive normative functions. The delegation further emphasized the role of

contributors in reducing competition for funds and close alignment between United Nations sustainable development cooperation frameworks and individual entity country programme documents. The delegation appreciated improved alignment with the management and accountability framework; performance evaluations prioritizing system-wide approaches; implementation of the 1 per cent coordination levy; efficiency gains; and global shared services and the common back-office initiative.

9. In response to delegations, the UNDP Associate Administrator stated that all UNDP country programme documents fully align to cooperation frameworks. Based on a centrally assigned goal on contributions to country team results, UNDP had requested all resident coordinators to provide inputs to performance appraisals of resident representatives; UNDP also provided feedback on resident coordinator appraisals. Critically low core funding, however, remained a challenge and reason for resource competition.

10. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) stated that transfers between United Nations entities were the largest source of non-core funding for UNFPA. He suggested that Member States align funding practices at the country level to reduce competition. He hoped that the next quadrennial comprehensive policy review would reinforce the United Nations normative role on human rights, including, but not limited to, gender equality and disability inclusion.

11. The UNOPS Deputy Executive Director (Delivery and Partnerships) underlined the vital role of resident coordinators in facilitating better collaboration among entities and promoting joint programmes. The quadrennial comprehensive policy review could recognize entity mandates and capacities; consider comparative advantages; and ensure effective use of resources and experience.

12. The Executive Board adopted decision 2024/8 on the update of the implementation efforts on the repositioning of the United Nations development system.

III. Internal audit and investigation

13. The UNDP Director, Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI) presented the annual report on internal audit and investigations activities in 2023 ([DP/2024/10](#)); the UNDP Director, Bureau for Management Services provided the management response to the OAI 2023 Annual Report and the Annual Report of the Audit and Evaluation Advisory Committee. The UNFPA Director, Office of Audit and Investigation Services (OAIS) presented the report on internal audit and investigation activities in 2023 ([DP/FPA/2024/6](#)) and the annual report of the Oversight Advisory Committee ([DP/FPA/2024/6/Add.1](#)); the UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) provided the management response. The UNOPS Director, Internal Audit and Investigations Group (IAIG), presented the annual report on internal audit and investigations activities in 2023 ([DP/OPS/2024/4](#)); the UNOPS Deputy Executive Director (Delivery and Partnerships) provided the management response.

14. The chairs of the UNDP Audit and Evaluation Advisory Committee, UNFPA Oversight Advisory Committee and UNOPS Audit Advisory Committee all presented their respective annual reports for 2023.

15. A delegation appreciated improved transparency by UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS and their accountability functions, a result of continuous efforts.

16. A delegation applauded ongoing efforts at UNFPA to work with local partners while noting substantial risks. It strongly supported plans to proactively address this

concern through contract revisions, training and policy support for implementing partners, and encouraged other organizations to adopt similar measures.

17. A delegation enquired about inadequate risk management as a recurring audit issue at UNDP and requested an update on an integrated risk management module and resources to improve Quantum's performance. Delegations asked why UNOPS had not provided a management response to a review of organizational culture and highlighted shortcomings in procurement, including in emergencies. One delegation noted challenges in the UNOPS culture transformation journey but emphasized a positive outlook.

Responses

18. In response to delegations, the UNDP Director, Bureau for Management Services clarified that a risk module and dashboard were fully operational. Ongoing enhancements to support Quantum included working with regional bureaux to identify training needs. A team of approximately 35 personnel and contractors supported Quantum and Quantum Plus for 10 agencies for an operational cost of approximately \$8 million, 20 per cent less than the \$10 million required for the previous Atlas system.

19. The UNDP Director, OAI, noted efforts towards a common approach to risk management across the organization. Of two long outstanding audit recommendations, one had been closed. The remaining recommendation was related to the recovery of a government contribution to local office costs from a Member State. Keeping the management team focused on recommendations included regular follow-up at least every six months.

20. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) underlined that UNFPA had strengthened the registration and management of implementing partners and introduced a new implementing partner agreement dashboard to tighten oversight. In 2023, UNFPA enhanced the integration of human resources and financial systems through Quantum Plus and Quantum human resources platforms.

21. The UNFPA Director, OAI, mentioned that UNFPA was tailoring standardized assessments of implementing partners to fit different contexts. He encouraged all agencies to use the United Nations Partners Portal.

22. The UNOPS Deputy Executive Director (Delivery and Partnerships) stressed that UNOPS was dedicated to working with local partners and applying sustainability criteria anchored in financial regulations and rules. Working with local vendors could enhance competitiveness for United Nations tenders.

23. The UNOPS Director, IAIG said that UNOPS had set up a taskforce to strengthen emergency procurement processes. Investigation, sanctions and implementation dimensions were in place.

24. The Executive Board adopted decision 2024/9 on the reports of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on internal audit activities and investigations in 2023, and management responses.

IV. Ethics

25. The UNDP Director, Ethics Office, presented a report on the activities of the UNDP Ethics Office in 2023 ([DP/2024/11](#)); the UNDP General Counsel, Office of Legal Services presented the management response. The UNFPA Ethics Adviser presented a report on the activities of the UNFPA Ethics Office in 2023 ([DP/FPA/2024/7](#)); the UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) presented

the management response. The UNOPS Director, Ethics Office presented the report on the activities of the UNOPS Ethics Office in 2023 ([DP/OPS/2024/5](#)); the UNOPS Chief of Staff presented the management response.

26. Delegations welcomed increasingly active outreach on ethics, urged strengthened whistleblower protections and enquired about assessing best practices in the United Nations. A delegation noted that greater levels of activities increased pressure on ethics office resourcing and encouraged the respective offices to engage with management and, if necessary, the Board if additional staff are required. A delegation requested details on the proactive outreach matrix and pilot ethics office risk index at UNDP, commending comprehensive reporting and swift action on accountability. The delegation asked about two matters referred for investigation at UNFPA and the scope of work on responsible personal social media use. Another delegation suggested an update on the UNOPS code of conduct and benchmarks to measure a culture of ethics, integrity and accountability.

27. In response to delegations, the UNDP Director, Ethics Office explained that the proactive outreach matrix and risk index exemplified the use of data to prioritize impactful activities. They helped to identify, for example, gaps in compliance with mandatory training. He outlined the emergence of a broader United Nations community engaged in discussions on benchmarking and best practices.

28. The UNDP General Counsel, Office of Legal Services noted that the pilot index was being reviewed and, if appropriate, would be expanded.

29. The UNFPA Ethics Adviser clarified that, while it was difficult to speak about specific cases, in the two matters mentioned, protective actions were taken.

30. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) emphasized the seriousness with which management regards the ethics function, noting the addition of a P4 post to the unit and the allocation of new resources. The social media policy applied to all personnel, regardless of contract status.

31. The UNOPS Director, Ethics Office stated that the whistleblower policy had been updated in 2022. A review of broader processes was part of a wider exercise on organizational culture. On benchmarks, UNOPS was part of the Ethics Network of Multilateral Organizations and was looking at engagement surveys with questions on the culture of ethics.

32. The Executive Board adopted decision 2024/10 on the reports of the ethics offices of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on activities in 2023, and management responses.

V. Protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment

33. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management), the UNDP Director, Bureau for Management Services and the UNOPS Director, People and Culture Group provided updates on protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment, in line with Executive Board decision 2023/9.

34. A group of delegations noted a report by the Secretary-General, which found that only 39 per cent of United Nations country teams have mechanisms to empower, encourage and protect staff who report cases. They asked what agencies were doing to increase this percentage, emphasizing inter-agency collaboration and joint capacity-building for implementing partners. They requested UNDP to elaborate on challenges in conducting risk assessments; UNFPA to detail additional capacity-

building for implementing partners; and UNOPS to describe potential benefits from joint systems.

35. A delegation welcomed the news that UNOPS had joined the misconduct disclosure scheme, UNFPA was piloting it, and UNDP was planning to join.

36. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) described increased staffing and resources for prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse and the first organizational strategy on the issue. UNFPA supported inter-agency tools to strengthen implementing partner capacities and co-led a module on protection against sexual exploitation and abuse in the United Nations Partner Portal. It had established an implementing partner review committee, rolled out the first phase of a bystander programme and increased consultations with communities to identify risks and foster accountability.

37. The UNDP Director, Bureau for Management Services said a key priority at UNDP was fostering a culture of speaking up, including through capacity-building for managers and sessions for personnel. UNDP had issued additional guidance on risk assessment and work with implementing partners, was considering joining the United Nations Partner Portal and would continue working with sister entities on joint initiatives, including harmonized action plans, as feasible.

38. The UNOPS Director, People and Culture Group stated that the organization had appointed a P5 head of organizational culture and engagement, responsible for leading organizational culture initiatives, including the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse function, and was discussing effective impact-based reporting.

39. The Executive Board adopted decision 2024/11 on the joint update on protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment.

VI. Field visits

40. The President of the Executive Board, as a member of the delegation, presented the official report of the field visit of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFP and UNOPS to Uruguay in 2023 (DP/FPA/OPS/2024/1). He emphasized that the visit had underscored robust partnerships between Uruguay and the United Nations, which had advanced social protection, sustainable energy and infrastructure development.

41. The Executive Board took note of the official report of the field visit of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFP and UNOPS to Uruguay (DP/FPA/OPS/2024/1).

VII. Third-party assessment on governance and oversight functions of the Executive Boards

42. The JIU inspector presented the report on the review of governance and oversight of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF and UN-Women ([JIU/REP/2023/7](#)).

43. A group of delegations said that any decision on the report should be preceded by in-depth, inclusive and transparent debate, with sufficient time for all Board members to carry out internal consultations, and with active, meaningful participation by developing countries in governance and oversight. It was deemed premature to establish a formal process without appropriate safeguards to comply with the General Assembly mandate.

44. A delegation viewed the review as an opportunity to develop Board support for agencies to implement the Sustainable Development Goals, stressing that entity

governance structures were complex and Board oversight mechanisms lacked clarity and efficiency. Many issues required significant technical expertise; the JIU recommendations could provide pathways to fulfil duties and responsibilities. A delegation emphasized that improved governance would strengthen collective ownership, responsibility and purpose.

45. Another delegation endorsed establishing a working group to address joint recommendations to all three boards. A delegation said the recommendations provided a robust starting point for collectively assessing whether the development system was meeting its objectives.

46. A delegation stressed adhering to Member States' ownership and leadership, and called for a thorough assessment of how recommendations were applied. Future discussions could provide an opportunity to improve current monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and clarify the relationship between the Board and agencies. Against a widening gap in development resources, reform efforts needed to balance institutional governance and programme implementation to accelerate the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

47. A delegation expressed concerns about the feasibility of the recommendations. Administrative measures deriving from them should be submitted for Board deliberation after careful analysis of budgetary and organizational implications and an evaluation of effectiveness.

48. In response to delegations, the JIU inspector acknowledged that implementing the report could pose challenges. It would require trust among Member States. The Secretariat could guide initial steps for Board members to consider.

49. The Executive Board adopted decision 2024/12 on the assessment of how the Executive Board executes its governance and oversight functions.

UNDP segment

VIII. Midterm review of the UNDP strategic plan, 2022–2025, including the annual report of the Administrator for 2023

50. The session considered the midterm review of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, including the annual report of the Administrator for 2023 ([DP/2024/12](#)), accompanied by the report of UNDP on the recommendations of the JIU in 2023 ([DP/2024/12/Add.1](#)) and the statistical annex ([DP/2024/12/Add.2](#)).

51. In his statement, the UNDP Administrator highlighted the importance of development cooperation in a world facing widespread turmoil and disruption. He noted UNDP had a central role in delivering the United Nations development cooperation offer and pointed to examples of advancements made in part as a result of development cooperation, including the plummeting share of the world population living in extreme poverty and the increased rates of global Internet connectivity. Against this background, the Administrator called for challenging a one-sided prevailing narrative of failing development cooperation by demonstrating the fundamental contribution it had made to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and resolving significant and shared challenges. The Administrator pointed to the Summit of the Future as an important moment for articulating a vision for moving forward together despite differences and stressed that UNDP and the United Nations development mission were integral to the world's ability to move in the right direction.

52. The midterm review demonstrated that UNDP was on track to meet its strategic plan targets and ambitions. UNDP was continuing to transition from individual projects to systems approaches driven by integration and innovation. It had pivoted to new offers that countries embraced to support their own development decisions. The four moonshots had lent additional momentum, often bringing the entire United Nations system together and mobilizing UNDP to link its assets with diverse partnerships towards achieving these targets. UNDP might come close to realizing some moonshot targets and making a difference to what happens next in the world.

53. The Administrator spotlighted the midterm review findings and lessons, such as how the Climate Promise had brought the United Nations system together to support more than 100 countries. This illustrated how UNDP had enhanced what it offered to countries as part of the United Nations. Record levels of delivery year after year testified to demand. Investments in the Strategic Plan enablers – strategic innovation, digital and development finance – had all delivered strong returns. Over 70 per cent of new projects had a digital component, and new offers on digital had inspired partnerships across the United Nations. The sustainable finance hub had become a source for innovations, from insurance markets to bond issuances. On development in crisis, UNDP had rethought its role. The Administrator highlighted the novel use of Special Drawing Rights for a massive local development effort in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as an example of how UNDP could enable decisions that deliver extraordinary benefits.

54. Furthermore, continued efficiency gains had freed millions of dollars for programming. Investments in staff had improved transparency, accountability, motivation and skills development. A “UNDP Listens” engagement survey had over 11,000 respondents, almost half the entire UNDP workforce; over three quarters highlighted that they were very satisfied with working at UNDP. The midterm review found that, on average, the most engaged offices outperformed on delivery.

55. The Administrator highlighted that even as UNDP continued to deliver, it had seen a 15-year low in core funding. This reality was reflected in the results of the engagement survey, which indicated that staff physical and mental health was affected by often excessive workloads. Trying to keep an organization functioning while chronically underinvesting in what makes it most effective was a grave concern. Work on innovation, digital, energy and finance had demonstrated enormous returns from very small investments, yet now the organization could only carry forward what had already been established. The Administrator described a business model review initiated to examine how the organization creates, finances and delivers value. UNDP would put before the Board some contradictions between certain outdated rules and regulations and expectations that UNDP should operate as a modern, agile, transparent and adaptive organization. The Board could then decide how UNDP should evolve as a financially viable proposition. The Administrator concluded by thanking UNDP staff for being extraordinary people.

56. Members of the Bureau of the Board thanked the Administrator for his remarks and made the following comments: The sound approach of UNDP to development was appreciated as was its ability to adapt and coordinate with other agencies. The upcoming quadrennial comprehensive policy review was a chance to learn and correct as needed. They further welcomed the strategic plan as a critical opportunity to maintain ambition in policy and action and called for rapid advances in implementing the recommendations of the JIU report. While paying tribute to the progress UNDP was making, Board members stressed flexible funding to respond to diverse needs. The UNDP integrator function and the UNDP ability to attune itself to Member States had had an impact; UNDP should sustain its ambition. Progress towards the moonshot of moving 100 million people out of multidimensional poverty was commended, while more information about adjustments to further improve access to services and

financial inclusion was requested. A hope for further strengthening the Accelerator Labs was expressed. Bureau members highlighted the opportunity costs of continued declines in regular resources, urged new models of financing and welcomed the business model review. They asked how UNDP planned to deepen efforts to address systemic risks and root causes of vulnerability and requested more information on institutionalizing the portfolio approach.

57. A group of delegations commended significant progress on life-saving interventions for vulnerable people in crisis or post-crisis settings that foster socioeconomic inclusion and social cohesion. Successes underscored the effectiveness of the integrated approach. The group lauded the UNDP commitment to rapid digitalization for inclusive development and urged increased support for countries lagging on digital public goods and infrastructure. UNDP could further contribute to poverty reduction by creating sustainable livelihoods and economic opportunities.

58. A group of delegations appreciated the integrated programming approach, steadfast commitment to digital transformation, efforts to expand energy access and initiatives to mobilize development finance. UNDP was positioned to drive structural economic transformation; enhance productive capacities; leverage science, technology and innovation; build resilience against shocks and strengthen means of implementation. The group expressed concerns regarding the shortage of financing, especially major cuts to regular resources.

59. A group of delegations looked to strategic support in implementing the outcomes of the Summit of the Future, with UNDP leveraging its integrator function within the United Nations. The group commended commitments to innovative financing solutions, climate financing, digitization and advancing development in crisis settings. Poverty eradication efforts were highly needed and must remain a core focus. The group stressed predictable, available regular resources for UNDP to fulfil its mandate in an efficient, independent manner. In looking towards the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, the group emphasized shifting from process-oriented reforms to impact-driven acceleration of Sustainable Development Goal implementation.

60. Delegations endorsed the evolution of UNDP from a project aid provider to a strategic partner that co-creates integrated development solutions as indispensable to addressing multidimensional challenges. Integrated programming was both sustainable and impactful. Leveraging partnerships and cross-linking issues achieved better results and used resources more effectively. Delegations expressed gratitude for UNDP leadership in strengthening national and regional development efforts and said that it should continue to support building consensus for development cooperation as the basis for efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. One delegation indicated that the case for strengthening effective multilateralism had never been stronger.

61. Delegations highlighted how UNDP had surpassed goals to support marginalized communities and made gains on human rights and gender equality. They welcomed efforts to drive forward South-South cooperation and suggested more could be done on science and innovation. They applauded UNDP support for the integrated national financing frameworks and the link to climate action, and welcomed a forthcoming report on integrating climate and development as the basis for action-oriented nationally determined contributions.

62. Delegations noted remaining challenges, such as effectively integrating gender perspectives into all programmes, addressing gender disparities both within the organization and in crisis contexts, and addressing intersecting forms of discrimination. Key areas to support included gender-responsive social protection;

structural transformation, including via the green economy; stronger engagement on women's inclusion in labour markets; and enhanced assistance in addressing the triple planetary crisis of climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss. Delegations requested further clarity on efforts to bridge the climate-security divide and on integrated programming in the digitalization portfolio. They queried if support for digitalization included issues around equality and human rights. They welcomed efforts to generate investment-ready project pipelines and de-risking tools, and emphasized that increased private-sector involvement could deliver needed financing.

63. Delegations suggested reflecting both achievements and limitations in the midterm review to allow Board members to better understand challenges, risks and areas for improvement. Additionally, delegations appreciated robust risk management frameworks and called for further reflection on risks beyond the quality of funding. Delegations highlighted resilience to financial constraints and donor flexibility in filling gaps while maximizing the impact of resources. They commended the business model review to introduce greater certainty in UNDP work.

64. Delegations lauded UNDP for making remarkable efforts to reduce administrative costs and improve management effectiveness. They appreciated transparency in responding to the recent data breach and allegations of mismanagement related to the Iraq Funding Facility for Stabilization, asking for more information on how UNDP assessed and learned from these matters, and on prevention and risk mitigation measures. Delegations stressed the critical contribution of the Executive Boards to the success of the United Nations development system through implementing the JIU report recommendations.

65. In response to delegations, the Administrator noted the importance UNDP placed on integrating foresight in its operations. He reaffirmed commitment to engaging with the Board on the JIU recommendations, agreed with a suggested joint briefing with the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs on election work, and further elaborated on the business model review. The Administrator referred to the enormous potential of the African Continental Free Trade Area; welcomed work on the programme of action for the landlocked developing countries; and reiterated strong commitment to the small island developing States.

66. The Administrator appreciated the repeated acknowledgement that UNDP responded closely to national development priorities, adding that 25 per cent of revenue now came from programme countries. The UNDP vision today was to continue to strengthen its value as a strategic development partner, thereby enhancing its relevance across diverse contexts. He described a new platform aimed at leveraging fiscal policies for gender equality and increasing demand for the Gender Seal programme. In its digital initiatives, UNDP focused on fundamental rights and the protection of data and privacy. On funding, it participated strongly in joint funds and emphasized thematic models. On the humanitarian-development nexus, a forthcoming strategy for internally displaced people would focus on deployment of country-level United Nations capacities.

67. The Administrator described diversified engagements with the private sector that were growing exponentially. Most focused on expanding space for private sector capital investment and partnerships, not on creating alternative funding for UNDP. He said UNDP was viewed by many as a credible partner in verifying bonds, developing digital public infrastructure and de-risking renewable energy infrastructure investments. Being an integral part of programme countries' ability to attract private sector investments should be a yardstick.

68. The Administrator detailed a robust risk management system. Regarding collaboration with other United Nations organizations, he emphasized extensive networking across countries and globally, and the full alignment of all UNDP country

programmes with United Nations sustainable development cooperation frameworks. The Administrator acknowledged challenges with regular resources despite an extensive country presence. UNDP was committed to dispelling perceptions that investing a dollar in its initiatives was less efficient than elsewhere, and pledged to present compelling arguments and scenarios. He stressed that chronically underinvesting in each other would not address current development challenges and advocated for a new consensus. Finally, he noted a commitment to continue engagement in many aspects of the Summit of the Future, including in strengthening development cooperation.

69. The Executive Board adopted decision 2024/13 on the midterm review of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, including the annual report of the Administrator for 2023.

IX. Gender equality at UNDP

70. The UNDP Associate Administrator introduced the item, and the UNDP Director, Bureau for Programme and Policy Support presented the annual report on the implementation of the UNDP gender equality strategy, 2022–2025 ([DP/2024/15](#)).

71. A Vice-President of the Bureau congratulated UNDP on its successful work on gender equality. As a cross-cutting development organization, UNDP could address many issues fundamental to progress, from energy to livelihoods to the environment. The Vice-President stressed the need for the United Nations to coordinate efforts on gender equality, including through the resident coordinators, given the active engagement of numerous agencies on this issue.

72. A group of delegations welcomed the increased collaboration of UNDP with civil society and enhanced support for women's human rights defenders. They stressed the importance of coordination and joint programming. The group appreciated emphasis on the care economy and support for structural reforms, including through work on fiscal policy. The group asked about support for gender equality in elections, women's economic empowerment through better paid jobs and more women in decision-making in UNDP offices in crisis settings.

73. A group of delegations expressed interest in a more substantive update on how UNDP was building equitable partnerships with women's rights organizations to reach those most in need. They requested UNDP to prioritize interventions to transform norms, values and power structures. Referring to recent survey results showing that women staff members rated workplace equality and empowerment slightly lower than men, the group asked what UNDP was doing to cultivate an inclusive, equal organizational culture.

74. Delegations called on UNDP to include the promotion of LGBTQI+ rights in its gender equality strategy; address the gender digital divide and technology-facilitated gender-based violence; and advance gender equality within the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. In looking at development more holistically and innovatively, they supported integrating gender equality as a core element of portfolios and programmes. Continuous institutional learning should involve exchanges with sister agencies.

75. In response to delegations, the UNDP Associate Administrator noted that senior management routinely reviewed gender equality from internal and programmatic perspectives. There was ongoing work with staff to apply standards of equity, inclusion and diversity. UNDP had reached gender parity across its staff with more women than men at the senior management level. He described close collaboration with other agencies on gender equality with clear divisions of labour. On LGBTQI+

issues, he noted robust internal support for staff and external programmes to leave no one behind. Despite specific budget allocations for the gender equality strategy, declining regular resources had an impact; a thematic funding window on gender remained significantly under resourced.

76. The UNDP Director, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support highlighted that every electoral assistance programme had a gender component. On collaboration with other agencies, he described recent coordination with UN-Women on addressing backlash against gender equality. Renewed work with civil society remained critical. UNDP in 22 countries helped advance women's roles in reconciliation and peacebuilding mechanisms. It supported countries to integrate measurable gender equality goals into national digital strategies and mitigate online risks.

77. The UNDP Director, Gender Equality stated that gender discriminatory norms were widespread and required a long-term focus, investment and intentional integration in every intervention. UNDP was investing in analytical skills to identify and define norms across different areas of work. Care economy work was key to address power imbalances and change norms. Leadership courses now required participants to examine their biases, driving internal and external change. These efforts were extended to partners, including ministries to drive a new generation of policies integrating social norms change. She described innovative work with men and boys, focusing on transformative approaches to masculinities, and said that around 500 UNDP male staff were actively driving organizational change for gender equality.

78. The Executive Board took note of the annual report on the implementation of the UNDP gender equality strategy, 2022–2025 ([DP/2024/15](#)).

X. UNDP country programmes and related matters

79. The UNDP Associate Administrator presented the first one-year extension of the country programmes for Liberia, the 18-month extension of the country programme for the Syrian Arab Republic, the two-year extension of the country programme for the Republic of the Congo and the second six-month extension of the country programme for Rwanda ([DP/2024/21](#)).

80. The Executive Board took note of the first one-year extension of the country programmes for Liberia, and approved the 18-month extension of the country programme for the Syrian Arab Republic, the two-year extension of the country programme for the Republic of the Congo, and the second six-month extension of the country programme for Rwanda, in accordance with its decision [2014/7](#).

XI. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

81. The UNDP Chief Financial Officer presented the midterm review of the UNDP integrated resources plan and the integrated budget, 2022–2025 ([DP/2024/13](#)), prepared in accordance with Executive Board decision 2009/22. He welcomed the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) on the midterm review of the UNDP integrated resources plan and the integrated budget, 2022–2025 ([DP/2024/14](#)), and took note of its recommendations.

82. A delegation said the ACABQ report was published less than 48 hours before the Board meeting, leaving delegations without time to review it, and requested a joint briefing with the ACABQ within 30 days.

83. A delegation appreciated an insightful midterm review, a balanced budget for the seventh consecutive year, the increase in programme expenditure and the unqualified audit opinion. Avenues for improved reporting included more transparency on interest earned on the financial resources of developing countries transferred to UNDP, with a suggestion that these countries determine the use of such resources. The delegation reiterated concerns over declining regular resources, proposing an in-depth discussion on impact. Another delegation encouraged voluntary contributions to regular resources and continued dialogues with prospective donors.

84. In response to delegations, the UNDP Chief Financial Officer said that the organization had received the ACABQ report late and expressed readiness to discuss it with the Board. He took note of the suggestion for treatment of interest earned, which was currently as mandated by Executive Board decision 2011/33 and in accordance with UNDP financial regulations and rules. He thanked Board members for support on regular resources.

85. The Executive Board adopted decision 2024/14 on the midterm review of the UNDP integrated resources plan and the integrated budget, 2022–2025.

XII. UNDP evaluation

86. The UNDP Director, Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) introduced the annual report on evaluation for 2023 (DP/2024/16), the evaluation of UNDP support to private sector development and structural transformation (DP/2024/17) and the evaluation of UNDP support to ecosystem management and biodiversity conservation (DP/2024/19). The UNDP Director, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, provided management commentaries to the annual report on evaluation for 2023, the management response to the evaluation of UNDP support to private sector development and structural transformation (DP/2024/18), and the management response to the evaluation of UNDP support to ecosystem management and biodiversity conservation (DP/2024/20).

Annual report on evaluation, 2023

87. A delegation encouraged UNDP to continue strengthening decentralized evaluations, stating that a culture of learning was key to improvement. It suggested more inclusivity in developing and implementing decentralized evaluations, and welcomed the integration of evaluations into decision-making and planning.

Evaluation of support to private sector development and structural transformation

88. A delegation noted UNDP improvements in private sector programming, including through organizational learning, and appreciated programme adaptability to different contexts. The delegation encouraged UNDP to leverage local networks and localization portfolios to support small businesses; use broader programming to enable private sector engagement; and coordinate efforts to empower women in the private sector.

89. A delegation stressed that private sector engagement should not come at the expense of regular resource contributions from Member States but was an important complement to the trillions needed by developing countries to implement the 2030 Agenda. The delegation stressed diverse private sector challenges in developing countries and asked how UNDP tailored its support. Another delegation asked about integrating market-based approaches and better facilitating private-sector partnerships.

90. In response to delegations, the UNDP Director, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support agreed on differentiating among diverse contexts. The business model review was examining matters further, including to address internal regulations and rules. Since most economic activity occurred in the private sector, its intersection with government was extremely important. UNDP could play a role at that intersection and support different categories of private sector actors.

Evaluation of support to ecosystem management and biodiversity conservation

91. A delegation expressed support for work on nature conservation and enhanced ecosystems and biodiversity, appreciating UNDP technical expertise and capacity for innovation. The delegation acknowledged support to local governments and the impact of the small grants programme in building local institutional capacity to address environmental issues. Mobilization of intersectoral support and finance for achieving biodiversity and conservation objectives at scale was urged. Another delegation asked about support for national biodiversity plans.

92. The Executive Board adopted decision 2024/15 on UNDP evaluation.

XIII. United Nations Capital Development Fund

93. The UNDP Associate Administrator introduced the item, and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) Executive Secretary presented the report on results achieved by UNCDF in 2023 ([DP/2024/22](#)).

94. A group of delegations welcomed a commitment to initiate reforms and noted that stable leadership was essential for regaining trust. They encouraged UNCDF and UNDP leadership to proactively brief the Board on relevant investigations. The group commended UNCDF for ongoing implementation of audit recommendations, and welcomed measures to improve risk management and clarify the relationship with UNDP. Concern was expressed about how UNCDF staff perceived audit findings, with a request to improve communication. The group encouraged UNCDF to invest in a meaningful corporate scorecard consistent with results-based management and noted concern about the ongoing crisis in regular resources. A more structured reflection on current institutional challenges and concrete actions to address them would be welcome. The group continued to value UNCDF for innovative approaches to bridging the financing gap.

95. A group of delegations said that worsening financial gaps and narrowing fiscal space made UNCDF capital assistance critical for the least developed countries. The group commended important contributions to inclusive, sustainable economic transformation and welcomed reforms while noting disappointment in declining regular resources.

96. A delegation said that UNCDF had a unique capability to attract private sector finance, enhance technical support to the least developed countries, broker partnerships with development finance institutions and the private sector, and work with countries traditionally overlooked in capital markets. Another delegation appreciated the fund's capacity to facilitate smaller transactions and provide patient, risk-tolerant capital.

97. In response to delegations, the UNDP Associate Administrator clarified that the disciplinary processes for previous UNCDF staff had concluded; the Bureau had been briefed.

98. The UNCDF Executive Secretary emphasized engaging staff in shaping future directions and immediate action to implement audit recommendations. He underlined

how reforms should be situated within broader discussions on the international financial institutions and geared towards positioning UNCDF as an industry lead on risk management, fiduciary oversight, agility and the deployment of financial instruments in high-risk settings. He looked forward to strengthening partnerships with sister United Nations organizations, starting with UNDP to build on an already sound platform.

99. The Executive Board adopted decision 2024/16 on the midterm review of the UNCDF strategic framework, 2022–2025, and the report on results achieved by UNCDF in 2023.

XIV. United Nations Volunteers

100. The UNDP Associate Administrator and the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Executive Coordinator presented the UNV report of the Administrator ([DP/2024/23](#)).

101. A group of delegations commended UNV for its ability to provide support in emergency and crisis settings. They emphasized the duty of care and ensuring volunteers' safety, and lauded commitment to gender parity and equal representation. On disability inclusion, it recognized UNV as a source of diversity for the United Nations and commended efforts to leave no one behind.

102. A group of delegations recognized the proclamation of 2026 as the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development, an important opportunity to acknowledge volunteers as a global force for change.

103. Several delegations said that 2023 marked the seventh consecutive record year for UNV. They recognized meeting all strategic framework indicators, significant efficiency gains and successful digital transformation. They pointed to how the midterm review of the strategic framework 2022–2025 reaffirmed UNV as a common service to the United Nations.

104. Delegations welcomed simplified work processes that reduced deployment times; contributions to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals; and the strategic use of the Special Voluntary Fund to conduct research promoting volunteerism and to drive innovation. They expressed eagerness to build on strong partnerships in commemorating the International Year and urged particular attention to volunteers with disabilities.

105. The UNV Executive Coordinator appreciated continued confidence in UNV, which allowed it to experiment and innovate. He welcomed recognition of the Special Voluntary Fund, given its crucial catalytic role. The duty of care for volunteers remained a paramount priority. UNV was working continuously to make disability inclusion a new normal in the workplace. He spotlighted a new initiative promoting volunteerism for intergenerational dialogues where senior and youth volunteers would work hand-in-hand to address development needs.

106. The Executive Board adopted decision 2024/17 on the United Nations Volunteers programme: annual report of the Administrator.

UNFPA segment

XV. Annual report of the Executive Director

107. The Board considered the integrated midterm review and progress report on the implementation of the UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2022–2025 ([DP/FPA/2024/4](#) [Part I]),

the statistical and financial review, 2023 ([DP/FPA/2024/4](#) [Part I, Add.1]) and the report on the recommendations of the JIU in 2023 ([DP/FPA/2024/4](#) [Part II]).

108. In her opening remarks (available on the UNFPA website), the UNFPA Executive Director remarked that the Programme of Action of the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) was not an outdated agenda but an unfulfilled one. At a moment of diverse demographic trends, complicated by climate displacements and other challenges, it was imperative to heed the ICPD call to focus on people and their dignity and human rights.

109. The thirtieth anniversary of the ICPD marked a continuum of significant achievements: Fewer women died giving birth; modern contraception was more widely available. Gains in women's rights and bodily autonomy sprang from investments in sexual and reproductive health and rights. Investment, collective action and political will continued to make a big difference in fulfilling the ICPD agenda.

110. In the first two years of its strategic plan, UNFPA helped avert more than 31 million unintended pregnancies and 9.5 million unsafe abortions. It assisted 2.4 million safe deliveries in humanitarian-affected countries and trained approximately 200,000 midwives. While UNFPA had achieved strategic plan outputs, global progress towards the plan's three transformative results had ground to a halt. Since 2016, annual reductions in maternal deaths had flatlined. Progress in meeting the need for family planning had stalled. The situation, however, would have been even worse without UNFPA.

111. Conflict, the climate crisis and the lingering effects of the pandemic had caused social and economic disruptions, compounded by the increasing pushback against agreed reproductive rights and worsening inequalities. Women and young people with disabilities, migrants, people living with HIV, and LGBTIQI+ and gender-diverse people continued to experience discrimination and exclusion in seeking sexual and reproductive health care. The Executive Director emphasized that no one was unreachable. If someone seemed hard to reach it meant people had not tried hard enough. Only systems that worked for those on the margins would work for everyone.

112. UNFPA continued to strengthen capacity to deliver in humanitarian settings. In 2023, it reached 14.4 million people with sexual and reproductive health services and nearly 6 million with gender-based violence prevention, risk mitigation and response services. Emergency preparedness, anticipatory action and pre-positioned supplies were increasingly integrated into regular operations to ensure efficient humanitarian responses.

113. UNFPA was committed to upholding the highest standards of accountability and transparency. It had reinforced its oversight function and continued to prioritize a strong evaluation function. The Executive Director described the relocation of some headquarters functions to Nairobi, underlining high rates of staff placement and efforts to ensure business continuity. The move was expected to strengthen support for country and regional offices, including in their normative role. A robust team would remain in New York to focus on global normative work.

114. The Executive Director noted with concern a decline in regular resources even as non-regular resources remained stable. However, there was funding growth from the international financial institutions and the private sector and through pooled funds, with the last demonstrating commitment to United Nations coordination. UNFPA continued to work hard on donor visibility, with a 92 per cent increase in donor mentions in social media posts in 2023. She stressed that much more was needed to reach the three zeros, pointing to the midterm review and UNFPA evaluations as offering ample evidence to guide accelerated efforts.

115. The Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean presented UNFPA work in the region. With partners, UNFPA was leveraging its normative and technical role to bridge the region's equity gap. It was using data and innovation to accelerate progress for women and girls left behind, including in humanitarian contexts. She pointed to several countries that were successful on the three transformative results; they could serve as testing grounds for policy innovation.

116. Members of the Bureau thanked the Executive Director for her remarks. A Vice-President of the Bureau underlined UNFPA trust and credibility, critical in mobilizing donor support. Results were not just about figures: There were human beings and lives behind them. UNFPA changed lives around the world, as demonstrated in its midterm review, while maintaining high standards of accountability. A second Vice-President lauded strong results in supporting adolescents and young people and encouraged UNFPA to extend existing successful approaches to improve maternal and newborn health. He requested careful consideration of risks and mitigation in the move to Nairobi. A Bureau member asked about how the lack of data was impacting programmes and how UNFPA could work with programme countries on this issue.

117. A group of countries commended UNFPA for its tireless efforts to reach populations left furthest behind. It noted significant efforts still needed to guarantee universal access to comprehensive reproductive health services and integrate population concerns into development strategies. This required strengthening partnerships with donors and recipient governments, engaging the private sector, expanding the donor base and exploring innovative financing mechanisms. Improved resource allocations focused on high-impact areas and reaching those most in need were crucial. Continuously improving accountability mechanisms would help hold all stakeholders responsible for their roles and contributions.

118. A group of countries appreciated UNFPA investment in improved risk management. It called for continued implementation of United Nations reform, including through joint programmes and evaluations. It commended the organization's pivotal role in providing life-saving support in humanitarian crises. Welcoming the six key priorities identified in the midterm review, it also underlined the importance of prioritizing the organization's normative role.

119. Delegations said that with progress still needed on the 2030 Agenda and the ICPD, more must be done to address the root causes of structural inequalities, including discriminatory social and gender norms, systemic health deficiencies, and shortages in access to education and economic autonomy for women and girls. They supported the call in the midterm review for innovative strategies to alter discriminatory social and gender norms and urged UNFPA to deploy stronger evidence for advocacy and policy dialogues. Bolstering thought leadership and tracking progress with clear metrics were other priorities. A delegation remarked that it was essential to seek the advice of Member States in designing and implementing public policies from an integrated, intersectional perspective.

120. Delegations underlined the importance of developing analytical capacities and new narratives of demographic resilience; looked forward to hearing more about the UNFPA foresight strategy; called for work with other United Nations entities to create spaces where migration could be safe, orderly and regular; and appreciated a growing emphasis on innovation, including to ensure that services and support reach those left furthest behind.

121. Delegations recognized advances in bringing together resilience, prevention, preparedness and early action in programming. Noting concerns about ongoing crises, they encouraged UNFPA to continue strengthening country office capacities to operate in emergency situations. The intersection between countries most affected by climate change and those where women and girls were at greatest risk of maternal

mortality, intimate partner violence and child marriage and pregnancy highlighted the importance of including sexual and reproductive health needs in emergency preparedness and disaster risk reduction plans.

122. Delegations committed to supporting UNFPA in combating gender-based violence, including by amplifying local and national capacities through women-led organizations. They encouraged UNFPA to look to young people to drive the ICPD agenda forward. They appreciated the quantification of the impact of the procurement of reproductive health supplies on both preventable maternal deaths and unintended pregnancies and assessed returns on investments in family planning.

123. A delegation noted the success of the Commission on Population and Development as demonstrating renewed momentum behind the ICPD Programme of Action. It urged UNFPA to be vocal and strategic in stepping up to defend universal human rights and welcomed efforts to respond to megatrends such as climate change, demographic transition and technological progress, while maintaining focus on the core mandate and comparative advantages.

124. A delegation welcomed the move to Nairobi as a decentralized global presence ensured proximity to where impact was most needed. Another delegation looked forward to visible improvements in efficiency and effectiveness that would provide savings that could be reallocated to substantive activities. Delegations encouraged UNFPA to integrate the findings of the midterm review into the headquarters optimization process. Enhanced dialogue with all stakeholders could explore more funding channels and balance development and humanitarian resources.

125. One delegation welcomed data on common and complementary indicators on interagency coherence and cooperation, and suggested that narrative reporting on results from joint engagements should feature in future annual reports.

126. In response to delegations, the UNFPA Executive Director said that the idea behind the move to Nairobi was to bring the work closer to the ground, partly because of Africa's needs but also due to the geographic time proximity with other parts of the world. She appreciated the support of Board Members in helping UNFPA optimize its presence and confirmed commitment to the UNFPA normative role.

127. She expressed full commitment to United Nations development system reform and the quadrennial comprehensive policy review and stated that the next annual report would include a joined-up narrative on the achievements of common strategic plan indicators.

128. The Executive Director agreed that the data proposition needed strengthening, and that work had already accelerated on this, with a strong South-South component. There was renewed emphasis, including through censuses, on helping governments ask questions that gave the answers they needed. UNFPA could shed light on what happened to women and girls, especially in vulnerable circumstances.

129. UNFPA would be speaking more frequently about men's responsibilities and the benefits they received, for instance, in taking parental leave. Work with boys from very early ages could enlist them as allies of girls in rejecting online hate speech. UNFPA would also continue to improve even on the 40 per cent of funds deployed through local women's groups and youth-led groups, always paying attention to accountability.

130. The Executive Director concluded by saying it was heartening to hear support and understanding and that while operating in an imperfect world, UNFPA would keep its ambition and aim high. Fulfilling the promises made at the ICPD should not take another 30 years.

131. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme) described how UNFPA programming advanced the three transformative results across the humanitarian, development and peace continuum. It balanced meeting immediate life-saving needs with resilience and capacity-building.

132. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) noted, on United Nations reform, that UNFPA achieved slightly over \$14 million in operational efficiencies in 2023, based on bilateral and system-wide initiatives.

133. The Executive Board adopted decision 2024/18 on the annual report of the Executive Director.

XVI. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

134. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) presented the midterm review of the UNFPA integrated budget, 2022–2025 ([DP/FPA/2024/3](#)) and the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the midterm review of the UNFPA integrated budget 2022–2025 ([DP/FPA/2024/8](#)).

135. A delegation supported long-term cost-savings efforts, including headquarters optimization, but expressed concern that unintended consequences could impact the net benefit. It encouraged UNFPA to be fully transparent about the process.

136. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) said that UNFPA remained committed to full transparency. It would continue to brief Member States and provide information on its webpage.

137. The Executive Board adopted decision 2024/19 on the midterm review of the UNFPA integrated budget, 2022–2025.

XVII. UNFPA evaluation

138. The UNFPA Director, Independent Evaluation Office, introduced the annual report on the UNFPA evaluation function, 2023: report of the Director, Evaluation Office ([DP/FPA/2024/5](#)) and the formative evaluation of the organizational resilience of UNFPA in light of its response to the COVID-19 pandemic ([DP/FPA/2024/CRP.1](#)). The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme) presented the management commentaries on the annual report on the UNFPA evaluation function ([DP/FPA/2024/CRP.5](#)) and the management response to the evaluation on the organizational resilience of UNFPA in light of its response to the COVID-19 pandemic ([DP/FPA/2024/CRP.1](#)).

139. On the annual report and management responses, a group of countries indicated the excellent performance of the Independent Evaluation Office in 2023 but underlined further improvements needed in the decentralized evaluation system, including for humanitarian evaluations. It appreciated the enhanced evaluation quality assurance system, and the creation of a support team for technical assistance and capacity development for monitoring and evaluation staff. It asked if measures were sufficient given the understaffing of specialists in some regions, and if further measures were foreseen to mitigate capacity limitations. It encouraged UNFPA to adhere to the recalculated evaluation function funding target of 1 per cent to 1.6 per cent of overall programme expenditure.

140. In response to delegations, the UNFPA Director, Independent Evaluation Office noted a strategy to strengthen decentralized evaluation that involved leveraging existing resources, such as through closer links between decentralized and humanitarian evaluation teams, and regular knowledge exchanges. It also entailed

mobilizing new resources, including through a new position dedicated to humanitarian evaluation. He explained that the 2024 Evaluation Policy requested new agreements above \$5 million to include, on a voluntary basis, a budget line for evaluation. When contributions from all donor agreements reached an economy of scale, UNFPA would consider establishing an evaluation pooled fund. Given an expected increase in evaluations, UNFPA was taking a phased approach to ensure technical assistance and quality control, focused on evaluations of projects above \$5 million from 2024 to 2025 and covering all evaluations from 2026. A tracking system would strengthen the evaluation function.

141. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme) noted that evaluation expenditure was at 2.5 per cent of regular resource expenditure. She stressed that humanitarian and decentralized evaluations were important as UNFPA sought to get as close to the field as possible.

142. The Executive Board adopted decision 2024/20 on UNFPA evaluation.

XVIII. UNFPA country programmes and related matters

143. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme) introduced the extension of the country programme for Rwanda and the country programme extension for the Syrian Arab Republic ([DP/FPA/2024/9](#)). In accordance with its decision 2014/7, the Executive Board approved the extension of the country programme for Rwanda and took note of the country programme extension for the Syrian Arab Republic.

UNOPS segment

XIX. Statement by the UNOPS Executive Director

144. The segment considered the report on the implementation of the restated UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2022–2025 ([DP/OPS/2024/6](#)); the comprehensive response plan in response to the recommendations of the two independent third-party reviews of UNOPS ([DP/OPS/2024/7](#)) and the terms of reference for the external third-party review of the comprehensive response plan ([DP/OPS/2024/8](#)).

145. In his opening address (available on the UNOPS website), the UNOPS Executive Director highlighted the organization's focus on practical solutions, such as integrated water supply networks with solar-powered systems in the Maldives and fuel delivery to support humanitarian efforts in Gaza. He updated the Board on reforms and the comprehensive response plan, emphasizing rebuilding trust. Of 43 recommendations, UNOPS had completed 36. Of four outstanding recommendations, three would be completed in 2024; one would continue until 2027.

146. UNOPS had increased resources for oversight functions, internal controls, risk management and organizational culture. It had integrated risk management into decision-making; created a dedicated risk and compliance group; ensured the independence and capacity of control functions; and completed a review of whistleblowing processes. Efforts continued to reshape organizational culture, enhance outcome reporting and revise financial regulations and rules. UNOPS remained committed to net zero revenue and was continuing with the settlement of excess reserves. Integration of environmental sustainability across its work included ambitious internal targets and an extended perspective across the supply chain.

147. The Executive Director reported that UNOPS had declined over 30 engagement opportunities in 2023, reaffirming commitment to its mandate. He concluded that

constraints on development, including under the Sustainable Development Goals, were not only related to policy and finance but also to implementation capacity. UNOPS played a unique role in addressing the implementation gap.

148. The UNOPS Director, People and Culture Group provided an update on the organizational culture workplan, noting five areas for development highlighted by the independent review. A Programme Board for Reshaping Organizational Culture had been established to support and advise on culture initiatives and review progress. Other features included engaging with a third party to conduct stakeholder engagement for further defining desired culture and behaviours, and the creation of a network of culture ambassadors.

149. A Vice-President of the Bureau commended UNOPS for progress but raised concerns on the lack of perceived accountability for key actors in the crisis two years ago. He stressed a clear division of labour between UNOPS as a non-programmatic organization and entities with clearly defined programmatic mandates, including on health. A Bureau member welcomed progress and asked how UNOPS was implementing its capacity development mandate.

150. A group of delegations underlined the sustainability of achievements and continued progress to rebuild, reform and renew UNOPS, which required longer-term dedication and commitment. They expected frequent updates on cultural reform and stood ready to support efforts.

151. A group of delegations said that the full, final and transparent accountability of former senior officials was essential, yet a perception remained that they had evaded accountability by resigning.

152. A group of delegations recognized the crucial role of UNOPS in capacity-building, project implementation and creative resource mobilization. Corrective measures should not discourage it from its mandate. The group called for UNOPS to support countries' development priorities and commended the risk and compliance group and organizational culture transformation plan.

153. Delegations supported a second interim review in early 2025 to sustain improvements and stressed implementing the updated whistleblower policy and determining the response to the missing \$61 million from the Sustainable Investments in Infrastructure and Innovation project (S3i). A delegation expressed concern about a large-scale medical supplies programme; called for more details on plans to expand UNOPS offices; and urged correcting geographical imbalances in staffing. A delegation appreciated UNOPS support for the fair participation of developing countries in United Nations procurement.

154. In response to delegations, the UNOPS Executive Director stressed that every effort was being made to increase collaboration with other United Nations organizations on project implementation. As an example of capacity support, he referred to how UNOPS might provide both supplies and technical assistance to strengthen national procurement systems. He stressed diversity in the UNOPS management team and said the whistleblowing process was on track. Noting a closed session on accountability issues, he called for discretion until the process was completed. He welcomed delegations' statements as the most positive in two years.

Thematic interactive dialogue: Ending the cycle of climate-induced disaster with sustainable resilient and inclusive infrastructure

155. The UNOPS Executive Director opened the interactive dialogue, highlighting climate resilience in infrastructure and addressing the infrastructure implementation gap. A major challenge was better planning and implementation, especially in fragile

and conflict-affected countries. UNOPS was assisting countries in defining sustainable, resilient infrastructure, including through assessment tools.

156. The UNOPS Deputy Executive Director (Delivery and Partnerships) shared experiences, such as in Zimbabwe, where UNOPS had helped communities to recover from shocks and develop resilient infrastructure. The aim should be to develop not only resilient infrastructure but also infrastructure for resilience.

157. The Permanent Representative of Cabo Verde underscored the role of infrastructure in economic growth and saving lives but noted significant capacity constraints due to limited fiscal space. A systems approach to physical and social infrastructure should optimize investments and improve livelihoods and could draw on UNOPS for master planning. Small island developing States would continue to call for financing for multidimensionally vulnerable countries.

158. The United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs said that infrastructure designed solely to deliver services was not sufficient; it had to be resilient to climate change. A critical element was infrastructure asset management. Public finance from multilateral development banks and national development banks could provide guarantees and attract public and private finance on the massive scale required.

159. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction described both a significant need for infrastructure investment and private capital looking for investment opportunities. Four conditions for investment were: risk analysis, adherence to standards and regulations, predictable mechanisms to recover and reconstruct infrastructure stock built to earlier standards, and financial backing.

160. Delegations asked about accessing private capital amid debt concerns in developing countries with the greatest needs; how UNOPS could partner with other United Nations organizations to bridge the infrastructure gap; and what tools UNOPS had for knowledge transfer. A delegation urged investing in pooled funding mechanisms to foster inter-agency, multidimensional cross-cutting approaches.

161. The UNOPS Executive Director emphasized that assessing infrastructure needs should precede project design, with UNOPS ready to support this process. It would explore testing the multidimensional vulnerability index in infrastructure projects. Since closing the infrastructure gap depended on partnerships, he encouraged more demand from programmatic agencies in water, sanitation and energy.

162. The United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs described structural shifts and functional solutions until substantial change occurred. Numerous emerging solutions included advancements through the fourth international conference on financing for development.

163. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction noted that early warning systems had focused on life-saving activities and now needed to include infrastructure resilience.

164. The UNOPS Executive Director concluded by commending participants for avoiding silos that defined infrastructure discussions. While UNOPS had no convening role within the United Nations, it aimed to actively contribute to an integrated approach to closing the infrastructure gap.

Part three

Second regular session 2024

**Held at United Nations Headquarters in New York
from 26 to 29 August 2024**

I. Organizational matters

1. The second regular session 2024 of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS was held from 26 to 29 August 2024.
2. The Executive Board approved the agenda and workplan for its second regular session 2024 ([DP/2024/L.3](#)) and the report of the annual session 2024 ([DP/2024/24](#)). The Board took note of the draft annual workplan for 2025 ([DP/2024/CRP.2](#)).
3. Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at the annual session 2024 appeared in document [DP/2024/25](#), made available on the Executive Board website.
4. The Executive Board agreed in decision 2024/30 to the following schedule for sessions of the Executive Board in 2025:

First regular session:	27 to 31 January 2025
Annual session:	2 to 6 June 2025
Second regular session:	25 to 29 August 2025

Statement by the Vice-President of the Executive Board

5. The Vice-President of the Executive Board, opening the session on behalf of the President, recognized the ongoing and rigorous efforts of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS in engaging with the Board and Member States. He commended their efforts to deliver on their mandates and noted that the Bureau of the Board is working to enhance the predictability of its activities to better support these organizations. He emphasized that thorough preparations and consultations for Board sessions reflect the value of the work of these organizations at the country level, benefitting billions of people. This focus, especially in the lead-up to the Summit of the Future, will help reaffirm and advance the shared mission and collective purpose.

Joint segment

II. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

6. The UNDP Associate Administrator, speaking on behalf of both UNDP and UNFPA, presented the comprehensive review of the joint cost-recovery policy and its implementation ([DP/FPA-ICEF-UNW/2024/1](#)).
7. Delegations called for annual consolidated reports on cost recovery, including detailed tables from each agency listing discounts, waivers and their corresponding financial impacts. They noted that discounted rates for thematic contributions had not significantly increased thematic resources and called for effective implementation at the country level. Delegations encouraged the inclusion of the rationale for direct costs in programme and project proposals, suggested exploring where costs related to oversight and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse could be included as direct costs, and requested further information on recurring challenges related to cost recovery at the country level. The comprehensive review recommended further refinements to cost categories and enhancements to direct costing, with a view to improving transparency and further ensuring full cost recovery. Proposed adjustments aim to enhance the collective impact and advance normative mandates.
8. In response, the UNDP Associate Administrator endorsed the call for more regular harmonized reporting, committing to transparency on cost recovery as guided by the Board and discussions with programme counterparts. He further noted that the UNDP integrated budget presented all cost recovery amounts and allocations. The UNDP Chief Financial Officer confirmed that when the Board adopts the joint cost-

recovery policy, it would be integrated into the policy guidance of UNDP, accompanied by training.

9. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) reaffirmed the commitment of UNFPA to advocating for core resources and preventing core funds from subsidizing non-core projects. UNFPA would strictly apply the policy at the country level, ensuring that all direct costs are included in projects. The UNFPA Comptroller added that to minimize cross-subsidization, a new UNFPA requirement mandates additional review for any funding proposal above \$5 million to ensure direct costs are included.

10. The Executive Board adopted decision 2024/24 on the comprehensive review of the joint cost-recovery policy and its implementation.

III. Update on the assessment of how the Executive Board executes its governance and oversight functions

11. The President of the Executive Board provided an update on the assessment of how the Executive Board executes its governance and oversight functions, in line with decision 2024/12. Engagements with the Presidents of the Boards of the UNICEF and UN-WOMEN laid the groundwork for close collaboration and alignment among Bureaux in progressing on recommendations from the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) assessment. A broader governance assessment will rely on the active participation of Member States in upcoming consultations to establish a working group. Furthermore, the President noted that each United Nations entity is requested to provide information notes in November 2024 to inform these consultations.

12. The President announced that the Bureaux would work with the regional groups to nominate members to the working group by early January 2025, ensuring equal representation. Draft terms of reference would be presented for adoption at the first regular session in 2025, with the working group providing regular updates thereafter. Formal sessions and decisions would maintain oversight and accountability for the report's recommendations, with progress updates included as a standing formal agenda item. A joint informal consultation with the JIU would be scheduled for mid-January 2025.

13. A group of delegations emphasized the wide-ranging implications of the JIU report, calling for careful consideration. They stressed the importance of well-informed and deliberate decisions, supporting an inclusive working group to guide the process. The group reaffirmed their commitment to a process paced to accommodate varying capacities.

14. A delegation referenced the 2022 reform of the WFP Board, expressing hope for similar leadership and a meaningful reform of governance and oversight.

15. In response, the UNFPA Executive Director highlighted the information-gathering exercise initiated with decision 2024/12, which requested information notes from the management of the entities. She shared three key reflections: (a) it is crucial to consider the roles and responsibilities outlined by other United Nations bodies, such as the General Assembly in resolution [48/162](#), which established the Executive Boards, and to ensure consistency with the United Nations Charter; (b) UNFPA encourages adopting lessons and best practices from other United Nations Executive Boards; and (c) it is important to assess whether existing mechanisms could achieve desired goals more effectively and to ensure capacities are in place to support new mechanisms sustainably and inclusively.

16. The UNDP Administrator echoed the UNFPA Executive Director's remarks, acknowledging an evolving context that requires both governance and management to align mechanisms, policies and procedures. UNDP remains committed to following the Board's further guidance.

17. The UNOPS Executive Director stressed the importance of aligning governance with international standards and practices and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Engagement with the Board enabled UNOPS to bridge high-level strategic directives and daily operations.

18. The Executive Board adopted decision 2024/25 on the assessment of how the Executive Board executes its governance and oversight functions.

UNDP segment

Interactive dialogue with the UNDP Administrator

19. In his statement, the UNDP Administrator described the Summit of the Future as a critical opportunity to tackle current global challenges and chart a path forward. Despite numerous difficulties, the world holds great potential and opportunities, as highlighted in the recent UNDP Signals Report. The session's focus on financing underscored the need for collective action and co-investment in development.

20. The Administrator noted that, although UNDP represents only 1 per cent of financing for each Sustainable Development Goal, it remains a pillar of development cooperation through its ability to evolve continuously.¹ According to AidData's Listening to Leaders Survey, UNDP is the only United Nations organization consistently ranked among the top five development partners by leaders benefitting from its advice and assistance. This is noteworthy given that many top-ranked organizations are international financial institutions with larger budgets. Additionally, in 2023, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries contributed 39 per cent of direct contributions to UNDP, while programme countries contributed 25 per cent, reflecting trust in UNDP and the diversity of its funding sources.

21. Addressing the challenge of articulating the value of UNDP, the Administrator mentioned that while core funding declined to \$566 million in 2023, UNDP delivered \$4.8 billion in programmatic financing. Every dollar in core funding leveraged an additional \$11 in programme financing. The Administrator stressed that sustaining high performance requires continued investment in future-focused capabilities and a global presence. He highlighted that modern operations such as the new enterprise resources platform and the People for 2030 strategy were recognized for advancing corporate infrastructure and culture. The commitment of UNDP to improved efficiency, transparency and accountability, including through working closely with the Executive Board, has facilitated its position as a trusted partner.

22. Other examples of the added value of UNDP in investing in the spectrum of needs of countries were cited, such as its Sustainable Finance Hub, established with a \$10.3 million investment, which helped to catalyse over \$30 billion in development finance and align \$200 billion of investment with the Sustainable Development Goals. Notably, UNDP has supported the integrated national financing frameworks, which have become a major platform for policy reform. The Administrator pointed to similar initiatives such as the "timbuktoo" platform in Africa designed to support entrepreneurship, and UNDP leadership in supporting nationally determined contributions to climate action through the Climate Promise. Similar investments in

¹ Analysis of AidData, 2024. Listening to Leaders Global View.

development unlocked transformative support for digitalization, innovation and the UNDP offer on development in crisis.

23. UNDP remains a committed and key partner to the United Nations development system. All its country programmes are aligned with United Nations sustainable development cooperation frameworks, and it contributes the most in cost-sharing to the resident coordinator system. The Administrator also highlighted that core funding supports UNDP in hosting key system-wide entities – the United Nations Volunteers, United Nations Office on South-South Cooperation, United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office.

24. In conclusion, the Administrator stated that UNDP was on track to deliver planned results, despite disruptions in the development context. However, setbacks in core funding put enormous stress on the organization. The Administrator acknowledged and appreciated that some countries have increased core funding, despite facing difficult times. With the uncertainties facing future development cooperation, UNDP is reflecting on its business model. He indicated that UNDP would conduct an “MRI” of current cost and revenue models to steer the organization towards sustainable financing and prepare for the organization’s next strategic plan.

25. An Executive Board Bureau member expressed concern about the decline in core funding while commending the ability of UNDP to continue to deliver on its mandate. Several delegations requested more information on the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office, preparations for the next strategic plan, and the role of core resources in national ownership and sustainability; they expressed concern regarding low levels of finance for gender equality. Delegations encouraged contributions to softly earmarked funding modalities such as the funding windows and enquired how UNDP could bridge the digital divide and mobilize climate finance.

26. A group of delegations encouraged UNDP to focus on people-centred economic recovery, environmental protection and rebuilding social contracts. The delegations noted the crucial link between sufficient and predictable funding, strengthened partnerships and the ability of UNDP to deliver on its ambitious mandate. They praised progress on economic inclusion for women and youth as well as digitalization, and called for more funding for climate-resilient infrastructure and strengthened partnerships with regional organizations and economic communities. The delegations emphasized prioritizing poverty reduction, institution-building, social protection and sustainable livelihoods, with a focus on addressing the root causes of poverty and inequality.

27. Another group of delegations highlighted the shortfall in commitments from developed countries and expressed concern about the sustainability of the significant achievements of UNDP amid current funding trends. The criticality of Member States fulfilling their funding compact commitments so that UNDP and other entities could respond to rapidly changing development conditions was underlined. They emphasized the need for significant changes in the international financial architecture and equitable access to funding in crises. They requested UNDP to strengthen its support through integrated national financing frameworks, mobilize innovative financing and capitalize on digital innovations.

28. Delegations requested that the next strategic plan focus on high-impact development returns and enquired about the impact of a coordinated United Nations system at the country level. One delegation emphasized the need for a broader donor base, while others praised the cost recovery and efficiency improvements made by UNDP.

29. A delegation raised concerns about the impact of defunding the United Nations development system on the Sustainable Development Goals. Another stressed the

need for more cost-effective development outcomes and urged the global community to maximize resources for sustained development investments.

30. A delegation called for active engagement with Member States in the timely business model review of UNDP and recommended complementing the Partners at Core campaign with efforts to engage key stakeholders, such as parliaments and the media.

31. A delegation praised the UNDP integrated approach to programming, its field presence and portfolio approach, indicating these as generating high development returns while enquiring about methods to evaluate effectiveness. Another delegation lauded the work of UNDP in social protection, public reforms, strengthened rule of law, efforts to consolidate peace and strengthen resilience, and stressed the importance of the multidimensional vulnerability index in supporting small island developing States.

32. Responding to delegations, the Administrator confirmed inclusive consultations on the strategic choices to be considered in the next UNDP strategic plan. He indicated significant efforts to make more explicit commitments to gender-focused activities in programme design and budgeting. The use of digital tools to enhance transparency and citizen engagement has led UNDP to look at its governance work through the lens of the technology frontier. He further noted that partnerships with international financial institutions were growing and expressed his expectations for advanced support from UNDP to countries, complementing funding from these institutions. He also reaffirmed the commitment of UNDP to supporting small island developing States and localization efforts.

33. On the nexus of efficiency, effectiveness and accountability, the Administrator credited the Executive Board's measures for the high performance of UNDP. He suggested that these criteria be used in evaluating value creation and investment choices.

34. The Administrator emphasized the need for integrated solutions amid a complex development landscape, calling for stronger outreach to taxpayers to link development efforts with their future. He viewed the upcoming international conference on financing for development as an opportunity to demonstrate that development cooperation is an investment in multilateralism.

35. The Administrator concluded by stating that the key to advancing development goals lies in collective action, where countries, regardless of wealth, become co-investors in the vision outlined in the 2030 Agenda.

Thematic interactive dialogue: Working together to accelerate sustainable energy for development

36. The President of the Executive Board introduced the thematic interactive dialogue, highlighting a just energy transition as a major global opportunity. He highlighted priorities, such as financial innovation, investment platforms and green industrialization, particularly through sectors such as artificial intelligence-managed energy solutions and data-driven energy policies. He commended the UNDP strategic plan for its focus on sustainable energy for development.

37. The UNDP Administrator underscored progress in energy access over the last 10 to 15 years and emphasized the importance of shifting to a sustainable development trajectory. UNDP efforts included a focus on affordable energy access and a just energy transition through renewable energy.

38. The Minister of Power of Nigeria outlined the energy challenges of the country, including the lack of access to reliable electricity for over 90 million Nigerians. He

detailed the country's multipronged approach to tackling energy issues, noting the pivotal role of UNDP in providing technical assistance and capacity-building. The Government of Nigeria was leveraging both public and private sector funds, embracing technology and innovation, fast-tracking infrastructure development, and fostering strategic partnerships with investment and development partners.

39. The Minister of Industry, Energy and Mining of Uruguay detailed Uruguay's success in achieving 99.9 per cent electrification and a 90 per cent share of renewables in the energy mix. The Minister emphasized the need for continued international cooperation to support ongoing decarbonization efforts. The Government of Uruguay recognized the critical role of UNDP in helping to shift fossil fuel subsidies towards renewable energy and e-mobility. Continued support was critical to developing a robust global ecosystem, including international standards, for new markets, and to advance innovation and technologies, build strong capacity, promote investments, expand infrastructure and increase citizen dialogues.

40. The Minister of Labour and Social Protection of Moldova stressed the importance of justice in the energy transition, recounting how support from UNDP helped to reduce energy poverty and foster social acceptance of energy reforms. To support the most vulnerable, the Government of Moldova collaborated with UNDP to develop an energy vulnerability reduction fund, based on a partnership involving the Government, private sector, energy suppliers and citizens. Surveys found that the majority of the population viewed it as a just system, which was important given social polarization. The experience led to re-engineering other programmes based on similar approaches, such as a voucher for eco-appliances targeting poor households.

41. Following the presentations, delegations expressed concerns over the high initial investment cost of renewable energy projects and limited financing options, urging support for national energy development plans and better access to climate finance. Some delegations called for assistance from UNDP in building resilient energy infrastructure, promoting private sector engagement, and establishing mechanisms to de-risk renewable energy projects and provide investment guarantees.

42. Delegations emphasized that just transitions involve the creation of new opportunities, clean energy investments, ambitious nationally determined contributions and shared societal benefits. They also suggested increasing access to finance via multilateral development banks and a systems approach to understanding and overcoming barriers to clean energy adoption.

43. Responding to delegations, the Minister of Power of Nigeria emphasized the need for tailored approaches for developing countries still reliant on fossil fuels. The financial burden of adopting green technologies and upgrading infrastructure was prohibitive for some countries, potentially diverting funds from critical sectors such as health care, education, agriculture and poverty alleviation. He called for support to leverage fossil fuel reserves for economic development while transitioning to cleaner alternatives. He noted that UNDP could support countries in developing robust policy frameworks that attract private investment in sustainable energy and remain aligned with national development.

44. The UNDP Administrator highlighted how core funding for the Sustainable Energy Hub was leveraged for national engagement and de-risking renewable energy markets. He reiterated that every country should participate in the energy revolution to prevent deepening inequalities and ensure a just energy transition.

45. The President of the Executive Board concluded by stating that while challenges remain, the opportunities from a just energy transition were significant and within reach, through shared commitment and collective impact.

IV. UNDP structured funding dialogue

46. The UNDP Associate Administrator presented the structured dialogue on financing the results of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2022–2025 (DP/2024/26 and its annexes), while the Executive Secretary of UNCDF presented the annual review of the financial situation of the United Nations Capital Development Fund, 2023 (DP/2024/27).

47. A group of delegations emphasized the importance of flexible, sustainable and predictable funding for United Nations entities to achieve their mandates and the Sustainable Development Goals. They voiced concerns over decreasing core contributions and requested continued emphasis on ongoing efforts to increase accountability and transparency as a foundation of trust. It was further emphasized that there is a collective need to ensure effective risk management, improved evidence-based communication, and increased visibility and incentives for core funding. The group stressed that core functions at UNDP should be funded by core funding, rather than fragmented funding through funding windows and other streams. They also called for broader donor bases, increased thematic and flexible funding, and collaboration with resident coordinators to ensure inclusive country-level dialogues, including with partner governments and contributors. They appreciated efforts towards continuous improvements and the yearly dialogues on funding, and requested updates on results achieved through innovative financing efforts.

48. A delegation highlighted the business case for core funding, noting its critical role in enabling UNDP to be agile, innovative and responsive to emerging crises while maintaining transparency and accountability. The delegation requested sufficient time to consider the business model review, and further asked for details on how UNDP planned to apply the multidimensional vulnerability index. Another delegation queried how the approach to reversing the decline in core contributions differed from previous efforts.

49. In response, the UNDP Associate Administrator pointed to the robust risk management framework at UNDP, citing the role of core funds in accountability and crisis response, such as recent investments in anti-money laundering. He acknowledged that resource competition among United Nations entities is a structural complexity and raised the potential need for consolidation. Core resources below a certain level would affect programmes, including crisis response. Other concerns related to sustaining high levels of effectiveness and transparency, increased workloads on staff and the ability to sufficiently deliver on expectations.

50. The Director of the UNDP Bureau for Programme and Policy Support stated that the multidimensional vulnerability index would be integrated into the next programmatic offer, potentially influencing concessional finance decisions, and that UNDP would advocate for its adoption by institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and others.

51. A delegation expressed concern about the overall financial situation of UNCDF and declining core contributions, despite non-core resource growth. It urged increased involvement from UNCDF in financing for development, particularly in mobilizing private finance and de-risking investments in high-risk environments.

52. The Executive Secretary of UNCDF noted that while non-core resources had tripled, the dominance of non-core funding remained a key challenge. He emphasized that core resources remained essential for leveraging non-core investments, particularly in supporting the least developed countries and in challenging markets.

53. The Executive Board adopted decision 2024/26 on the structured funding dialogue on financing the results of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2022–2025.

V. UNDP country programmes and related matters

54. The UNDP Associate Administrator presented an overview of the new UNDP country programme documents for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Namibia, Sierra Leone and Ukraine, and the extensions for the country programmes for Myanmar and Yemen.

55. The regional directors for Africa, the Arab States, and Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States provided details from their regional perspectives.

56. The Executive Board approved, in accordance with its decision 2014/7, the country programme documents for the Democratic Republic of the Congo ([DP/DCP/COD/4](#)), Djibouti ([DP/DCP/DJI/4](#)), Namibia ([DP/DCP/NAM/4](#)), Sierra Leone ([DP/DCP/SLE/5](#)) and Ukraine ([DP/DCP/UKR/4](#)).

57. It took note of the first one-year extension of the country programme for Yemen and approved the third one-year extension of the country programme for Myanmar ([DP/2024/21](#)).

UNFPA segment

Statement by the UNFPA Executive Director

58. In her statement, the Executive Director highlighted the focus of UNFPA on building a future for women and girls in all their diversities ahead of the Summit of the Future. She referenced key events marking the thirtieth anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), including dialogues on demographic resilience, technology and youth leadership. The future approach of UNFPA will involve forging new partnerships, driving innovation, exploring financing options and leveraging technology to advance rights and choices for all.

59. UNFPA is adapting to a changing world, notably by implementing a headquarters optimization process, including the creation of a new integrated programme division and an external relations division. The new programme division will aim to break silos, enhance knowledge management, and strengthen foresight and analytics, with a phased move to Nairobi planned for 2025. The external relations division, based in New York, will improve engagement with intergovernmental and interagency processes. UNFPA has strengthened supply chain functions, including by repositioning supply chain specialists in regional offices and expanding third-party procurement services.

60. Emphasizing accountability, transparency and integrity, the Executive Director noted investments in oversight, ethical awareness and risk management, and underlined the commitment of UNFPA to zero tolerance for any form of wrongdoing by any staff member, no matter their grade. UNFPA launched a strategy on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment, backed by a dedicated professional team, to embed safety, respect and accountability across all business units and partnerships.

61. UNFPA continues to champion technology as a force for good while actively combating digital violence. The Executive Director stressed the importance of ending all forms of violence, highlighting the recent upholding of a ban on female genital mutilation in the Gambia. She condemned the pushback against women's rights, reproductive rights, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer

(LGBTIQ+) rights, calling for bold advocacy in addressing growing inequalities, crises and economic challenges.

62. Partnerships are key to the achievements of UNFPA, with 2023 marking the seventh consecutive year of UNFPA surpassing \$1 billion in funding, including over \$1.4 billion in total funding. However, core funding continues to decline, falling to 27 per cent of total resources. Humanitarian needs rose, accounting for 43 per cent of non-core funding, yet the 2024 global humanitarian appeal for \$1.2 billion was only 18 per cent funded. UNFPA remains concerned about the future of core funding as it prepares for the next strategic plan cycle. UNFPA welcomed the funding compact 2.0 and stands ready to engage with United Nations partners and Member States to take this forward.

63. UNFPA continues to address challenges from conflicts, the climate crisis and attacks on women's rights. It provides life-saving sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence services in complex emergencies while raising awareness of the disproportionate impact of the climate crisis on women and girls. The Executive Director reaffirmed the commitment of UNFPA to reproductive freedom and the right of individuals to make decisions about their own bodies, as envisioned in the United Nations Charter.

64. The UNFPA Regional Director for West and Central Africa highlighted significant advances in education, health and sexual and reproductive health benefitting millions of women, girls and young people. However, security challenges in the Sahel and the effects of climate change continue to exacerbate vulnerabilities and inequalities, requiring a collective response and adequate core funding.

65. An Executive Board Bureau member emphasized the importance of Member States upholding funding commitments. Acknowledging progress since the ICPD, a delegate commended the efforts of UNFPA to leverage additional resources through innovative funding mechanisms while managing associated risks. Another delegate requested updates on the work of UNFPA on youth, peace, and security, and on improving outreach to remote, disaster-affected communities.

66. A group of delegations praised the efforts of UNFPA to combat maternal mortality and morbidity, harmful practices and unequal access to family planning. They called for coordinated action on inequalities, especially at the Summit of the Future and the Fourth Conference on Financing for Development. The group welcomed the optimization of the UNFPA headquarters process and urged continued investment in health infrastructure, human resources and emergency preparedness, especially for vulnerable populations. They appreciated support for women-led organizations in humanitarian contexts and the emphasis on localization.

67. Delegations stressed that optimization efforts must also address the needs of ageing societies, emphasizing demographic resilience and diversity. They commended the work of UNFPA on climate, emergency preparedness and data optimization, and urged continued advocacy for women's rights amid global pushbacks. Delegations requested more information on how UNFPA would incorporate ICPD commemorative events takeaways and implement the United Nations LGBTIQ+ strategy. They supported a policy emphasizing South-South cooperation and appreciated the results of the joint programme to combat female genital mutilation.

68. Concerns were raised regarding the continued dependency on a few major donors, but delegations welcomed ongoing efforts to diversify funding, including through domestic resource mobilization and partnerships with international financial institutions and the private sector. Delegations called for strengthened governance and oversight functions to restore confidence and reverse the decline in core funding.

They also sought information on how UNFPA would address gaps in family planning and preventable maternal death.

69. In response to delegations, the Executive Director reiterated that core resources are critical for agility in crises, as demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic. She highlighted the importance of risk management and dialogue with the Executive Board in shaping high-yield strategies, particularly those prioritizing adolescents and youth as powerful change agents. Recent youth dialogues revealed enthusiasm for human rights, gender equality and climate resilience, offering opportunities for intergenerational engagement.

70. Support from UNFPA to countries on demographic resilience includes the needs of ageing and low fertility populations. Future work will focus on demographic resilience, expanded research and targeted data analysis to identify those left behind. The climate efforts of UNFPA integrate sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender equality and population issues into adaptation and resilience strategies. Advancing women's rights, health and education contributes to cohesive societies, stronger economies and resilient families.

71. The Executive Director concluded by stressing that a stronger multilateral system and greater partnerships are key to ensuring the ICPD Programme of Action remains central to sustainable development and the rights of women and girls.

Thematic interactive dialogue: Addressing inequalities to achieve the ICPD programme of action

72. The President of the Executive Board opened the thematic interactive dialogue reflecting on the thirtieth anniversary of the ICPD, which established sexual and reproductive health and rights as essential to global development. He praised the progress made, including a 20 per cent drop in unintended pregnancies and increased contraceptive use, but noted stagnation in areas such as gender-based violence, maternal health and family planning. To advance the ICPD agenda, he emphasized targeting the most marginalized women and youth.

73. The UNFPA Executive Director highlighted that despite advancements, inequalities persist. She stressed the importance of prioritizing those furthest left behind, including through the collection and use of disaggregated data.

74. The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Health discussed the ongoing impact of racism and discrimination in health care. Despite progress in equality and anti-discrimination laws, racist, exploitative practices continue to affect global health financing, foreign policy and the aid sector, hindering the ICPD agenda. She called for accountability, justice and reparations for health rights violations, urging all stakeholders to uphold human rights and ensure the highest attainable standard of health for all.

75. The President of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics addressed demographic inequalities and the need for updated public policies. He cited studies in Brazil, especially on indigenous and marginalized communities, which promoted public debates and strengthened policies across sectors. Technology has helped expose demographic realities more effectively.

76. A youth delegate emphasized that young people seek meaningful participation to challenge norms and create solutions on their own terms, such as through peer-to-peer partnerships. The recent youth dialogue highlighted challenges to health-care access, including high out-of-pocket health costs, and the need for third-party consent and other legal restrictions. The delegate recommended support for community-building to empower youth and provide opportunities, among other recommendations.

77. The UNFPA Director of the Programme Division described the focus of UNFPA on leaving no one behind as a core priority in its current strategic plan, with a marker tracking programme expenditure. UNFPA promoted disaggregated data to enhance the visibility of marginalized groups and supported governments in identifying gaps based on ethnicity and race. Addressing entrenched social and gender norms that disproportionately disadvantage women and girls remains critical.

78. In response to the panellists, a delegation enquired about addressing exclusion due to harmful social norms and stigma to improve access to sexual and reproductive health services. It also asked about mobile applications to gather disaggregated data, including from remote communities. The delegation emphasized the role of midwives in reaching more people, called for investment in data platforms and highlighted the potential of digital health technologies to connect rural patients with specialized health-care providers. It also sought examples of programmes linking health services with livelihoods, education and social protection to address multiple inequalities.

79. The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Health reiterated that health-care workers are human rights defenders, emphasizing that data analysis should influence policy.

80. The President of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics raised concerns about the global reduction in funding for statistics, noting the rise in misinformation and the concentration of data in the private sector.

81. The youth delegate described working with marginalized groups through the global youth dialogue to address stigma and promote a human rights-based approach to technology to counter hate speech and online discrimination.

82. The UNFPA Director of the Programme Division reaffirmed the value of midwives and underscored the need to invest in civil registration and vital statistics as crucial for informed decision-making on what works, for whom and where.

VI. UNFPA structured funding dialogue

83. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) and the UNFPA Director of the Division of External Relations presented the report on the structured funding dialogue, 2023–2024 ([DP/FPA/2024/11](#)).

84. A group of delegations emphasized that flexible, sustainable and predictable funding is essential for United Nations entities to deliver on their mandates and the Sustainable Development Goals, and to maintain strong internal oversight. They expressed concern about decreasing core contributions and called for increased accountability and transparency to build trust. Key priorities included effective risk management, evidence-based communication, and enhanced visibility and incentives for core funding. The group sought insights into challenges posed by declining core funding, how UNFPA shares lessons and strategies to reduce funding competition. They stressed the importance of funding core functions with core resources, expanding the donor base and diversifying funding streams. They also enquired about incentives for thematic and flexible funding and progress on private-sector and philanthropic resources, and urged UNFPA to fully implement the funding compact and collaborate with resident coordinators. They appreciated the ongoing funding dialogues and efforts.

85. A delegation highlighted that the case for core funding is strong as it allows UNFPA to remain agile, innovative, transparent and accountable while adhering to internationally agreed principles. The delegation asked how UNFPA: (a) ensures a balanced distribution of resources across its three transformative results areas and

whether the current balance is optimal; (b) is advancing its domestic financing agenda; and (c) approaches the multidimensional vulnerability index.

86. Another delegation called for a reaffirmation of the goals behind the multidimensional vulnerability index and a commitment to strengthening structured funding. It recommended further investment in non-discriminatory artificial intelligence-facilitated data collection to ensure equitable achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. A delegation also enquired about the status of the adolescent sexual and reproductive health development impact bond launched by UNFPA.

87. In response to delegations, the UNFPA Director of the Division of External Relations noted that risk management and transparency remained priorities and had been enhanced. Communications had improved, effectively demonstrating results and the value proposition of UNFPA. Funding from other United Nations entities remains the largest funding source for UNFPA, highlighting the importance of collaboration. UNFPA is on track with expenditures for its three transformative results. Investment cases have been critical for securing domestic resources, and contributions to core resources from programme countries have increased. The metrics on the development impact bond are promising, with interest from three additional countries. UNFPA will continue to update the Board on innovative financing modalities.

88. The UNFPA Director of the Programme Division emphasized that core funding is vital for maintaining normative work. A decline in core funding could hinder this capacity, which is particularly concerning as the UNFPA mandate is becoming increasingly sensitive in more countries. She anticipated the multidimensional vulnerability index would be included in the new strategic plan. UNFPA will continue ensuring alignment with the best data and focus on the areas of greatest need.

89. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) noted the impact of declining core funds on humanitarian work. While there has been a significant increase in humanitarian funding, it has mostly come through tightly earmarked resources, concentrated in a few countries. Many humanitarian contexts remain underfunded and depend on core resources to help address humanitarian needs.

90. The Executive Board adopted decision 2024/27 on the report on the UNFPA structured funding dialogue, 2023–2024.

VII. UNFPA country programmes and related matters

91. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme) presented an overview of the new UNFPA country programme documents for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Namibia, Sierra Leone and Ukraine, and the extensions for the country programmes for Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Liberia, Mexico, Myanmar, the Republic of Congo and Yemen.

92. The regional directors for the Arab States, East and Southern Africa, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and West and Central Africa provided details from their regional perspectives.

93. The Executive Board approved, in accordance with its decision 2014/7, the UNFPA country programme documents for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DP/FPA/CPD/COD/6), Djibouti (DP/FPA/CPD/DJI/6), Namibia (DP/FPA/CPD/NAM/7), Sierra Leone (DP/FPA/CPD/SLE/8) and Ukraine (DP/FPA/CPD/UKR/4).

94. It also took note of the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Cuba, Liberia, Mexico and Yemen. It approved the first two-year extension of the country programme for the Republic of Congo, the third one-year extension of the

country programme for Myanmar and the fourth one-year extension of the country programme for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea ([DP/FPA/2024/12](#)).

UNOPS segment

VIII. Statement by the UNOPS Executive Director

95. The UNOPS Executive Director presented an update on the comprehensive response plan in response to the recommendations of the two independent third-party reviews of UNOPS, including the terms of reference for the external third-party review at the end of the implementation period of the comprehensive response plan ([DP/OPS/2024/10](#)); the implementation strategy for the Process Innovation and Digitalization Programme; and an update on the approximate amount of remaining undisbursed funds. He also presented the annual statistical report on the procurement activities of United Nations system organizations, 2023 ([DP/OPS/2024/9](#)).

96. In his statement, the Executive Director highlighted the continued focus of UNOPS on project implementation aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, climate action and peace and security, emphasizing their impact on the ground, particularly in crisis settings.

97. The reform agenda of UNOPS, under the guidance of the Executive Board, is nearing completion. Of 43 recommendations in the comprehensive response plan, only three remain to be addressed with finalization expected in 2024. One key initiative, the Process Innovation and Digitalization Programme, is planned to extend to 2027. He reaffirmed the commitment of UNOPS to delivering on the remaining recommendations.

98. A second external third-party review on the implementation of the comprehensive response plan is planned for early 2025. The Process Innovation and Digitalization Programme aims to streamline and digitalize processes, enhance decision-making and improve resource management. The ongoing review of processes and systems is expected to enhance enterprise resource planning systems and specialized systems in human resources, procurement, finance and project management. UNOPS has also made significant progress on resolving the matter of excess reserves, settling over 93 per cent of the total, which is more than \$115 million.

99. The Executive Director noted that ongoing reforms had improved staff morale and commitment. Last year, UNOPS signed 300 new engagements, reflecting increased interest from partners. A forthcoming third-party review will assess partner satisfaction and help shape the next strategic plan.

100. Procurement was emphasized as crucial to addressing development challenges, including job creation, inequality and climate action. Public procurement, in particular, offers opportunities for sustainable development and reducing carbon emissions.

101. In response to the Executive Director, an Executive Board Bureau member stressed the importance of receiving adequate and consistent information on the status of implementation of all recommendations and welcomed the second external review as integral to full accountability and transparency. Some delegates highlighted the role of UNOPS in improving humanitarian operations, regional climate resilience and capacity-building for national institutions. Others stressed that while progress had been made on the reform journey, it was not yet complete; they highlighted the need for a cautious approach to the Process Innovation and Digitalization Programme. Delegations requested insights on remaining areas of focus under the current Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, and key challenges for the next strategic plan.

102. A group of delegations urged UNOPS to prioritize capacity-building, knowledge transfer and job creation for youth, and emphasized inclusive digital solutions to bridge the digital divide and promote economic empowerment. They expressed concern about the slow pace of digitalization as hindering the ability of UNOPS to respond to emerging development challenges. They acknowledged the enhanced commitment to transparency and accountability, as well as efforts to strengthen the UNOPS governance structure; however, they expressed reservations about capacity gaps that limit effective project delivery and knowledge-sharing with partners. They urged UNOPS to address these challenges and to prioritize sustainable procurement and project management for maximum impact. They also referred to effective strategies to address pressing needs amid debt concerns and encouraged innovative ways to mobilize private capital for infrastructure development in the most vulnerable countries.

103. A group of delegations praised the reforms of UNOPS and called for continued efforts towards full accountability, which would ensure a more inclusive and trustworthy UNOPS embedded firmly in the United Nations development system. They highlighted their expectations for the forthcoming review to be in-depth and independent, and to outline clearly where reforms had been successfully implemented and where continued action was still required. They stressed that full accountability and recovery of lost funds remained a priority. Although the Process Innovation and Digitalization Programme is projected to run until 2027, it should be included in the review to assess progress and provide insights for implementation.

104. A delegation stressed the importance of increasing developing country participation in procurement. Another delegation requested updates on the revised whistleblower policy, underscoring that the policy is to be presented to the Board no later than the first regular session of 2025. Delegations noted the lack of clarity in the staff rebalancing exercise, with indications that some contract staff were performing core functions. UNOPS was urged to adopt the new United Nations LGBTIQ+ strategy, with a request for further information on implementation plans.

105. In response to delegations, the Executive Director highlighted the strengthened accountability of UNOPS through ethics, investigation, risk management and the oversight of the Executive Board. He mentioned ongoing efforts beyond the comprehensive response plan, including initiatives in organizational culture; project, programme and portfolio management; and digitalization. He also noted the priority of addressing climate and environmental issues and leveraging cross-country collaboration.

106. The Executive Director acknowledged the risks in the Process Innovation and Digitalization Programme, including funding, value for money, oversimplification and insufficient stakeholder engagement, and emphasized regular engagement with Member States. UNOPS would deliver draft financial rules and regulations by late 2024, as outlined in the comprehensive response plan. He welcomed the focus on technical assistance and capacity-building, especially in addressing implementation gaps.

107. Enhanced data collection and reporting would support the next strategic plan, with efforts to improve indicators and insights. Progress was being made on the LGBTIQ+ strategy, with a revised diversity, equity and inclusion strategy underway. The updated whistleblower protection system, including a central portal and a workplace conduct team, would be launched before the next Board session in January 2025. He also noted that 200 consultants had been converted to staff through a gradual process to balance financial sustainability and project management continuity.

108. The UNOPS Director of Procurement described efforts to work with Governments on public procurement capacity-building and to increase local supplier participation, promoting more sustainable products and services.

109. The Executive Board adopted decision 2024/28 on the comprehensive response plan in response to the recommendations of the two independent third-party reviews of UNOPS and decision 2024/29 on the annual statistical report on the procurement activities of United Nations system organizations, 2023.

Annex I

Decisions adopted by the Executive Board during 2024

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2024/1

Reports of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Capital Development Fund, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Office for Project Services on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors, 2022

The Executive Board

1. *Notes* the unqualified audit opinions on the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) issued by the United Nations Board of Auditors for 2022;
2. *Acknowledges* the progress made and supports the ongoing efforts of UNDP, UNCDF, UNFPA and UNOPS to implement the recommendations of the Board of Auditors;
3. *Encourages* UNDP, UNCDF, UNFPA and UNOPS to enhance their efforts to implement all open recommendations;
4. *Encourages* UNDP, UNCDF, UNFPA and UNOPS to include a statement of internal controls in their financial reports;
5. *Acknowledges* the observations and recommendations on risk management and decides to include at its first regular session a recurring joint agenda item for decision on risk management, to provide updates on the continuous work to improve the system of enterprise risk management and to inform the Board of critical risks of strategic importance;
6. *Requests* that for future presentations of reports from the Board of Auditors to the Executive Board, a representative from the Board of Auditors be available for questions from the Executive Board, and further requests that adequate time be allotted for remarks from the representative of the Board of Auditors and for questions from the Executive Board following the presentation of the report of the Board of Auditors for each agency;
7. *Requests* UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to provide a joint update to the Executive Board, as a recurring item for decision at the first regular session, on how the organizations are continually strengthening organizational culture, including their actions to prevent and respond to all forms of discrimination, including racism and racial discrimination, to ensure diversity, equity and inclusion, and to improve geographical representation and gender balance;
8. *Requests* that the annual address by the Chair of the Staff Council be included formally under the new agenda item on organizational culture, to allow integration of the perspective of staff into discussions on organizational culture;

With regard to UNDP:

9. *Notes* the progress made by UNDP in closing open audit recommendations and acknowledges that all recommendations issued prior to 2021 have been implemented;

With regard to UNCDF:

10. *Commends* UNCDF for closing all recommendations issued prior to 2022;

With regard to UNFPA:

11. *Commends* the sustained high rate of recommendation implementation by UNFPA in recent years;

12. *Urges* UNFPA to take appropriate measures to strengthen supply chain management and address associated risks, in response to the recommendations of the Board of Auditors, and requests UNFPA to provide ahead of the second regular session 2024 a written update on actions taken, followed by a presentation;

With regard to UNOPS:

13. *Notes* the progress made by UNOPS in closing open recommendations;

14. *Notes with concern* the observations and recommendations in relation to the implementation of the comprehensive response plan;

15. *Appreciates* the ongoing efforts of UNOPS to strengthen the approval process of preselection requests in procurement, and requests an update on the actions taken as part of the consultation process on the ongoing review of the UNOPS financial regulations and rules;

16. *Underlines* the need to enhance risk management and risk awareness to improve governance and internal controls in UNOPS.

2 February 2024

2024/2

UNDP evaluation

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the evaluation of UNDP support to the digitalization of public services (DP/2024/6) and the management response (DP/2024/7);

2. *Acknowledges* the results achieved by UNDP and its crucial role supporting countries in the digital transformation of public services;

3. *Encourages* UNDP to build on its work on digitalization of public services, including on digital public goods and digital public infrastructure, by strengthening support to programme countries, upon their request, focusing greater attention in the areas of digital legal identity, digital financial services and data interoperability; bridging the digital divide, including the gender digital divide; and securing data privacy and personal data protection and legal identity management;

4. *Further encourages* UNDP to adopt a targeted approach to support least developed countries in their efforts to strengthen digital public infrastructure and regulatory frameworks for improving public services and economic development;

5. *Encourages* UNDP to strengthen its efforts to mobilize and create an enabling environment for development financing for sectoral digitalization approaches and digital transformation at the country level;

6. *Also encourages* UNDP to facilitate South-South and triangular cooperation for digital transformation and strategically engage in enabling South-South cooperation to accelerate the development of additional capacities and learning lessons on digital transformation;

7. *Requests* that UNDP management address the issues raised by the evaluation, taking the conclusions and recommendations into consideration in its future programming.

2 February 2024

2024/3**UNFPA evaluation***The Executive Board**With regard to the UNFPA evaluation policy (DP/FPA/2024/1):*

1. *Welcomes* the enhancements introduced in the 2024 evaluation policy and the fact that the policy has been informed by the conclusions and recommendations of the 2023 independent peer review;
2. *Reaffirms* the importance of the evaluation function at UNFPA and underscores the value of high-quality independent evaluation evidence in supporting the UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, in accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
3. *Acknowledges* the transparent and participatory process undertaken in developing the 2024 evaluation policy;
4. *Encourages* the continued engagement of UNFPA in joint, inter-agency and system-wide evaluations, including with the system-wide evaluation office, as well as in United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework evaluation exercises at country level;
5. *Requests* UNFPA to continue reporting to the Executive Board, as part of the annual report on the evaluation function, on the implementation of the evaluation policy, including on achieving the funding targets and related funding mechanisms;
6. *Approves* the 2024 evaluation policy;

With regard to the multi-year costed evaluation plan, 2024–2027 (DP/FPA/2024/2):

7. *Welcomes* the relevance and utility of the multi-year costed evaluation plan for 2024–2027;
8. *Acknowledges* the transparent and participatory process undertaken in developing the multi-year costed evaluation plan for 2024–2027;
9. *Approves* the multi-year costed evaluation plan for 2024–2027.

*2 February 2024***2024/4****Comprehensive response plan in response to the recommendations of the two independent third-party reviews on UNOPS***The Executive Board*

1. *Acknowledges* the progress in implementing the comprehensive response plan and encourages the ongoing transformation of UNOPS;
2. *Decides* that the progress in implementing the outstanding recommendations will be reported to the Executive Board through continued monthly briefings, to be conducted by UNOPS senior management, until the first regular session 2025;
3. *Takes note* of the findings of the interim third-party review of the status of implementation of the recommendations;
4. *Takes note* of the still ongoing review of the whistle-blowing process and encourages UNOPS management to accelerate progress in this regard;
5. *Underlines* the need for UNOPS to continue efforts on implementing the strategic plan and budget, to enhance governance, risk management and internal

controls, and to increase efforts on timely, efficient and cost-effective information technology-transformation, as identified in the interim third-party review;

6. *Requests* UNOPS to develop and present to the Executive Board, no later than the second regular session 2024, an implementation strategy for the Process Innovation and Digitalization Programme, including risk analysis, budget and framework, with targets and timelines for monitoring, and further requests that UNOPS includes updates on this in monthly briefings and formal sessions;

7. *Recalls* its decisions 2022/13, 2023/18 and 2023/22 to freeze all transfers out of the operational reserve for any purpose other than daily operations;

8. *Recalls* its decision 2023/22 that approved the carry forward of the balance of \$23.6 million of the allocated sum of \$35.4 million for use to implement the comprehensive response plan within the current Strategic Plan cycle, 2022–2025;

9. *Further recalls* its decision 2023/22 to release the second tranche of \$11.8 million for implementation of the comprehensive response plan;

10. *Requests* detailed information by 31 March 2024 on utilization of the first tranche and a justification for the resulting carryover amount;

11. *Approves* the carrying forward of the balance of the first tranche of \$11.8 million into the UNOPS biennium budget, 2024–2025, for implementation of the comprehensive response plan;

12. *Reaffirms* it will release further tranches at the request of UNOPS at a future formal session in line with decision 2023/4, paragraph 19;

With regard to the requests for additional information on the project portfolio of UNOPS and alignment with its original mandate in General Assembly resolution 65/176 and its restated Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, within paragraph 4 of decision 2023/22 and paragraph 7 of decision 2023/23:

13. *Expresses appreciation* for the information provided on the alignment of the past and future UNOPS portfolio with its original mandate in resolution 65/176 and its restated Strategic Plan, 2022–2025;

14. *Encourages* UNOPS to proceed to implement the envisaged portfolio insights gateway, making detailed portfolio information publicly available in real time;

15. *Strongly encourages* UNOPS to continue to critically assess new demands for services to determine their alignment with the original mandate and to engage partners, in particular from the United Nations, if their mandates are more suitable to meet the demand, and furthermore, to continuously review the current portfolio to ensure alignment with the original mandate;

With regard to the terms of reference of the external third-party review, which was requested to be commissioned by UNOPS at the end of the implementation period of the comprehensive response plan, within paragraph 18 of decision 2022/24:

16. *Recalls* its decisions 2022/24 and 2023/23 for UNOPS to commission a third-party review, which will be presented to the Executive Board at the end of the implementation period of the comprehensive response plan;

17. *Recalls* its decision 2023/23 for UNOPS to submit the terms of reference of the external third-party review to the Executive Board for input and validation and requests that UNOPS submit these at the second regular session 2024;

18. *Decides* that the third-party review on the recommendations that have been concluded by the end of 2024 will be conducted in early 2025, with the exception of

one recommendation spanning until 2027 which concerns a multi-year programme on process innovation and digitalization;

19. *Requests* that UNOPS commission a third-party review on the implementation of the last recommendation, which concerns a multi-year programme on process innovation and digitalization, once implemented;

With regard to accountability following the sustainable investments in infrastructure and innovation (S3i) and associated management crisis:

20. *Notes* that impunity, or the perception thereof, has a detrimental effect on staff morale and trust in accountability systems;

21. *Recalls* decision 2022/21, paragraph 3, and requests the Executive Director, liaising with the appropriate oversight bodies, to ensure that impunity, or the perception thereof, is prevented, and that all individuals implicated in the S3i crisis, including previous senior UNOPS leadership, are held accountable, and to keep the Executive Board informed.

2 February 2024

2024/5

UNOPS organizational culture

The Executive Board

With regard to the UNOPS strategy for the implementation of organizational culture reform fully aligned with United Nations norms and values, as requested within paragraph 11 of decision 2023/23:

1. *Welcomes* the UNOPS response to the third-party review of organizational culture commissioned in March 2023;

2. *Takes note* of the proposed approach to reshape and embed a cultural transformation at UNOPS, rooted in the values of the United Nations;

3. *Welcomes* the steps and actions already taken in driving strategic transformation and shifting the organizational culture;

4. *Decides* that UNOPS should present to the Board, ahead of the annual session 2024, a detailed workplan with relevant milestones to implement the recommendations contained in the third-party review of the organizational culture;

5. *Decides* that progress and challenges in implementing the workplan will be reported through the continued monthly briefings on the comprehensive response plan until the first regular session 2025;

With regard to the complete and unredacted results and reports of all the Pulse surveys and of the organizational culture assessment of UNOPS conducted by KPMG, as requested within paragraph 12 of decision 2023/23:

6. *Takes note* of the results of the Pulse surveys and encourages UNOPS management to respond promptly to staff concerns raised;

7. *Requests* UNOPS to increasingly engage with its workforce, including through regular Pulse surveys, and to report to the Executive Board the survey results and follow-up actions taken in response;

With regard to the UNOPS plan on the implementation of paragraph 11 of decision 2023/1, on limiting the use of individual contractor agreements, and the update on the progress towards the January 2024 milestones, as requested within paragraph 16 of decision 2023/23:

8. *Welcomes* the update regarding identified positions that have been filled (or are in the process of) in line with the original recommendation of the United Nations Board of Auditors;

9. *Recognizes* the importance of the findings of the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit on the review of the use of non-staff personnel and related contractual modalities in the United Nations system (Joint Inspection Unit project A.468), to guide future decisions regarding UNOPS application of individual contractor agreements across the organization.

2 February 2024

2024/6

UNOPS distribution of excess reserves to paying entities: UNOPS proposal on the alternative use of undisbursed funds

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the good faith effort by UNOPS and progress to distribute all excess reserves, aligned with the Executive Board decisions, to paying entities;
2. Welcomes the third-party independent review of the distribution of excess reserves and takes notes of the validation of the UNOPS methodology used;
3. Decides to extend until 31 December 2024 the deadline for the distribution of the excess reserves accumulated as of 31 December 2021 and requests UNOPS to continue engagement with paying entities;
4. *Takes note with appreciation* of the options proposed by UNOPS for use of undisbursed funds, requests an update ahead of the second regular session 2024 on the approximate amount remaining, and agrees to decide on their use at the second regular session.

2 February 2024

2024/7

Overview of decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its first regular session 2024

The Executive Board

Recalls that during its first regular session 2024, it:

Item 1

Organizational matters

Elected on 10 January 2024 the following members of the Bureau for 2024:

President: H.E. Mr. Muhammad Muhith (Bangladesh)
 Vice-President: H.E. Mrs. Leonor Zalabata Torres (Colombia)
 Vice-President: H.E. Mr. Cornel Feruță (Romania)
 Vice-President: H.E. Mr. Thomas Peter Zahneisen (Germany)
 Vice-President: H.E. Mr. Tefaye Yilma Sabo (Ethiopia)

Adopted the agenda ([DP/2024/L.1](#)) and approved the workplan for its first regular session 2024;

Adopted the report of the second regular session 2023 ([DP/2024/1](#));

Adopted the annual workplan of the Executive Board for 2024 (DP/2024/CRP.1);

Adopted the tentative workplan for the annual session 2024;

Agreed to the following schedule for the remaining sessions of the Executive Board in 2024:

Annual session:	3 to 7 June 2024
Second regular session:	26 to 30 August 2024

Joint segment

Item 2

Recommendations of the Board of Auditors

Adopted decision 2024/1 on the reports of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Capital Development Fund, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Office for Project Services on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors, 2022;

Item 3

Follow-up to the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board meeting

Took note of the joint UNDP/UNFPA report on the implementation of decisions and recommendations of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board (DP-FPA/2024/1);

Item 4

Field visits

Took note of the report of the joint field visit of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP to Senegal (DP/FPA/OPS-ICEF-UNW-WFP/2024/1); and took note of the presentation on the field visit of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to Uruguay;

UNDP segment

Item 5

Human Development Report

Took note of an update by the secretariat on consultations on the Human Development Report;

Item 6

UNDP country programmes and related matters

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

Bhutan ([DP/DCP/BTN/3](#));
Brazil ([DP/DCP/BRA/4](#));
Cambodia ([DP/DCP/KHM/5](#));
Gambia ([DP/DCP/GMB/4](#));
Guinea ([DP/DCP/GIN/4](#));
Madagascar ([DP/DCP/MDG/5](#));
Mauritius ([DP/DCP/MUS/5](#));
Philippines (DP/DSP/PHL/4);
Seychelles ([DP/DCP/SYC/4](#));

Took note of the first one-year extension of the country programme for Cuba as approved by the UNDP Administrator ([DP/2024/5](#)); and approved the second and

third one-year extensions, respectively, of the country programmes for Ukraine and Sudan ([DP/2024/5](#));

Item 7

UNDP evaluation

Adopted decision 2024/2 on the evaluation of UNDP support to the digitalization of public services ([DP/2024/6](#)) and the management response thereto ([DP/2024/7](#));

UNFPA segment

Item 8

UNFPA evaluation

Adopted decision 2024/3 on the UNFPA evaluation policy ([DP/FPA/2024/1](#)) and the multi-year costed evaluation plan, 2024–2027 ([DP/FPA/2024/2](#));

Item 9

Country programmes and related matters

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

Bhutan ([DP/FPA/CPD/BTN/8](#));
 Brazil ([DP/FPA/CPD/BRA/7](#));
 Cambodia ([DP/FPA/CPD/KHM/7](#));
 Gambia ([DP/FPA/CPD/GMB/9](#));
 Guinea ([DP/FPA/CPD/GIN/9](#));
 Madagascar ([DP/FPA/CPD/MDG/9](#));
 Nicaragua ([DP/FPA/CPD/NIC/10](#));
 Papua New Guinea ([DP/FPA/CPD/PNG/7](#));
 Philippines ([DP/FPA/CPD/PHL/9](#));

Approved the second and third, one-year extensions, respectively, of the country programmes for Ukraine and Sudan ([DP/FPA/2024/4](#));

UNOPS segment

Item 10

United Nations Office for Project Services

Adopted decision 2024/4 on the comprehensive response plan in response to the recommendations of the two independent third-party reviews of UNOPS;

Adopted decision 2024/5 on UNOPS organizational culture;

Adopted decision 2024/6 on UNOPS distribution of excess reserves to paying entities: UNOPS proposal on the alternative use of undisbursed funds.

2 February 2024

2024/8

Update on the implementation efforts on the repositioning of the United Nations development system

The Executive Board

1. *Welcomes* the updates provided by UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on the implementation of General Assembly resolution [72/279](#) and related mandates on the

repositioning of the United Nations development system in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system;

2. *Takes note with appreciation* of the annex on the United Nations development system reform checklist prepared by UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS, which is included with their respective updates;

3. *Encourages* UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to continue to strive for inter-agency harmonization of reporting on implementation efforts and results of the repositioning of the United Nations development system;

4. *Reaffirms* the strong commitment to the United Nations development system reform, and encourages UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to continue to work closely with United Nations organizations, under the leadership of resident coordinators and in collaboration with United Nations country teams, stakeholders and other development partners, to support country efforts towards the Sustainable Development Goals through the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework;

5. *Calls upon* UNDP and UNFPA to take further steps to align their country programmes and respective resource allocations with the Cooperation Frameworks, and to strengthen monitoring and reporting on how their entity-specific activities contribute to collective United Nations country team results, in line with national priorities and needs;

6. *Calls upon* UNOPS to continue contributing to the implementation of the Cooperation Frameworks through the delivery of its mandate;

7. *Requests* UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to adhere to all elements of the Management and Accountability Framework and encourages their constructive engagement in the upcoming review of the Framework;

8. *Requests* UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to take further steps to ensure effective information-sharing with resident coordinators within the respective country teams;

9. *Notes* the importance of pooled funding for UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to progress on the Sustainable Development Goals in an integrated manner, and encourages them to continue increasing their engagement with pooled funds, in line with the agencies' respective mandates.

7 June 2024

2024/9

Reports of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on internal audit activities and investigations in 2023, and management responses

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the reports of the respective audit offices of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS ([DP/2024/10](#); [DP/FPA/2024/6](#); [DP/OPS/2024/4](#)), which have been harmonized with those of other United Nations organizations, in line with Executive Board decision 2020/10, and the reports of the respective audit committees as well as the management responses;

2. *Expresses* its continuing support for the internal audit and investigation functions of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS and reiterates the importance of their full independence and direct access to the Executive Board;

3. *Recalls* its decision 2023/7 and commends the audit and investigation offices for the proactive approach to organize closed briefings limited to the members and observers of the Executive Board, to share relevant information regarding the annual

workplan, risk assessments, emerging risks and control issues, and encourages the audit and investigation offices to continue this practice;

4. *Encourages* UNDP, the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), UNFPA and UNOPS to ensure full and timely implementation of audit recommendations;

5. *Reiterates* Executive Board decision 2020/10, which encourages UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to use harmonized definitions and reporting, including harmonized audit ratings, to provide the Executive Board with a more coherent overview of findings and results;

6. *Acknowledges* that the internal audit offices of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS have both assurance and advisory functions that add value to the organizations, and requests them, in line with their independence from management and in alignment with the international standards of the Institute of Internal Auditors, to strive to achieve a balance between advisory and assurance engagements;

With regard to UNDP:

7. *Takes note* of the opinions of the audit and investigation functions on the adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and internal control elements of UNDP;

8. *Notes* the recurring findings and recommendations on risk management, particularly those made by the Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI), the United Nations Board of Auditors and the Joint Inspection Unit, and requests UNDP to promptly implement the recommendations directed at UNDP;

With regard to UNCDF:

9. *Takes note* of the OAI audit rating opinion that systems of governance, risk management and controls within UNCDF are ‘partially satisfactory, major improvements needed’ in some areas;

10. *Requests* the Fund to continue to prioritize fully implementing all recommendations from the report in a proactive and transparent manner and to inform the Executive Board of progress in an informal briefing ahead of the second regular session 2024;

With regard to UNFPA:

11. *Notes with appreciation* the Office of Audit and Investigation Services (OAIS) opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the UNFPA governance, risk management and control processes, as set out in document [DP/FPA/2024/6](#);

With regard to UNOPS:

12. *Takes note* of the opinion, based on the scope of work undertaken, on the adequacy and effectiveness of the UNOPS framework of governance, risk management and control (pursuant to Executive Board decision [2015/13](#));

13. *Requests* UNOPS to further harmonize the format of its management response to annual reports on internal audit and investigation with those of UNDP and UNFPA, and, particularly, to provide a summary of actions taken to address key audit findings.

7 June 2024

2024/10

Reports of the ethics offices of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on activities in 2023, and management responses

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the reports of the ethics offices of UNDP ([DP/2024/11](#)), UNFPA ([DP/FPA/2024/7](#)) and UNOPS ([DP/OPS/2024/5](#)), and the management responses;
2. *Commends* the important work of the UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS ethics offices in strengthening an ethical organizational culture, and encourages them to continue their work in full independence;
3. *Requests* the ethics offices of the UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to continue to strengthen the whistle-blower protection procedures and policies of their respective organizations to meet the standards of the best international practices, including protection from retaliation, and to provide annual updates to the Board on these efforts within existing reporting;

With regard to UNDP:

4. *Commends* progress made by the UNDP Ethics Office in continuing to strengthen the ethical culture of UNDP;

With regard to UNFPA:

5. *Commends* the continued progress in the work of the UNFPA Ethics Office;

With regard to UNOPS:

6. *Takes note* of the implementation of the recommendations from the independent review of the UNOPS ethics function and the comprehensive response plan in relation to ethics;
7. *Commends* progress made by the UNOPS Ethics Office in renewing its efforts to promote a culture of ethics at UNOPS;
8. *Requests* UNOPS to provide management response to annual reports of the Ethics Office as a separate document;

With regard to the Joint Inspection Unit review of organizational ombudsman services across the United Nations system ([JIU/REP/2015/6](#)) and its recommendation 5:

9. *Notes* the separate mandate of the Office of the Ombudsman for the United Nations funds and programmes as per [ST/SGB/2016/7](#), and invites the Ombudsman's Office to present its annual report at the first regular session of the Executive Board, as part of the organizational culture agenda item;
10. *Invites* UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to provide the Ombudsman's Office with all necessary resources to adequately perform its mandate, as per their cost-sharing agreement;

With regard to the Joint Inspection Unit note on the review of measures and mechanisms for addressing racism and racial discrimination in United Nations system organizations: managing for achieving organizational effectiveness ([JIU/NOTE/2022/1/Rev.1](#)):

11. *Expresses concern* that despite progress in combating racism and discrimination in certain parts of the United Nations system, racism and racial discrimination remain major and underrecognized problems in United Nations organizations;
12. *Takes note* of the management responses by UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit note;

13. *Urges* the management of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to implement the entity-specific recommendations 2, 3, 5 and 6 outlined in the note, and emphasizes the importance of harmonizing the outcomes of each recommendation;
14. *Also urges* the management of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS, in collaboration, where possible, with the management of all relevant entities and through the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, to further efforts to achieve the system-wide recommendations 1 and 4;
15. *Requests* the management of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to develop timelines for the implementation of the entity-specific recommendations mentioned above, to be presented at the first regular session in 2025;
16. *Also requests* the management of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to jointly present updates on the organizations' individual efforts to implement all recommendations by the Joint Inspection Unit at the annual session of the Executive Board in 2025;
17. *Invites* the Bureau, in coordination with the bureaux of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and the World Food Programme, to consider the work of the organizations on addressing racism and racial discrimination as a topic for the joint meeting of the boards;
18. *Decides* to add an agenda item on addressing racism and racial discrimination for information at the first regular session 2025 and for decision at the annual session 2025.

7 June 2024

2024/11

Joint update on protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the updates by UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on actions to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment, and respective action plans;
2. *Welcomes* the new uniform template and approach to reporting on actions to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment, and requests UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to include, in reporting, a brief synthesis outlining collective progress and shared challenges and to better align reporting to future protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment action plans;
3. *Recalls* decision 2023/9 and requests UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to continue, with firm commitment and support from leadership:
 - (a) To take action to ensure a victim/survivor-centred, system-wide and coherent approach to preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment, and to continue to foster inclusive and respectful organizational cultures where all personnel are empowered and encouraged to report sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment and protected against retaliation;
 - (b) To report to the Executive Board about all cases in a transparent and accountable manner and to use iReport for sexual exploitation and abuse cases;
 - (c) To increase their system-wide collaboration efforts on prevention, protection, and response, including through conducting joint assessments of

implementing partners, joint capacity-building of implementing partners and community engagement.

4. *Welcomes* that risks associated to the topic have been incorporated into respective enterprise risk management systems or safeguarding mechanisms, and encourages UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to increase the rate of sexual exploitation and abuse risk assessments for their programmes and projects and design appropriate mitigation measures;

5. *Recalls* decision 2023/9, on piloting the Misconduct Disclosure Scheme, welcomes the steps taken by UNOPS and UNFPA and encourages UNDP to also pilot the scheme and requests these agencies to report on the results of the pilot and lessons learned, within existing reporting;

6. *Requests* UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to continue to update the Executive Board on their actions to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment and decides to include this as a recurring item for decision during the annual session.

7 June 2024

2024/12

Assessment of how the Executive Board executes its governance and oversight functions

The Executive Board

1. *Recalls* its decision 2022/22, which requested the Bureau of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS, in consultation with the relevant bureaux of United Nations development system entities, to provide options and cost estimates for an assessment, including the feasibility of a third-party assessment by an entity external to the United Nations system with independent expertise on governance and oversight, of how the Executive Board, in collaboration with UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS as well as the United Nations system, executes its governance and oversight functions, with a view to ensuring that these functions are aligned with the highest international standards and best practices;

2. *Welcomes* the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled “Review of the governance and oversight of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office for Project Services, the United Nations Children’s Fund and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women” ([JIU/REP/2023/7](#)), and takes note of its recommendations;

3. *Recalls* its decisions 2022/24, paragraph 11, and 2023/14, paragraphs 3 to 5, in which the Executive Board expressed the need to further consider relevant recommendations made on governance and oversight, addressed to the Executive Board;

4. *Stresses* the importance of inclusive and meaningful participation and consultation of Board members and observers, in particular of programme countries, including through cross-board and cross-regional consultations, and stresses the need for phased, inclusive, transparent and balanced processes when proposing action on the Joint Inspection Unit report;

5. *Stresses* that improvements to the way the Executive Board execute their governance and oversight functions should contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals by enabling UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to deliver effectively and efficiently on their

mandates and by ensuring that they are responsive to the needs and priorities of programme countries;

6. *Commits*, therefore, to a two-track process that constitutes: (a) an information-gathering exercise; and (b) the establishment of a working group;

7. *Confirms* that consultations and information notes on the report do not prejudice any decision of the Executive Board on how to address the Joint Inspection Unit report and its recommendations;

8. *Decides* to include an item for decision on the progress of the consideration of the Joint Inspection Unit report on the agendas of every formal session, until decided otherwise;

9. *Requests* the Bureau to provide, in consultation with the bureaux of the participating Boards, an update on the implementation of this decision at the second regular session 2024;

With regard to additional information required:

10. *Requests* the management of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to provide, in an information note, their initial views of the Joint Inspection Unit report;

11. *Requests* the directors of the independent offices of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to provide, in an information note, their initial views of the Joint Inspection Unit report;

12. *Requests* the Bureau to organize, in coordination with the bureaux of the Executive Boards of UNICEF and UN-Women, a joint informal consultation of the Executive Boards with the Joint Inspection Unit on the report by the first regular session 2025, while taking into consideration other United Nations processes, to ensure inclusive and meaningful participation, particularly of programme countries;

13. *Requests* the Bureau to undertake an open and inclusive consultation with Executive Board members and observers on information and analysis needs relating to the Joint Inspection Unit report and its recommendations, to support the working group on the Joint Inspection Unit report;

With regard to the working group:

14. *Decides* to establish a working group to study and report on the Joint Inspection Unit report, in which representatives of the Executive Boards of UNICEF and UN-Women will be invited to participate;

15. *Requests* the Bureau, in potential collaboration with the bureaux of UNICEF and UN Women, to develop, through a cross-board and cross-regional consultative process, terms of reference that enable the operationalization of the working group and to present it to the Executive Board for adoption at the first regular session 2025;

16. *Decides* that the Bureau, in consultation with the regional groups and in collaboration with the bureaux of participating Boards, will facilitate the nomination of members or observers of the Executive Boards to participate in the working group, up to an aggregate total of 15, with equal representation of the five regional groups, to be confirmed by the participating boards through a silence procedure, ahead of the first regular session 2025;

17. *Requests* that the secretariat provide information and support services, when and as requested by the Joint Inspection Unit working group, to further its work;

18. *Requests* the working group to provide regular updates to the participating Boards, as necessary, starting after the first regular session 2025.

7 June 2024

2024/13**Midterm review of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, including the annual report of the Administrator for 2023***The Executive Board*

1. *Takes note* of the midterm review of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, including the annual report of the Administrator for 2023 ([DP/2024/12](#) and Corr.1) and its annexes, the report of UNDP on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit in 2023 ([DP/2024/12/Add.1](#)) and the statistical annex ([DP/2024/12/Add.2](#));
2. *Welcomes* progress made towards the outcome areas of the Strategic Plan, 2022–2025 and, in this regard, encourages UNDP to further its efforts to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions, accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development, and strengthen resilience to shocks and crises;
3. *Requests* UNDP to continue improving its results reporting, including by identifying where activities are not achieving intended results and how the organization is learning from this;
4. *Requests* that UNDP take into account the lessons learned from the first two years of implementation of the Strategic Plan, 2022–2025 in its continued implementation and also in the design of subsequent strategic plans;
5. *Requests* that UNDP include in midterm reviews of future strategic plans detailed information on its proposed adjustments, for consideration of the Executive Board;
6. *Encourages* UNDP to continue responding to specific development challenges of programme countries, in consultation with their respective South-South cooperation focal points, through South-South and triangular cooperation, including by strengthening its collaboration with the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation;
7. *Requests* UNDP to assess its accountability framework against the updated 2023 Joint Inspection Unit reference accountability framework, as presented in the Unit report on the review of accountability frameworks in the United Nations system organizations ([JIU/REP/2023/3](#)), and adjust it as necessary, by the annual session 2025;
8. *Welcomes* UNDP progress towards achieving the outputs of the Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, and urges UNDP to enhance progress towards achieving the partially met outputs, also by enhancing its portfolio and other innovative approaches.

7 June 2024

2024/14**Midterm review of the UNDP integrated resources plan and the integrated budget, 2022–2025***The Executive Board*

1. *Takes note* of the midterm review of the UNDP integrated resources plan and integrated budget, 2022–2025 ([DP/2024/13](#));
2. *Welcomes* the strong UNDP performance in balancing the institutional budget and achieving efficiency, against the backdrop of the complex funding landscape;
3. *Welcomes* the detailed overview of the allocation of regular resources and the comprehensive analysis of the impact of the current funding levels.

7 June 2024

2024/15**UNDP evaluation***The Executive Board*

With regard to the annual report on evaluation, 2023 (DP/2024/16 and Corr.1) and the management commentaries thereto:

1. *Takes note* of the annual report on evaluation and the management commentaries thereon, welcomes the analysis provided on key findings and lessons learned from evaluations carried out in 2023, and requests that UNDP address the issues raised;

With regard to the evaluation of UNDP support to private sector development and structural transformation (DP/2024/17) and the management response thereto (DP/2024/18):

2. *Takes note* of the evaluation of UNDP support to private sector development and structural transformation and requests UNDP management to address the issues raised in the report and its recommendations, as outlined in the management response thereto;

With regard to the evaluation of UNDP support to ecosystem management and biodiversity conservation (DP/2024/19) and the management response thereto (DP/2024/20):

3. *Takes note* of the evaluation of UNDP support to ecosystem management and biodiversity conservation and requests UNDP management to address the issues raised in the report and its recommendations, as outlined in the management response thereto.

7 June 2024

2024/16**Midterm review of the UNCDF Strategic Framework, 2022–2025, and the report on results achieved by UNCDF in 2023***The Executive Board*

1. *Takes note* of the midterm review of the UNCDF Strategic Framework, 2022–2025, and the report on results achieved by UNCDF in 2023 (DP/2024/22);

2. *Acknowledges* the progress made by UNCDF in undertaking reforms to enhance implementation of its Strategic Framework, 2022–2025 and requests UNCDF to continue to ensure an inclusive, open, respectful and empowering organizational culture for all staff as an integral part of the reforms;

3. *Encourages* UNCDF to further explore how it can respond to the financing needs of the least developed countries, including its role in providing catalytic and blended Sustainable Development Goal financing, while enhancing collaboration with the United Nations development system and development finance institutions;

4. *Recommits* to supporting UNCDF to achieve its base growth resource requirements of \$25 million per year in regular resources as per the Strategic Framework, 2022–2025.

7 June 2024

2024/17**United Nations Volunteers programme: annual report of the Administrator***The Executive Board*

1. *Takes note* of the results achieved in 2023 and the findings and recommendations of the midterm review of the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Strategic Framework 2022–2025, as reflected in the report of the Administrator ([DP/2024/23](#));
2. *Recognizes* that volunteerism can be a powerful and cross-cutting means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and expresses appreciation to all UN Volunteers for their exemplary contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals;
3. *Acknowledges* the efforts of UNV in promoting disability inclusion and encourages UNV to continue advocating for the inclusion of persons with disabilities;
4. *Takes note* of results in further improving its operational efficiency and agility, and in this regard, welcomes the recommendation of the midterm review to revise the deployment speed target for national volunteers;
5. *Reaffirms* the importance of the Special Voluntary Fund in delivering the UNV Strategic Framework, 2022–2025, and urges all development partners in a position to do so to contribute to the Fund;
6. *Takes note* of the proclamation of 2026 as the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development and encourages UNV to facilitate implementation of the International Year.

7 June 2024

2024/18**Annual report of the UNFPA Executive Director***The Executive Board*

1. *Takes note* of the Integrated midterm review and progress report on the implementation of the UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2022–2025 [[DP/FPA/2024/4 \(Part I\)](#)], the statistical and financial review, 2023 [[DP/FPA/2024/4 \(Part I/Add.1\)](#)] and their related annexes, as well as the report on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit in 2023 [[DP/FPA/2024/4 \(Part II\)](#)];
2. *Notes with appreciation* the progress made by UNFPA in achieving the results of the UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, as recorded during the first two years of its implementation and urges UNFPA to address identified gaps and challenges in the Strategic Plan implementation going forward;
3. *Approves* the proposed adjustments to the UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, based on the findings of the midterm review, as contained in [DP/FPA/2024/4 \(Part I\)](#) and annex 1;
4. *Welcomes* the six remedial priorities to improve UNFPA readiness and the execution of its Strategic Plan, 2022–2025;
5. *Encourages* UNFPA to continue to strengthen its humanitarian response and preparedness capacity;
6. *Reaffirms* the importance of high-quality data and its contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, acknowledges the role of UNFPA in generating high-quality population data, and encourages UNFPA to strengthen its capacity and efforts in this regard;

7. *Notes with concern* the stagnating numbers in the reduction of maternal and newborn mortality and encourages UNFPA to accelerate its efforts on this matter;

8. *Welcomes* the UNFPA headquarters optimization process and its intended benefits, and recognizing the efforts of UNFPA to keep the Board informed on the process thus far:

(a) Requests UNFPA to continue to provide periodic briefings to the Executive Board on the progress of the headquarters optimization process, prior to each session, until the first regular session 2026;

(b) Requests UNFPA to share the risk assessment and mitigation measures underlying the headquarters optimization process with the Executive Board before the second regular session 2024;

(c) Requests UNFPA to monitor the impacts of the headquarters optimization process on performance and effectiveness, integrate results of this monitoring in subsequent annual reports of the Executive Director, and carry out an independent assessment of the headquarters optimization process by 2026, after its completion;

(d) Encourages UNFPA to continue to proactively engage with the Staff Council on the headquarters optimization process and other significant change processes;

9. *Requests* UNFPA to assess its accountability framework against the updated 2023 Joint Inspection Unit reference accountability framework, as presented in the Joint Inspection Unit report on the review of accountability frameworks in the United Nations system organizations (JIU/REP/2023/3), and adjust it, as necessary, by the annual session 2025.

7 June 2024

2024/19

Midterm review of the UNFPA integrated budget, 2022–2025

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the midterm review of the UNFPA integrated budget, 2022–2025 (DP/FPA/2024/10), and welcomes its alignment with the midterm review of the UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2022–2025 [DP/FPA/2024/4 (Part I)], and also takes note of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the midterm review of the UNFPA integrated budget, 2022–2025 (DP/FPA/2024/8);

2. *Takes note* of the results framework and resource requirements reflected in the revised estimates for the UNFPA integrated budget, 2022–2025, including linkages of results and resources, as contained in document DP/FPA/2024/10;

3. *Approves* the presentation of activities and associated costs, as reflected in document DP/FPA/2024/10;

4. *Also approves* revised gross estimates for the institutional budget 2022–2025 in the amount of \$872.3 million, noting that these estimates include \$249.8 million for indirect cost recovery from other resources;

5. *Further approves* a revised ceiling for global and regional programmes during 2022–2025 in the amount of \$211.6 million in regular resources, noting that this amount cannot be exceeded without approval of the Executive Board;

6. *Recalls* Executive Board decision 2015/3, and approves a revised amount of \$42 million of regular resources for the UNFPA emergency fund, and also reaffirms the existing authorization for the UNFPA Executive Director to increase the

emergency fund by up to \$2 million beyond the ceiling in any given year if the number and extent of the emergencies so warrant;

7. *Endorses* the proposal of the Executive Director, similar to decisions 2008/6, 2012/13, 2013/32, 2017/24 and 2021/9, to grant her exceptional authority during 2024–2025 to access up to an additional \$5.6 million in regular resources for security measures, provided these are used for new and emerging security mandates, as defined by the directives of the United Nations Department of Safety and Security, and requests UNFPA to report to the Executive Board annually on the use of those funds in its statistical and financial review.

7 June 2024

2024/20

UNFPA evaluation

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the annual report on the evaluation function, 2023 (DP/FPA/2024/5), including the programme of work and budget of the Independent Evaluation Office in 2024, and related management commentaries;
2. Welcomes the progress and achievements of the evaluation function and the continued adaptability and responsiveness of the evaluation function to local contexts and new and emerging global challenges;
3. *Also welcomes* the contributions to United Nations interagency and system-wide evaluation efforts, and fostering national evaluation capacity development;
4. Encourages the Independent Evaluation Office to continue using innovative practices, including artificial intelligence;
5. *Also encourages* UNFPA to continue to enhance the capacity of the decentralized evaluation function and humanitarian evaluations, and to increase investments in the evaluation function.

7 June 2024

2024/21

Report on implementation of the restated UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2022–2025

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the report (DP/OPS/2024/6) and its annexes;
2. Recognizes the contributions of UNOPS to the results of United Nations and other partners in 2023, and welcomes its progress in implementing the restated Strategic Plan, 2022–2025;
3. *Takes note* of the new format and approach of the report of the Executive Director on implementation, and encourages further alignment in format and structure with the annual reporting of UNDP and UNFPA;
4. *Reiterates* decision 2023/23, paragraph 8, that UNOPS must refrain from new strategic initiatives, subject to approval from the Executive Board;
5. *Recalls* decisions 2022/13, 2023/18, 2023/22, 2024/4 to freeze all transfers out of the operational reserve for any purpose other than daily operations;
6. *Takes note* of the annual report on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit, and draws attention to recommendation 5 of the “Review of the use of non-staff personnel and related contractual modalities in the United Nations system organizations” (JIU/REP/2023/8), and requests UNOPS to implement it in full;

7. *Requests* UNOPS to assess its accountability framework against the updated 2023 Joint Inspection Unit reference accountability framework, as presented in the Unit's report on the "Review of accountability frameworks in the United Nations system organizations" (JIU/REP/2023/3), and adjust it as necessary, by the annual session 2025.

7 June 2024

2024/22

Comprehensive response plan in response to the recommendations of the two independent third-party reviews of UNOPS

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the document (DP/OPS/2024/7);
2. *Acknowledges* the progress made by UNOPS in implementing the comprehensive response plan in response to the third-party reviews of UNOPS and encourages UNOPS to continue to focus on implementing all recommendations and outstanding actions in a timely manner until the comprehensive response plan is completed;
3. *Calls on* UNOPS to implement in full the whistleblower process to ensure that strong, safe and confidential systems for whistleblowing and protection against retaliation for all staff and non-staff are in place, to safeguard the protection of individuals that report wrongdoings, risks and misconduct within UNOPS;
4. *Recalls* decision 2024/5 to increasingly engage with its staff and non-staff, including through Pulse surveys, and to report to the Executive Board the complete and unredacted survey results and follow-up actions taken in response, and requests these be shared within three months of conducting the survey;
5. *Recalls* decision 2024/4, paragraphs 20 and 21, on the prevention of impunity, and in line with rule 16 of the rules of procedure, requests the Bureau to organize a closed-door confidential briefing with the Office of Internal Oversight Services with a view to discuss Sustainable Investments in Infrastructure and Innovation (S3i) initiative accountability and related issues;

With regard to the terms of reference of the external third-party review, which was requested to be commissioned by UNOPS at the end of the implementation period of the comprehensive response plan, within paragraph 18 of decision 2022/24;

6. *Recalls* its decision 2024/4 that the third-party review will be conducted in early 2025 and that UNOPS will commission a final third-party review on the implementation of the last recommendation, which concerns a multi-year programme on process innovation and digitalization, once implemented;
7. *Takes note* of the draft terms of reference in relation to the external third-party review to be submitted as per decision 2022/24 by the Internal Audit and Investigations Group (IAIG), and requests the IAIG to present the terms of reference to the Executive Board at the second regular session 2024;

With regard to the detailed workplan with relevant milestones to implement the recommendations contained in the third-party review of the organizational culture, as requested within paragraph 4 of decision 2024/5;

8. *Welcomes* the proposed approach and workplan for organizational culture transformation at UNOPS, rooted in the values of the United Nations;
9. *Recalls* its decision 2024/5, paragraph 5, to report progress and challenges in implementing the workplan through the continued monthly briefings on the

comprehensive response plan until the first regular session 2025 and as part of the annual item on organizational culture during first regular sessions.

7 June 2024

2024/23

Overview of decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its annual session 2024

The Executive Board

Recalls that during its annual session 2024, it:

Item 1

Organizational matters

Adopted the agenda ([DP/2024/L.2](#)) and approved the workplan for the annual session 2024;

Adopted the report of the first regular session 2024 ([DP/2024/8](#));

Adopted the tentative workplan for the second regular session 2024;

Joint segment

Item 2

Update on the implementation efforts on the repositioning of the United Nations development system

Adopted decision 2024/8 on the update on the implementation efforts on the repositioning of the United Nations development system;

Item 3

Internal audit and investigation

Adopted decision 2024/9 on the reports of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on internal audit and investigation activities in 2023, and management responses;

Item 4

Ethics

Adopted decision 2024/10 on the reports of the ethics offices of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on activities in 2023, and management responses;

Item 5

Protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment

Adopted decision 2024/11 on the joint update on protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment;

Item 6

Field visits

Took note of the report of the field visit of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to Uruguay (DP/FPA/OPS/2024/1);

Item 19**Third-party assessment on the governance and oversight functions of the Executive Boards**

Adopted decision 2024/12 on the assessment of how the Executive Board executes its governance and oversight functions;

UNDP segment**Item 7****Midterm review of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, including the annual report of the Administrator for 2023**

Adopted decision 2024/13 on the midterm review of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, including the annual report of the Administrator for 2023;

Held an interactive discussion with the Administrator on the combined midterm review and the annual report;

Item 8**Financial, budgetary and administrative matters**

Adopted decision 2024/14 on the midterm review of the UNDP integrated resources plan and the integrated budget, 2022–2025;

Item 9**Gender equality at UNDP**

Took note of the annual report on the implementation of the UNDP gender equality strategy, 2022–2025 ([DP/2024/15](#));

Item 10**UNDP evaluation**

Adopted decision 2024/15 on UNDP evaluation;

Item 11**UNDP country programmes and related matters**

Took note of the first one-year extension of the country programme for Liberia as approved by the UNDP Administrator ([DP/2024/21](#)); and approved the 18-month extension of the country programme for the Syrian Arab Republic, the two-year extension of the country programme for the Republic of the Congo, and the second six-month extension of the country programme for Rwanda ([DP/2024/21](#));

Item 12**United Nations Capital Development Fund**

Adopted decision 2024/16 on the midterm review of the United Nations Capital Development Fund Strategic Framework, 2022–2025, and the report on results achieved by the United Nations Capital Development Fund in 2023;

Item 13**United Nations Volunteers programme**

Adopted decision 2024/17 on the United Nations Volunteers programme: annual report of the Administrator;

UNFPA segment

Item 14

Annual report of the Executive Director

Adopted decision 2024/18 on UNFPA: Annual report of the Executive Director;

Held an interactive discussion with the Executive Director on the combined midterm review and annual report;

Item 15

UNFPA – Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

Adopted decision 2024/19 on the midterm review of the UNFPA integrated budget, 2022–2025;

Item 16

UNFPA evaluation

Adopted decision 2024/20 on UNFPA evaluation;

Item 17

UNFPA country programmes and related matters

Took note of the first one-year extension of the country programme for the Syrian Arab Republic, as approved by the UNFPA Executive Director ([DP/FPA/2024/9](#)); and approved the second, six-month extension for Rwanda ([DP/FPA/2024/9](#));

UNOPS segment

Item 18

Annual report of the UNOPS Executive Director

Adopted decision 2024/21 on the report on implementation of the restated UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2022–2025;

Adopted decision 2024/22 on the comprehensive response plan in response to the recommendations of the two independent third-party reviews of UNOPS;

Held an interactive discussion with the Executive Director on the above topics and a thematic interactive dialogue on the topic of ending the cycle of climate-induced disasters through sustainable resilient and inclusive infrastructure.

7 June 2024

2024/24

Comprehensive review of the joint cost-recovery policy and its implementation

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the comprehensive review of the joint cost-recovery policy (DP/FPA/ICEF-UNW/2024/1);
2. *Acknowledges* the criticality of ensuring the recovery of all direct and indirect costs to programmes and projects;
3. *Resolves* that the comprehensive cost-recovery policy, as outlined in document DP/FPA/ICEF-UNW/2024/1, supersedes the previous cost-recovery policy;
4. *Approves* the cost-classification categories, and their definitions, as outlined in the policy, effective 1 January 2026, as follows:

- (a) Development and humanitarian activities, with subcategories: (i) programmes; and (ii) development effectiveness activities;
 - (b) United Nations development coordination activities;
 - (c) Enabling functions, with subcategories: (i) management activities; (ii) independent oversight and assurance activities; and (iii) special-purpose activities;
5. *Approves* the cost-recovery policy, including the methodology and rates, as outlined in the policy;
6. *Recalls* decision 2020/12, paragraph 5, and requests UNDP and UNFPA, in collaboration with UNICEF and UN-Women, to provide information requested therein, in a joint harmonized report, to be discussed under their structured funding dialogue agenda items at the second regular session each year;
7. *Further requests* UNDP and UNFPA, in collaboration with UNICEF and UN-Women, to continue to present in a harmonized manner the calculations of the notional cost-recovery rates in their respective integrated budget documents;
8. *Requests* UNDP and UNFPA, in collaboration with UNICEF and UN-Women, to present a comprehensive review of the cost-recovery policy and its implementation for decision at the second regular session 2028, and further requests UNDP and UNFPA, in collaboration with UNICEF and UN-Women, to organize a joint briefing in 2027 to present a joint timeline for the review and preliminary observations and findings from the implementation of the cost-recovery policy.

29 August 2024

2024/25

Assessment of how the Executive Board executes its governance and oversight functions

The Executive Board

1. *Recalls* its decision 2024/12, on the consideration of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit ([JIU/REP/2023/7](#)), which requested the Bureau of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to provide, in consultation with the bureaux of the participating Boards, an update on the implementation of this decision at the second regular session 2024;
2. *Welcomes* the update provided by the Bureau at the second regular session 2024.

29 August 2024

2024/26

Structured funding dialogue on financing the results of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2022–2025

The Executive Board

1. *Welcomes* the report on the structured funding dialogue on financing the results of the UNDP Strategic Plan ([DP/2024/26](#) and Corr.1) and its annexes, including progress made on entity-specific commitments of the funding compact;
2. *Notes* the importance of sufficient and predictable regular resources, and expresses concern about the continuing decline of regular resource contributions and the impact on the ability of UNDP to deliver the intended results of the Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, restore and accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals and maintain robust oversight and accountability systems;

3. *Recalls* the importance of funding predictability and multi-year contributions to enable UNDP to respond to the evolving needs of programme countries with agility and reduce the risk of jeopardizing its ability to achieve the results of the Strategic Plan, 2022–2025;
4. *Notes* the importance of flexible thematic funding to complement regular resources, which is critical for UNDP to accelerate programming to meet the Sustainable Development Goals;
5. *Welcomes* the new funding compact for United Nations support to the Sustainable Development Goals, and calls on UNDP and encourages Member States to fully implement their respective commitments in line with relevant resolutions of the Economic and Social Council;
6. *Encourages* UNDP to continue its engagement with Member States, through structured funding dialogues, on prioritizing contributions to regular resources, and shifting from highly earmarked to more predictable and flexible funding;
7. *Encourages* UNDP to continuously engage with relevant stakeholders, including the private sector, foundations, civil society and individuals, to diversify its potential sources of funding, and to strengthen partnerships with international financial institutions;
8. *Recognizes* UNDP efforts to accelerate financing for the Sustainable Development Goals, including those realized through the Sustainable Finance Hub, and encourages UNDP to provide, within existing reporting, further details on results achieved through these efforts as well as their potential risks and opportunities;

With regard to the amendments to the Global Environment Facility Instrument:

9. *Takes note* of the Administrator's note concerning proposed amendments to the instrument for the establishment of the restructured Global Environment Facility;
10. *Decides* to adopt the amendments to the instrument for the establishment of the restructured Global Environment Facility, as approved by the Seventh Assembly of the Global Environment Facility held in Vancouver, Canada from 22 to 26 August 2023;
11. *Requests* the Administrator to transmit the present decision to the Chief Executive Officer and Chairperson of the Global Environment Facility.

29 August 2024

2024/27

Report on the UNFPA structured funding dialogue, 2023–2024

The Executive Board

1. *Welcomes* the report on the UNFPA structured funding dialogue, 2023–2024 ([DP/FPA/2024/11](#)), including progress made on entity-specific commitments of the funding compact;
2. *Notes* the importance of sufficient and predictable regular (core) resources linked to intended and demonstrated results, as these are critical for UNFPA to deliver on the Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, respond to various humanitarian crises and help realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
3. *Recalls* the importance of broadening the contributor base, and encourages UNFPA to engage with Member States to prioritize contributions to regular resources in a timely and predictable manner, in line with the United Nations funding compact, and also encourages UNFPA to continue to make efforts in terms of visibility and recognition of contributions, particularly for regular resources;

4. *Encourages* UNFPA to continue to engage with relevant stakeholders, including the private sector, foundations, civil society and individuals, to diversify its potential sources of funding, and to strengthen partnerships with international financial institutions;
5. *Notes* the importance of flexible thematic and pooled funding as critical for UNFPA to be able to accelerate programming to meet the three transformative results and the Sustainable Development Goals;
6. *Welcomes* the new funding compact for United Nations support to the Sustainable Development Goals, and calls on UNFPA and encourages Member States to fully implement their respective commitments in line with relevant resolutions of the Economic and Social Council;
7. *Encourages* UNFPA to continue its engagement with Member States, through structured funding dialogues, on prioritizing contributions to regular resources and shifting from highly earmarked to more predictable and flexible funding;
8. *Recognizes* the UNFPA efforts to explore funding accelerator instruments, such as the Strategic Investment Facility and others, to achieve strategic plan outcomes and the three transformative results, and encourages UNFPA to provide further details on results achieved through these instruments and their potential risks within existing reporting.

29 August 2024

2024/28

Comprehensive response plan in response to the recommendations of the two independent third-party reviews of UNOPS

The Executive Board

1. *Recognizes* the progress achieved by UNOPS in the implementation of the comprehensive response plan;
2. *Requests* that the annual report of the Ethics Office include information, under the section “Financial disclosure programme,” on the compliance of the members of the senior management team with the UNOPS policy on financial disclosure and conflict of interest statements;
3. *Requests* UNOPS to report to the Executive Board, by the first regular session of 2025, the full and complete results of the portfolio risk assessment completed in response to KPMG recommendations issued in 2022, and to organize during the first regular session of 2025 a closed briefing to share the unredacted results with the Board;
4. *Requests* UNOPS to share an update on the review of the Financial Regulations and Rules during the December 2024 monthly update briefing;

With regard to the terms of reference for the external third-party review of the implementation of the comprehensive response plan:

5. *Takes note* of the terms of reference as presented in document [DP/OPS/2024/10](#);
6. *Reaffirms* decision 2024/4, and reiterates that this review should constitute a comprehensive progress review of all elements of the comprehensive response plan, aimed at assessing the status of implementation of each recommendation and action taken, including whether the intended impact has been achieved and what more is required if actions to address recommendations are not completed to full satisfaction;

7. *Notes* the formal closure of the Sustainable Investments in Infrastructure and Innovation (S3i) office as of 31 December 2023 and decides to include the closure process in the scope of the third-party review;

8. *Requests* the Internal Audit and Investigations Group (IAIG) to proceed with the external third-party review, incorporating guidance from this decision;

9. *Requests* IAIG to submit the unredacted report of the external third-party review and present the conclusions to the Executive Board ahead of the annual session 2025;

With regard to the implementation strategy for the Process Innovation and Digitalization Programme:

10. *Takes note* of the implementation strategy for the Process Innovation and Digitalization Programme, as requested by the Executive Board in paragraph 6 of decision 2024/4;

11. *Encourages* UNOPS, including IAIG, to take appropriate measures to ensure transparency, accountability and integrity in the implementation of the Process Innovation and Digitalization Programme;

12. *Recalls* decision 2024/4, paragraph 18, to not include the Process Innovation and Digitalization Programme in the external third-party review of the comprehensive response plan;

13. *Requests* IAIG to commission an external formative evaluation of the Process Innovation and Digitalization Programme to assess its business case, contribution to the UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, outputs, outcomes, risk-management and budget, as well as progress to date, to be presented to the Executive Board for decision during the annual session 2025;

14. *Requests* IAIG to submit by mid-October 2024 the draft terms of reference for the formative evaluation of the Process Innovation and Digitalization Programme, through the Bureau, to the Executive Board, for online consultation;

15. *Requests* UNOPS management to provide updates on the Process Innovation and Digitalization Programme implementation, including written information on the enterprise resource planning selection process, at quarterly informal briefings, as well as an annual written report on implementation at first regular sessions, until the programme's implementation is determined complete after a final external evaluation is endorsed by the Executive Board;

With regard to the approximate amount remaining of undisbursed funds and their alternative use:

16. *Takes note* of the update on the progress of the refund of excess reserves accumulated as of 31 December 2021, and the estimated amount of excess reserves undisbursed by 31 December 2024, as requested by the Executive Board in paragraph 4 of decision 2024/6;

17. *Recalls* document [DP/OPS/2024/3](#) in which five options on the alternative use of undisbursed funds were presented for consideration;

18. *Further recalls* its decision 2024/6 that extended the deadline for the distribution of all excess reserves accumulated as of 31 December 2021 until 31 December 2024, and in which the Board agreed to decide on the use of undisbursed excess reserves at the second regular session;

19. *Acknowledges* that UNOPS has sought legal advice from the Office of the Legal Counsel on excess reserves as of 31 December 2021 allocated to two paying entities, per Executive Board decision 2023/4, and requests UNOPS to share any advice

received from the Office of the Legal Counsel on these reserves with the Board in writing by the end of September 2024;

20. *Further requests* UNOPS to continue to hold beyond 31 December 2024, only the undisbursed excess reserves allocated to these two paying entities;

21. *Decides* to resolve the issue of the undisbursed excess reserves allocated to these two paying entities at the first regular session 2025;

22. *Further decides* to transfer all remaining excess reserves accumulated as of 31 December 2021 and not disbursed by 31 December 2024, as unearmarked, equal contributions to the Joint SDG Fund and the Special-Purpose Trust Fund for the Resident Coordinator System and the Development Coordination Office;

23. *Requests* UNOPS to provide an update on undisbursed excess reserves as of 31 December 2024 and excess reserves accumulated after 31 December 2021 in an informal briefing ahead of the first regular session 2025, and to also invite the United Nations Board of Auditors to participate.

29 August 2024

2024/29

Annual statistical report on the procurement activities of United Nations system organizations, 2023

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the annual statistical report on United Nations procurement, 2023 ([DP/OPS/2024/9](#));

2. *Welcomes* the data and analysis contained therein;

3. *Acknowledges* the 2023 report, which marks the fortieth edition of United Nations procurement reporting, and underscores the importance of transparency and openness in procurement practices for building trust with partners and the public, and encourages UNOPS, in collaboration with other United Nations entities, to continually improve transparency and reporting on procurement operations and their outcomes, emphasizing the impact of procurement on sustainable development;

4. *Encourages* UNOPS to further explore opportunities of collaborative procurement with other United Nations entities.

29 August 2024

2024/30

Overview of decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its second regular session 2024

The Executive Board

Recalls that during its second regular session 2024, it:

Item 1

Organizational matters

Adopted the agenda ([DP/2024/L.3](#)) and approved the workplan for the second regular session 2024 ([DP/2024/L.3](#));

Adopted the report of the annual session 2024 ([DP/2024/24](#));

Adopted the tentative workplan for the first regular session 2025;

Joint segment

Item 2

Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

Adopted decision 2024/24 on the comprehensive review of the joint cost-recovery policy and its implementation;

Item 9

Update on the assessment of how the Executive Board executes its governance and oversight functions

Adopted decision 2024/25 on the assessment of how the Executive Board executes its governance and oversight functions;

UNDP segment

Item 3

Structured funding dialogue

Adopted decision 2024/26 on the structured funding dialogue on financing the results of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2022–2025;

Item 4

UNDP country programmes and related matters

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

Democratic Republic of the Congo ([DP/DCP/COD/4](#));

Djibouti ([DP/DCP/DJI/4](#));

Namibia ([DP/DCP/NAM/4](#));

Sierra Leone ([DP/DCP/SLE/5](#));

Ukraine ([DP/DCP/UKR/4](#));

Took note of the first one-year extension of the country programme for Yemen ([DP/2024/28](#)) as approved by the UNDP Administrator; and approved the third one-year extension of the country programme for Myanmar ([DP/2024/28](#));

UNFPA segment

Item 5

UNFPA structured funding dialogue

Adopted decision 2024/27 on the UNFPA structured funding dialogue;

Item 6

UNFPA country programmes and related matters

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

Democratic Republic of the Congo ([DP/FPA/CPD/COD/6](#));

Djibouti ([DP/FPA/CPD/DJI/6](#));

Namibia ([DP/FPA/CPD/NAM/7](#));

Sierra Leone ([DP/FPA/CPD/SLE/8](#));

Ukraine ([DP/FPA/CPD/UKR/4](#));

Took note of the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Cuba, Liberia, Mexico and Yemen, as approved by the UNFPA Executive Director ([DP/FPA/2024/12](#)); and approved the first, two-year extension of the country programme for the Republic of the Congo; the third one-year extension of the country programme for Myanmar; and the fourth one-year extension of the country programme for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea ([DP/FPA/2024/12](#));

UNOPS segment

Item 7

Statement by the UNOPS Executive Director

Adopted decision 2024/28 on the comprehensive response plan in response to the recommendations of the two independent third-party reviews of UNOPS;

Adopted decision 2024/29 on the annual statistical report on the procurement activities of United Nations system organizations, 2023.

Annex II

Membership of the Executive Board in 2024

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

African States: Cameroon (2024), Chad (2024), Côte d'Ivoire (2024), Ethiopia (2025), Kenya (2024), Lesotho (2024), Nigeria (2026) and Tunisia (2026).

Asia-Pacific States: Bangladesh (2026), China (2025), Kazakhstan (2024), Myanmar (2024), Nauru (2026), Republic of Korea (2025) and Qatar (2024).

Eastern European States: Republic of Moldova (2025), Romania (2026), Slovakia (2025) and Ukraine (2024).

Latin American and Caribbean States: Brazil (2026), Colombia (2025), Costa Rica (2024), Ecuador (2025) and Jamaica (2026).

Western European and other States:* Canada, France, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Norway, Portugal, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America.

* Western European and other States has its own rotation schedule, which varies every year.

Annex III

Report of the joint meeting of the Executive Boards of UNICEF, UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, WFP and UN-Women held on 31 May 2024

1. The Joint Meeting of the Executive Boards (JMB) of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women, and WFP takes place annually and provides a platform for Member States to discuss issues of common interest across agencies, involving both the Members and Observers of the four Executive Boards as well as the Principals of six agencies. In 2024, the Executive Boards requested a discussion on the role of effective governance, by governing bodies, in promoting multilateralism and United Nations Development System (UNDS) effectiveness, in accelerating the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

1. The meeting was opened by the JMB Chair, the President of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS. The Chair expressed his appreciation for the presence of the Board Presidents as well as of the Principals and deputy of all JMB partners. In his remarks, the Chair underlined that the governing bodies of the United Nations funds and programmes played a crucial role in supporting and supervising the activities of each agency, as well as in ensuring that United Nations entities carry out the respective duties emanated from various multilateral agreements and joint initiatives. The strategic direction, oversight and accountability provided by the Executive Boards played a crucial role in ensuring that these organizations could more effectively and efficiently deliver on their respective mandates, and achieve system-wide results, including the SDGs. Ultimately, the Executive Boards ensured the effectiveness of the UNDS. As the world changes and becomes more complex, the United Nations governing bodies must evolve too. The decisions taken by the Executive Boards in recent years were testimony to the fact that the Boards were not only aware of the need to evolve but that they were taking proactive action.

2. The Chair stressed that United Nations entities' effectiveness in countries hinged on the effectiveness of their Executive Boards, which ensured that all actions taken were grounded in pragmatism and were responsive to the needs of communities. He noted that multilateral collaboration through fora such as the JMB was critical for addressing mounting development challenges in a fast-changing world. With only six years remaining until 2030 and growing crises, the Boards ensured that United Nations agencies could fulfil their mandates and remain fit for purpose. This required adapting the working methods, rules, decision-making and meetings modalities of the Boards themselves.

3. The Chair referred to the requests made by the Executive Boards for expert reviews of their oversight and governance functions. For example, in 2023, WFP undertook an assessment of its governance frameworks and processes to identify opportunities for improving efficiency and effectiveness. The review, conducted by an independent consultant, provided a set of recommendations for the Board to provide the best possible strategic advice and support to WFP. A working group of the Executive Board was then established to review the recommendations and develop an implementation plan for those recommendations approved by the Board. The Chair also noted that in 2023, at the request of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF and UN-Women, an assessment was conducted by the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) on the governance and oversight functions of the three Executive Boards. The review highlighted opportunities for improvement in key governance areas, including roles and responsibilities, structure, processes, and systems.

4. Both these reviews offered opportunities for reflection on how Executive Boards could be strengthened to enhance their governance and oversight roles. In the Boards' collective effort to foster multilateralism, every dollar invested should lead to tangible outcomes. A fundamental principle of multilateralism is equality among nations. In this spirit, the Chair encouraged Members to explore new platforms for working together to strengthen governance frameworks for enhanced United Nations system effectiveness, including through intergovernmental processes like the Summit of the Future. Through stronger collaboration and open communications, all parties could forge ahead with renewed determination towards achieving the SDGs.

5. The Assistant Secretary-General for Development Coordination, speaking on behalf of the Deputy Secretary-General, highlighted the critical role of governing boards in advancing multilateralism and sustainable development, and leading change within the United Nations system. This was possible because of the alignment of Board decisions with broader decisions of the United Nations on governance coordination. Expressing gratitude to the entities that had led this journey, he noted that Member States wished this progress to continue. The scale and ambition of the SDGs necessitated that multilateral institutions keep pace with changing needs. Governing bodies of United Nations entities needed to seize all opportunities to reflect on the guidance they received and to build upon their positive working relationships. Significant opportunities existed to build even stronger linkages among United Nations governance processes.

6. The JIU report had provided useful guidance in this regard. For the first time, a full overview had been provided of how United Nations agencies had integrated the requirements of reform. Entities' first round of discussions on this would be much anticipated. Executive Boards would have a central role in advancing the implementation of a new funding compact. In the last Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) cycle before 2030, it would be possible to set an ambitious course for the next four years. As the Summit of the Future drew near, it was time to renew the focus on these goals. The President of the Executive Board of WFP reiterated that the Summit of the Future and other multilateral processes were important opportunities for identifying ways to improve global governance and influencing the vision for a more effective and unified multilateral system to ensure that no one is left behind. The Executive Boards' roles included ensuring collaboration with other United Nations partners to achieve the long-term goals of resilience and sustainable development. In the light of challenges facing the world, it was critical to reflect on whether these entities' governance was fit to address these pressing challenges and to deliver as one for achieving the SDGs.

7. The JMB session provided an opportunity to exchange views on the 2023 JIU review which highlighted the possibilities for improving governance system and functions and how to make the most of these possibilities. Over the course of the session, the heads and deputy of the six entities had an opportunity to express their opinions regarding their agencies' governance arrangements and how they could be enhanced. This was also an opportunity to collectively consider how the JMB could be more efficient and effective in providing oversight. The Path for the Future document, currently being negotiated in the lead up to the Summit of the Future, envisages a section on transforming global governance to overcome the challenges facing the world today. As heads of organizations, those present at the JMB session had a fundamental role to play. The President of the WFP Executive Board encouraged all Board Members and entities Principals to use this unique platform for bringing ideas from their respective entities to the table. Only through open dialogue could United Nations partners work together with governments to address the challenges each of them faced and maximize their effectiveness in order to achieve the SDGs.

8. The UNFPA Director of Communications and Strategic Partnerships opened a panel discussion with the principals and deputy of the six participating United Nations agencies. The aim of this discussion was to engage directly with agencies' senior management and gather their perspectives on the role of governing bodies – and Executive Boards more specifically – and how agencies can more effectively work with the Boards towards enhancing the effectiveness of the UNDS and accelerating the achievement of the SDGs.

9. The Executive Director of UNFPA highlighted that the Executive Boards were a quintessential expression of multilateralism – inclusive platforms for cooperation and decision-making by consensus. They were not only crucial in ensuring that agencies can deliver their mandates effectively and efficiently but were also critical in achieving system-wide impact. Achievement of the SDGs very much depended on accountability: the Executive Boards play a crucial role in holding United Nations agencies accountable for their performance. Strong linkages existed between the Boards and the results achieved on the ground, which is ultimately what United Nations agencies were measured against. In line with the Secretary-General's United Nations 2.0 vision, the Executive Boards play a key role in promoting agility, a focus on people, risk management, and the use of data and foresight – not only for individual United Nations agencies but for the entire UNDS.

10. Responding to a question about whether Executive Boards had steered United Nations agencies to more effectively coordinate on cross-cutting themes, the Executive Director of UN-Women highlighted the interconnected challenges the world was facing. In this context, the success of United Nations agencies' work would depend on their combined ability to deliver as one. How United Nations partners addressed intersectionality and mainstreamed cross-cutting themes was critical to achieving all SDGs – especially SDG 5: Gender Equality. Without women and girls' participation and leadership, the other SDGs would not be achievable. The Summit of the Future, Beijing+30 Anniversary, and other convenings constitute prime opportunities to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

11. UN-Women reiterated its commitment to effective coordination, coherence, and gender mainstreaming throughout the United Nations system. Gender-equality acceleration plans would be a key driver and accountability tool for all partners. Board guidance was critical for this level of inter-agency coordination. For example, Executive Boards had been steering agencies on: (i) promoting system-wide action on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual harassment, and fostering safe working environments; (ii) developing integrated solutions, including joint assessments, needs analyses, collaborative planning (44 per cent of United Nations joint programmes focused on SDG 5 and gender equality in 2023), joint field visits and a QCPR annex for harmonized reporting; and (iii) aligning strategic planning processes for the harmonization of outputs and strengthened United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs).

12. The Executive Director of UNOPS responded to a question on how United Nations entities, with guidance from their governing bodies, could adjust to new ways of working internally within each organization and externally with other United Nations entities and partners as they strove for greater impact and efficiency. Questions about new ways of working not only needed to be addressed by participants in the JMB but across the entire United Nations system in its collective response to the United Nations 2.0 initiative. He highlighted three new ways in which UNOPS was working. First, its internal journey of transformation went beyond addressing a single crisis and constituted a full review of the organizational culture: building capacities for evidence and learning; strengthening management of projects and portfolios; and ensuring that processes and information systems were fit for purpose. This included a revision of financial regulations, renewal of policy frameworks, a

new risk-management framework, and ensuring transparent management for net-zero revenue. The Executive Board held the organization to account in the process and provided guidance and support throughout a challenging and successful journey. Second, to increase its efficiency, UNOPS had established mission hubs to accelerate the SDGs and collaborate across the UNDS. UNOPS was aligning its way of working through partnerships with other agencies. Third, UNOPS had committed to accelerate climate action within its operations and through its projects with partners. In addition, UNOPS continued to engage with UNDS partners towards common back offices and made use of global shared services such as United Nations Web Buy Plus and the Booking Hub. Partner agencies were encouraged to use more shared service platforms. As a project-based, non-programmatic, non-normative entity, UNOPS would support the UNDS through the Resident Coordinator system, which enabled inter-agency collaboration and facilitated partnerships with Member States.

13. The Administrator of UNDP provided examples of how agencies have relied on their Executive Boards to adapt to different circumstances – for example during crises – and become more resilient. Taking note of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolution [48/162](#) that defines the roles of Executive Boards, he highlighted the importance of the Executive Boards as guardians of General Assembly and Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) decisions that define all United Nations entities' mandates and overall management support. In crisis settings, Executive Board leadership was critical for calibrating agile management responses in order to keep delivering within communities. For example, during the Covid-19 pandemic, UNDP's Executive Board supported management in making decisions that allowed rapid disbursement and reconfiguration of financing in an evolving and complex context.

14. The Board also supported advocacy and resource mobilization, which allowed UNDP to develop 131 national socio-economic response plans alongside Resident Coordinator Offices and UNCTs. The Administrator emphasized the importance of continuous dialogue between the Executives of United Nations agencies and the Presidents of the Boards and the Bureaus, which facilitated timely guidance and aligned the decisions of Executives and the Boards. The Administrator provided an example of this continuous dialogue and partnership with the UNDP Executive Board related to the development of the UNDP's Strategic Plan in parallel with the unfolding UNDS reform and forthcoming decisions by the UNGA. The Executive Board's adoption of a 'reform-ready' Strategic Plan provided both the Board and management with the flexibility to respond to a changing context. These engagements also helped to ensure that Executives provided Boards, to whom they are accountable, with clear and timely information to make informed decisions that enable agencies to deliver results.

15. Speaking about the role Executive Boards have played in enhancing collaboration and UNDS effectiveness, the Executive Director of UNICEF highlighted the importance of the aligned decisions among the Executive Boards. The common paragraphs among Executive Board decisions facilitated alignment at the country level. She reflected that the UNICEF Annual Survey on UNDS Reform provided evidence that United Nations agencies were better able to assist Member States in meeting development priorities as a result of UNDS reforms. The Executive Director provided practical examples of alignment, describing how a joint programme in Micronesia on digital transformation had made great strides in education, gender equality and maritime security. In Jamaica, joint work had helped the Government to implement public expenditure review recommendations, introducing a new system for projecting educational resource requirements. As United Nations partners sought to accelerate progress on the 2030 Agenda, these examples showed the potential of delivering together through joint programmes to scale up existing efforts.

16. The Deputy Executive Director of WFP reflected on what more was needed from Executive Boards to facilitate the work of agencies and accelerate the achievement of the SDGs. Noting the unprecedented gap between needs and available resources, he stressed that Boards could bring attention to resource constraints, assist in mobilizing resources and help United Nations agencies to work more efficiently so they could find creative ways to close the resource gap. In an increasingly complex political environment and growing involvement of the United Nations Agencies, fund and programmes in humanitarian operations, Boards' guidance was also crucial to help ensure that United Nations agencies could continue adhering to humanitarian principles. These principles were sometimes challenged, and agencies needed support to remain consistent and take a principled approach. Finally, he emphasized the importance of consensus and unity within Executive Boards especially surrounding challenging issues. In a polarized world, agencies needed Member States to come together and show consensus on their mandate as United Nations entities. The upcoming Summit of the Future could be a prime opportunity to affirm this common global mandate.

17. The second portion of the panel discussion offered reflections on the future. Executive leaders were asked what agencies could do to improve their support to governing bodies in their path towards becoming more 'future fit'.

18. The UNFPA Executive Director noted that the political support agencies received from the Executive Boards was crucial. While formal sessions only took place three times a year, the Executive Boards accompanied the agencies day by day. This constant dialogue ensured that programmes could remain responsive to constantly evolving needs. Interventions by Member States at Board meetings carried tremendous weight well beyond the walls of the Board rooms. Executive Boards pushed agencies to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances. They were also first in adopting different working modalities during the Covid-19 pandemic. One of the ways agencies could support Executive Boards in becoming more future-fit was by developing solid communications and storytelling strategies that helped Executive Boards to communicate more effectively about agencies' work, building trust and engagement. Organized field visits – such as the Joint Field Visit and the visits of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Executive Board – allowed the Executive Boards to directly observe the work and impact of agencies on the ground. Agencies also organized more informal briefings to allow for in-depth technical dialogue, providing the Boards with real-time data for decision making.

19. The Executive Director of UN-Women highlighted the Secretary-General's bold vision for a forward-thinking United Nations 2.0 and for making the agencies and their governing bodies future-fit. UN-Women's business model, implementation modalities and global footprint continue to evolve in order to deliver on the agency's mandate and push back against gender equality resistance. United Nations 2.0 and UN-Women 2.0 can serve as powerful catalysts for boosting United Nations-wide innovation and implementation capacity, including in agencies' support to the work of their governing bodies. However, fulfilling this goal requires greater trust, increased capacities, and more resources at all levels – towards a more coherent, coordinated, and efficient UNDS focused on delivering the SDGs.

20. Stressing that agencies should be ready to go beyond the 'how' to the 'what ifs' and the need for more focus on foresight, the Executive Director of UNOPS reflected that the Covid-19 pandemic had come as a surprise to many, even though it was part of several foresight exercises. The Summit of the Future would provide an opportunity to address policy and financing gaps, as well as implementation gaps and make the United Nations more resilient to unexpected crises. Despite adequate funding and policy reforms, the bankability of projects was being undermined by a lack of capacity and technical assistance. Conversations about what has worked and

aligning project implementation with SDGs could go a long way to address the capacity gap. Executive Boards could also take the lead on topics that could not be addressed by a single agency, such as sustainable energy and food-systems transition. Discussions among Executive Boards would contribute to concrete inter-agency collaboration on these issues, building on the recommendations in the JIU report.

21. The UNDP Administrator highlighted that agencies could improve their support to governing bodies through more efficient information flows between the Chief Executives and Executive Boards, and by improving the quality and user-friendliness of information. The Administrator emphasized the importance of sharing the vast amount of information and insights collected by UNDP – for example through its Human Development Report, Future Trends Report and Report on Small Islands Digital States – to support Board members in fulfilling their oversight and governance functions. Noting the capacity constraints that Board members face, he highlighted the importance of optimizing the frequency of interactions between management and Boards. The Administrator emphasized the critical role the Boards play in protecting the transparency and accountability of the United Nations governance system.

22. Reflecting on the importance of collaboration, the Executive Director of UNICEF emphasized programme effectiveness and leadership. Alignment among agencies stemmed from the strong support of governing bodies. Agencies that had aligned programming documents with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) and ECOSOC could further enhance inter-agency collaboration. She explained that future programme effectiveness involves sharing burdens effectively. The UNICEF Executive Director went on to state that when the system produces mainstreaming guidance, and the Executive Boards recognize its importance, the United Nations system could programme more effectively. Positive examples of this approach included the System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity and the United Nations Youth Strategy. Because of their Executive Boards' support, United Nations agencies were doing incredible work. Resource gaps remained, but the upcoming funding compact could help United Nations agencies to address those issues.

23. Expressing his appreciation for the opportunity to discuss these issues with the Executive Board through the governance review, the Deputy Executive Director of WFP noted that this process – owned by Member States – had triggered much internal reflection about transparency and openness. Transparency required trust instead of fear of repercussions for putting sensitive issues on the table. Informal meetings with the Board could contribute to information asymmetry among Board Members because not all Members were able to attend. Fewer, but more strategic, engagements supported by the right information, would go a long way to address asymmetries. Board guidance was required for agencies to understand the top priorities and what should be de-prioritized in a tighter funding environment.

24. During an interactive discussion between Member States and the Principals of the United Nations entities, delegations raised the following points:

- Effective UNDS governance not only depended on oversight but on the ability to identify needs. Executive Boards should be equipped to guide agencies in fulfilling their mandates. Asymmetries and capacity gaps should be addressed in order to avoid undermining the principle of equality under the pretext of efficiency.
- Practical actions to avoid duplication included aligning agendas on key focus areas and enhanced communications. In addition, continued support to the Resident Coordinator system was critical for bringing these results to the community level. Through improved efficacy and regularity of assessments and reviews, Executive Boards would continue to support improved delivery.

- The Board appreciated the JIU review and looked forward to deliberating on the response to the JIU report – an opportunity to enhance coordination and ensure that governance and oversight structures remained fit-for-purpose. The 2024 JMB was aligned with the process of self-reflection stemming from WFP’s governance review and the JIU assessment. Learning and adopting good practices from across the United Nations were fundamental. This conversation was just one component of a deeper reflection on the system through the QCPR. Board Members recommended the creation of a working group to deliberate on JIU recommendations and voiced their support for this process.
- Member States found it challenging to stay abreast of many activities and ensure robust, streamlined governance. There was optimism that JIU recommendations would result in clear, risk-informed governance processes aligned with broader United Nations reform. Board Members acknowledged their role in providing harmonized governance to support the difficult changes agencies needed to make. Any governance failure would have severe repercussions for public confidence in the United Nations, and therefore for funding and delivery of SDGs. They also acknowledged the urgency with which governance needed to evolve, given the significant needs worldwide.
- It was encouraging that agencies were ready to work together with their Boards. Interactions such as these made multilateralism more visible and demonstrated its effectiveness. Building solidarity and trust would also necessitate taking into account the asymmetries between countries.
- With humanitarian needs increasing, it would be fundamental to ensure that efficient and strategic governing bodies held United Nations agencies accountable. There was agreement on the need for further reflection on better and more fit-for-purpose engagements – not more reporting. Board Members welcomed further opportunities to discuss these important topics, towards a more coherent multilateral system that can deliver more with less.
- Promoting multilateralism would ultimately depend on open dialogue and inclusive spaces among governing bodies. Members asked how the JIU assessment could be used to enhance coordination, and whether agencies’ experiences with United Nations reform could be shared with governing bodies to improve their governance.

25. In response, the Executive Director of UNICEF expressed that this was a challenging time for many communities around the world. United Nations agencies could only respond to this level of need by working together. Boards would be critical to this work, and their support and trust were very much appreciated. The trust placed in agencies by their Boards contributed to their effective oversight. The Executive Director of UNFPA appreciated the Board’s role as a conduit for programme delivery. Integrated governance and working at the nexus of humanitarianism and peacebuilding was critical – especially as resources continued to shrink. Localization and delivering through local organizations were promising solutions, and the Board’s oversight was appreciated to ensure accountability. Together, agencies and their Boards should ensure that communities’ needs would not be politicized.

26. Highlighting the importance of risks and assurance, the Deputy Executive Director of WFP stressed that robust governance systems ultimately enabled agencies to deliver assistance where it was most needed. Operating in complex environments presented risks: agencies needed their Boards’ support in understanding and sharing these risks. He recommended that partnerships should not be structured from headquarters but should be delivery-focused and tailored to each country’s context. These partnerships might also include partners from outside the United Nations system. The Executive Director of UNOPS underscored the importance of proper risk

management while delivering in contexts where there was not a significant United Nations presence. It was impressive that agencies stayed and delivered in these contexts, protecting people in difficult situations. The discussion needed to focus on what was learned in these contexts and on the problems undermining the humanitarian-peacebuilding-development nexus. This dimension of risk required more open discussion across United Nations agencies.

27. Highlighting the importance of agencies' partnerships with their Boards, the Executive Director of UN-Women detailed these relationships' immense value to United Nations agencies. Along with its partners, UN-Women stood ready to act on the Board's recommendations for improving governance. The entity supported all opportunities to make the Executive Boards more effective. Amid many challenges for women and girls worldwide, UN-Women would act on the Board's guidance to deliver to the highest standards. The interactive session concluded with the UNDP Administrator's reminder that United Nations personnel often work in extremely difficult contexts, putting their lives in danger in the line of duty. He reminded participants that the discussions held today had very real implications all over the world. The risk management work United Nations agencies and their Boards had been engaging in had yielded very real impacts on communities worldwide.

28. The Vice President of the UNICEF Executive Board expressed his deep gratitude to all present for participating in this important forum. Strengthening multilateralism would be more important than ever in the years to come. Recapping the day's discussion, he stressed that Executive Boards were crucial for the effective and efficient operation of United Nations agencies, guiding them towards individual and system-wide results, and moving towards a more modern, future-oriented United Nations. Reviews of governance and oversight had played a crucial role; the JIU report would be at the centre of discussions going forward. Along with a renewed commitment to multilateralism among United Nations entities, he reiterated the need for balanced engagement. Discussions on more harmonized, data-driven, and efficient engagement between United Nations agencies and governing bodies had been positive. The upcoming Summit of the Future would be another opportunity for continued multilateral engagement around critical issues facing the development community.

29. The President of the UN-Women Executive Board concluded the session by highlighting the importance of the JIU review and WFP governance assessment. It would be important to share recommendations identified in the assessments of different Executive Boards. Best practices identified in one assessment could be shared to increase the efficacy of all Boards. Capacity building and periodic informal sessions would be critical to enhance new Board Members' understanding of governing bodies' functions. This would facilitate equitable and inclusive participation among all Members. Active participation in the Summit of the Future would be particularly essential to ensure that the Board's priorities were reflected in its outcomes. Integration of these outcomes into organizational oversight bodies' plans and strategies would likewise be fundamental for better governance and effective action. Several interventions had concerned the need to improve communication in order to convey the governing bodies' important roles to all United Nations Member States, the public and other stakeholders. The discussion had underscored the importance of maintaining open, systematic dialogue to keep everyone informed and ensure that valuable feedback was utilized. Member States and agencies would need to listen to each other in order to understand where communication bottlenecks lie.

30. In streamlining governance within United Nations organizations, women and girls – comprising half the world's population – could not be overlooked. In addition to women and girls, the focus on people with disabilities and older persons also

needed to continue, since these groups are at the core of development. Working together, it would be possible to face and overcome the challenges that lie ahead, giving priority to human survival.

31. The session was formally closed by the President of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Executive Board, who thanked all in attendance for their participation, and UNFPA for coordinating the meeting. He concluded by underlining the importance of the reflections offered during the JMB in the lead-up to the Summit of the Future and beyond.

