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UNFPA – Annual report of the Executive Director

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Report on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit in 2012

Report of the Executive Director

Summary

　　In line with General Assembly resolution 59/267, this report provides a synopsis of UNFPA management responses to the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) in 15 reports and notes,and draws attention to specific recommendations directed to the legislative organs of the United Nations system organizations. The present report focuses on the 15 JIU reports and notes relevant to UNFPA, including eight issued in 2012 and seven carried over from 2011. Of the total 120 recommendationsissued, 92 were relevant to UNFPA, of which74recommendations were addressed to UNFPA management and 18to the legislative organs. The present report provides UNFPA management responses to the relevant recommendations, and includes an update of the implementation status of recommendations contained in reports issued by the JIU in 2010 and 2011. The present report was prepared in a format jointly developed with UNDP.

Elements of a decision

　　The Executive Board may wish to take note of the present report, especially those aspects of the JIU reports that have particular relevance to the work of UNFPA.

Please recycle

I.   Overview of Joint Inspection Unit reports and notes

1.   The present report provides a summary of UNFPA management responses to recommendationsissued by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU),included in 15 reports and notes, which are relevant to UNFPA.The present documentincludesthe recommendations that are directed to the UNFPA governing body. The JIU reports and notes[1] covered in the present report include eight reports or notes issued in 2012 and seven carried over from 2011. These are:

(a)   The role of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and Resident Coordinators: A benchmarking framework for coherence and integration within the United Nations system(JIU/REP/2009/9);

(b)   Inter-agency staff mobility and work/life balance in the organizations of the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2010/8);

(c)   Procurement reforms in the United Nations system (JIU/NOTE/2011/1);

(d)   Multilingualism in the United Nations system organizations: Status of implementation(JIU/REP/2011/4);

(e)   The investigation function in the United Nations system(JIU/REP/2011/7);

(f)   Information and communication technology (ICT) governance in the United Nations system organizations(JIU/REP/2011/9);

(g)   Staff-management relations within the United Nations(JIU/REP/2011/10);

(h)   The management of sick leave in the United Nations system(JIU/REP/2012/2);

(i)   Staff recruitment in United Nations system organizations: A comparative analysis and benchmarking framework-- overview(JIU/REP/2012/4);

(j)   Flexible working arrangements in the United Nations system organizations (JIU/NOTE/2012/4);

(k)   Review of individual consultancies in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2012/5);

(l)   Enterprise resource planning systems in United Nations system organizations (JIU/REP/2012/8);

(m)   Lump-sum payments in lieu of entitlements (JIU/REP/2012/9);

(n)   Financing for humanitarian operations in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2012/11);

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[1]The full listing of JIU reports and notes is available at:https://www.unjiu.org/en/reports-notes/Pages/reports.aspx.

(o)   Strategic planning in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2012/12).

II.   Synopsis and review of relevant Joint Inspection Unit reports and recommendations

2.   The management responses to the relevant recommendations in the 15JIU reports and notes, including the recommendations for consideration by the legislative body, are provided below. Annex 1 to the present report provides a statistical summary of reports and notes that are subject to the present reporting;annex 2 and annex 3 provide information on the implementation status of recommendations issued in 2011 and 2010 respectively;annex 4 contains an overview of the recommendations relevant to UNFPA and directed to the governing body of UNFPA,and the management responses; and annex 5 outlines the topics of relevance for UNFPA in the JIU work programmefor 2013. Due to word-count limitations, annexes 4 and 5 are available separately on the UNFPA website.

A.   The role of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and Resident Coordinators: A benchmarking framework for coherence andintegration within the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2009/9)

3.   The review examined the roles of theSpecial Representatives of the Secretary-General and Resident Coordinators in thecontext of the coherence and integration process of the United Nations system. It identified current barriers to the achievement of coherence and integration and proposed18 benchmarks that can be adopted to address these obstacles.In addition, the JIU issued one recommendation directed tothe legislative organs for adopting the benchmarking framework to guide and measure efforts towards a more efficient and effective organization,and better serve countryneeds.

4.   UNFPA welcomes the recommendation and supports the18 benchmarks. While a number of actions were taken to adopt the benchmarksover the past years, a need for additional clarity on the mechanisms proposed to implement each benchmark,as well as system-wide issues related to their implementation wereraised. The latter pertain in particular to: benchmark 13, recommending that the "one leader" at thecountry level beentrusted with the necessary authority and be held accountable to the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) for the successful implementation of the "one plan";benchmark 14 on adequate resources needed to enable the representatives of the United Nations system (for example, Resident Coordinators, Special Representatives of the Secretary-General)to perform their coordination responsibilities effectively;and benchmark 15 on a results-based approach to planning, implementationand reporting on the "one plan".

B. Inter-agency staff mobility and work/life balance in the organizations of the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2010/8)

5.   The review assessed the policies and mechanisms regulating staff mobility and work/life balancefrom a system-wide perspective, and provided recommendations for harmonizing and facilitating inter-agency staff mobility and work/life balance across the United Nations system. The review acknowledged the considerable differences among organizations and their mobility policies as a challenge to promoting inter-agency mobility, and stressed the need for improved dialogue between staff and management to further improve humanresources management policies, including concerning staff mobility. The JIU drew attention to the potential legal implications of using two different legal instruments for the purpose of staff mobility and stressed a need to reach consensus on the use of one approach across the system. The review also identified the need for meaningful indicators and relevant data on inter-agency mobility necessary for planning, monitoring and measuring the achievements of mobility practices and initiatives.

6.   The reviewrecommendedthat organizations urgently addressthe harmonization of business practices to facilitate inter-agency mobility and encouraged "one common system staff". The review noted the need for betterintegration of the concept of mobility into a common system cultureand proactive actions to promote opportunities for inter-agency initiativesaimed at advancement of staff mobility. Recommendations were mainly addressed to the CEB for action.The reviewfurthersuggestedthat staff health considerationsarean integral part of staff mobility policies and that the medical services play an important role in human resources management, including decision-making processes regarding staff mobility and work/life balance programmes.

7.   Of the 10 recommendations issued, four arepertinent to UNFPA:recommendations 4, 5 and 10pertain tothe Executive Director; and recommendation 9pertains tothe Executive Board.

8.   UNFPA shares the view that staff mobility and work/life balance are two major components of a human resources management strategy, and supports, in principle, the need for the development and implementation of a meaningful mobility scheme across the system. UNFPA agrees that a review of the internal staff mobility and/or staff rotation schemes from a system-wide perspective will be helpful to make these supportive, consistent and coherent with inter-agency mobility initiatives (recommendation 4). UNFPA has been addressing this through thework oftheinternal group on talent management and planning for succession and the UNFPA career fitness programme. UNFPA supports the need to review relevant internal rules of the organizationsto ensure that all vacant posts are equally open to all staff members, including those working in other system organizations.UNFPA considers this a cross-cutting issue that requires commitments of reciprocity by all organizations of the United Nations system (recommendation 5).UNFPA also considers it important to conduct regular assessments of the performance of work/life balance programmes and a cost-benefit analysis of such programmes (recommendation 10).

9.   Regarding recommendation 9, directed to legislative bodies, UNFPA welcomes theemphasis on the need for host country authoritiesto play a critical role in facilitating access to local labour markets for the spouses of international staff members, through, inter alia, the granting of work permits or similar arrangements. UNFPA notes that the creation of such opportunities within the United Nations organizations can be addressed through the legislative bodies of the dual career and mobility programme.

C.   Procurement reforms in the United Nations system (JIU/NOTE/2011/1)

10.   The review assessed the efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and coherence of procurement policies, practices and reform initiatives adopted by the United Nations system organizations. It offered potential good practices and areas for improvement on: procurement strategy development; supply chain management; sustainable procurement; procurement from developing countries; ethics management; vendor sanctioning and procurement challenge mechanisms; a common coding system; risk management; monitoring, reporting and performance management; and inter-agency coordination and collaboration.

11.   The JIU note includes18 recommendations, tobe considered as benchmarks or good practices, of which 16 are relevant to UNFPA and for consideration by the Executive Director. The recommendations suggest measures to strengthen the procurement function with regard to: (a) the structure and availability of resources, including the number and professional qualifications of procurement staff; (b) procurement information systems, with integrated data collection and monitoring capabilities; (c)procurement strategy and planning; (d) a policy on environmentallyfriendly procurement and on ethics issues such as financial disclosure, post-employment restrictions, and vendor complaint management; (e)monitoring, performance evaluation and knowledge-sharing; and (f) greater use of inter-agency collaborative approaches. UNFPA welcomes the recommendations and is working on theirimplementation, most of which have beenintegrated into UNFPA procurement processes.

D.   Multilingualism in the United Nations system organizations: Status of implementation (JIU/REP/2011/4)

12.   The objective of the review was to assess the implementation of multilingualism across the system, as a follow-up to the 2002 JIU report on the same subject. The review evaluated key dimensions of multilingualism, analysingits rationale and policy implications and identifying measures to foster its effective implementation, in connection with different aspects of language services and their utilization in the United Nations organizations. The JIU found a formal policy on multilingualism in place in only a few organizations. The JIU also noted an ongoing trend towards use of one language, English, over the other five official languages; and lack of effective monitoring and controls by the executive heads of the organizations regarding the parity of the six official languages and the equal treatment

of the working languages, including the use of additional languages in specific duty stations. Other problems identified were theshortage of professional language staff and the lack of succession planning in view of the upcoming retirement of many of them. The role of the organizational coordinators of multilingualism and their involvement in strategic planning on multilingualism was highlighted. The JIU further emphasized that the effective implementation of multilingualism requires a collective and shared responsibility approach that encompasses many different stakeholders, including Member States, executive heads of organizations, conference- and language-related services, training institutions and public information departments.

13.   Of the 15 recommendations issued, 12 are of relevance to UNFPA, of which eight (recommendations 1,3,4,5,7,9,11 and 14) are directed to the Executive Director; and four (recommendations 6,8,12 and 15) are directed to the Executive Board.

14.   UNFPA remains committed to multilingualismand largely supports thereview's recommendations, while pointing tothe challenges related to their implementation in view of competing priorities within a restrictedbudget, for example, the appointment of a senior official for coordinatingstrategic planning of the multilingualism process, management of anetwork of focal points and regular reporting to the legislative bodies on the implementation progress (recommendation 1). Regarding the current imbalance in the use of working languages, including among senior managers (recommendation 3), all UNFPA staff members have access to the language courses offered at the United Nations headquartersand atthe country level,where offered, as well as to onlinecourses in all six United Nations official languages. In addition, UNFPA allows senior managers to have lessons and tutoring in the language(s) of the country or region they work in. These efforts also correspond toassessments of user needs and further facilitate strategies to enhance the implementation of multilingualism at all levels (recommendation 4). Furthermore, UNFPA is of the view that an assessment of the effectiveness of current incentives (for example, language allowance and accelerated increment) to enable multilingualism would be beneficial.

15.   UNFPA agrees, in principle, with recommendations 5 and6, which address different aspects of conference and language servicesmanagement,since the organization outsourcesthese,as needed, to external institutions or to the United Nations language and translation services.Should theCEB establish an inter-agency body on multilingualism, UNFPA will participate in the hope of benefiting from better coordination and resource-sharing.

16.   Important UNFPA documentation, including Executive Board documents, major reports, press releases, some feature stories, fact sheets and videos, as well as web-based information is available in all official languages. However, ensuring that thefull range of materials is available in all official and working languagesof the organization would require additional human and financial resources(recommendation 7).UNFPA is in compliance with language requirements related to its recruitment process (recommendation

11) and continues its efforts to ensure that its most important services, activities and related materials are available in different languages, including the local language(s) of beneficiaries, and on multilingual websites (recommendations 12 and 14).

17.   UNFPA supports recommendation 8, which calls on the legislative bodies to ensurethe necessary resource allocation needed "to achieve effective succession planning and dispense targeted training to candidates to language examinations", and is ready for further consultations under the Executive Board's guidance. UNFPA ability to comply with recommendation 15 is dependent on the approach taken by legislative bodies to "endorse, including through budgetary channels, the arrangements required to ensure effective compliance in delivering the organizations' core work in all official and working languages", and the guidance provided by the Executive Board.

E.   The investigation function in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2011/7)

18.   Thereviewfollowed   up   on   two   previous   JIU   reports   on   oversight, namely,JIU/REP/2006/2 on oversight lacunae in the United Nations system and JIU/REP/2010/5 on the review of the audit function of the United Nations system.The reviewaimed at determining progress made in strengthening the investigation function in UnitedNations organizations over the past decade. Itrevealed that internal oversight entities remain operationally dependent on executiveheads, as the heads of oversight entities are not free to decide on their own budgetaryrequirements, nor are they able to exercise total control over their human resources.The review found that in a number of organizations, responsibility forinvestigations   is   fragmented,   resulting   in   some   investigations beingconductedby non-professional investigators. The review also found variations in manuals and methods of investigations, and a lack of consistent and effective follow-through on investigation results.

19.   The review included recommendations designed to foster system-widecoherence and harmonization and called for consolidating all investigation activities into theinternal oversight service of each organization; professionalizing the investigationfunction through the recruitment of qualified staff and exemption frommobility and rotation schemes within the same organization; centralizing the follow-throughof investigation results and periodic review of the adequacy of resourcesand staffing ofthe investigation function; and institutionalizing thecooperation of oversight bodies and the exchange of best practices in theinvestigation field. The JIU further recommended to the Secretary-General to establish,under the auspices of the CEB, an inter-agency task force to develop options for the consideration of legislative bodies, for the establishment,by the end of 2013, ofasingle consolidated United Nations system investigation unit. This would benefit smallagencies that lack investigative capacity; harmonize business practices and lead tocommon standards and procedures in conducting investigations; resolveindependence issues; result in hiring only professional investigators; providestaff promotion opportunities; and address fragmentation issues.

20. Of theeight recommendations included in the report, sevenare pertinent to UNFPA: two are addressed to the Executive Board (recommendations 4 and 6);fourto the Executive Director (recommendations 1,2,3 and7);and one (recommendation 5) to the head of internal oversight/investigation unit.UNFPA supports most of the recommendations as a way to promote better accountability, higher scrutiny and harmonization among the United Nations oversight and investigation entities.

21. All investigative work, previously divided between the Division for Human Resources, the Division for Management Services and the Division for Oversight Services (DOS), is in the process of being consolidated in DOS. Adequacy of resources is under consideration (recommendation1). The recruitment of investigation staff is conducted in accordance with staff regulations and rules, on the basis of merit, professional qualifications and experience, without undue influence from management (recommendation 2). Investigation staff is not subject to mobility; and inter-agency transfer and/or secondment of investigative staffis encouraged and has taken place (recommendation 3). Investigations are initiated without the Executive Director's prior approval (recommendation 4).

22. Regarding recommendation 5, calling the Conference of International Investigators (CII) to establish a subgroupfor the United Nations system similar to that in the audit community (UN-RIAS)[2],it should be recalled that the structure of the CII is not comparable to that of the UN-RIAS. UNFPA nevertheless supports the creation of a United Nations dedicated investigation group and DOS is actively participating in its creation.

23. Regarding recommendation 6 on the continuous review of the adequacy of resources and staffing for the investigation function, UNFPA is committed to this,in keeping with the recommendations of itsAudit Advisory Committee and on the basis of the UNFPA budget cycle. Regarding the implementation and follow-upof investigation reports, theChief of the Office of the Executive Director is the focal point atUNFPA (recommendation 7).

F. Information and communication technology (ICT) governance in the United Nations system organizations (JIU/REP/2011/9)

24. The review aimed atpromoting effective ICT governance through a comparative analysis of the different ICT governance frameworks, practices and processes in the various United Nations system organizations with a view to identifying best practices and lessons learned. The 11 recommendations included in the report soughtto strengthen ICT governance frameworks regarding the role, composition and effectiveness of the organizations' ICT governance committee or equivalent; the organizations' ICT strategy, its alignment with business needs and implementation; the role and responsibilities of the

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[2]Representatives of the Internal Audit Services of the United Nations organizations.

Chief Information Officer or equivalent; ICT risk management; ICT performance and oversight; and ICT investments.

25. UNFPA was recognized in the report as one of the United Nations system organizations that met most of the criteria of an effective ICT governance framework, such as:a unique ICT governance mechanism; established reporting line and functions of the Chief ICT Officer to promote strong leadership over the ICT governance infrastructure; significant efforts and progressmade over past years towards centralizing the ICT structure to improve ICT mechanisms; periodic review of the ICT strategy, to ensure its alignment withthe organization's business priorities; andmonitoring of ICT costs to facilitate strategic decision-making, cost-effectiveness, accountability and transparency.

26. Of the 11recommendations issued, 10are directed toUNFPA, nineof which are directed to the Executive Director (recommendations 1,2,3,4,5,7,8,9 and 10),and oneis for consideration by the Executive Board (recommendation 6). In addition, the JIU requestedthe Secretary-General, in his capacity as the CEB Chairman, to streamline the ICT Network of the High-level Committee on Management (HLCM) by identifying and focusing on common issues and providing clear guidance on coordination and cooperation among the organizations (recommendation 11).

27. UNFPA welcomed the recommendations and made significant efforts in 2012to address them. Specifically, thisincludedthe establishment of theUNFPA ICT Board, composed of the most senior business managers from all major organizational units, and chaired by the Deputy Executive Director (Management) (recommendation 1); the operationalization of the ICT Board (recommendation 2); ongoing work to ensure regular review and evaluation of the ICT Board's performance to improveits effectiveness and facilitate improvement (recommendation 3); the reporting line ofthe Chief of the UNFPA Management Information Services Branch(MIS) to the appropriate senior level to ensure adequate responsibilities, authority and access to executive management (recommendation4); the corporate ICT strategy developed in support of the organization's strategic plan and regularly reviewed and updated to ensure its alignment with the organization's business needs and priorities (recommendations 5 and 7);mechanisms established to monitorthe implementation of the ICT strategy, and allow regular reporting to the ICT Governance Committee (recommendation 8); regular cost-effectiveness analysis of ICT-related expenditures (recommendation 9); and the planned incorporation of regular post-implementation reviews of major ICT investments and projects as part of the ICT Board's responsibilities, starting from 2013 (recommendation 10).

28. The JIU encouraged the Executive Boardto "request the executive heads to present the corporate ICT strategies to Member States for their information and support". UNFPA agrees and awaits the guidanceof the Executive Board (recommendation 6).

G.   Staff-management relations within the United Nations (JIU/REP/2011/10)

29.   The review, which was prepared following suggestions by representatives of managementand staff, identified the conditions that would further promote staff-managementrelations (SMR) at all levels in the Secretariat, at all duty stations and in theseparately administered organs, funds and programmes, tribunals, United NationsUniversity, peace operations and political missions on the basis of the principles andtexts agreed by the Member States.The review revealed that the implementation of SMR principles, as intendedperestablished legal and political requirements,is problematic within the various entities and across all levelsof staff-management interactions. The review noted that effective SMR requires, fromboth sides, the willingness to participate in discussions in good faith and aproperunderstanding of the issues at stake, the latter point being tied closely to training onSMR. The JIU observed that in a number of joint bodies,including the Staff-Management Committee (formerly known as the Staff-Management Coordinating Committee) which is the only Secretariat-wide staff-managementnegotiating body, some agreements on human resources-related matterswere achieved through negotiations, indicating the existence of collectivebargaining. The review proposed the explicit acknowledgement of this concept for thejoint negotiation bodies and called upon the General Assembly to recognize theapplication to United Nations staff of the relevant International Labour Organization instruments in this regard. Italso suggested a series of concrete improvements in the Staff-Management Committee.

30.   Of the six recommendations included in the report, four(recommendations 2,3,4 and 6) are addressed to the Executive Director. UNFPA complies with most of the suggested measures, particularly with respect to the official status of staff representative bodies and elected staff representatives. The UNFPA Staff Council Representative is provided access to all available communication means (recommendation 2). Regarding recommendation 3, which suggests that the Secretary-General's administrative instruction, ST/AI/293 and A/C.5/50/64, should be fully implemented and considered as minimal provisions until the revised administrative provisions are released upon agreement at the Staff Council, it is noted that implementation of this recommendation is problematic as ST/AI/293 is not applicabletothe separately administered funds and programmes, and therefore UNFPA operates under a different instruction, namely UNDP/ADM/2001/15,dated11 April 2001. Steps were undertaken to incorporate SMR-related matters in the training and orientation programmes provided to UNFPA newly appointed managers (recommendation 4); and to ensureongoing consultations with staff representatives at the senior management level, including meetings with the Division for Human Resources (recommendation 6).

H.   Management of sick leave in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2012/2)

31.   The report reviewed the manner in which international organizations record, manage and report sick leave and proposed improvements that would enable United Nations system organizations to clarify, improve and harmonize system-wide rules and regulations pertaining to sick leave, prevent abuse and, more importantly, exercise dutyofcare with

regard to the health and safety of staff. The review revealed that due to the lack of data collection systems in the majority of the organizations, and because the data is not comparable due to different methodologies used, it was neither possible to perform a system-wide comparison of sick leave absenteeism,norto state with certainty the direct/indirect cost of staff illness for the United Nations system organizations.Furthermore, some organizations do not record sick leave data for all staff, temporary staff, consultants and independent contractors.

32.   The report findings suggested that maintaining a healthy work environment is sine qua non for reducing medical absenteeism (sick leave). To address this, executive heads are requested to provide legislative bodies with comprehensive annual or biennial reports on sick leave, incorporating statistical and financial data, as well as measures taken to reduce sick leave absenteeism. Executive heads are further requested to design and implement a return-to-work policy for those staff members who were on extended sick leave absence. The report recommended that newly created occupational health services should be required to focus on the medical aspects of sick leave management, including a compilation of relevant statistics and analysis. The report further recommended that managers and supervisors be trained on how to address the needs of staff members with medical issues that might lead to significant absences.

33.   Of the seven recommendations issued, six are of direct relevance to UNFPA; of these, recommendations 1,2,3,4 and 7 are directed to the Executive Director; while recommendation 5 is directed to the Executive Board for consideration.

34.   Regarding recommendation 1, while UNFPA welcomes increasing attention to the collection of sick leave data, it remains of the opinion that copies of sick leave certificates and reports (where applicable) be submitted only in cases of sickness for 20 days or longer, as the benefits of recording sick leave of shorterlengthwould not justify redesigning currentUNFPA processes and systems and the corresponding increased administrative overhead. Regarding medical services, UNFPA continues to rely on the United Nations Medical Services, which is more cost-effective than creating its own medical services.

35.   UNFPA supports the establishment of a set of common information requirements (recommendation 2)and the inclusion of such information in sick leave certificates and reportsfor periods of extended sick leave (recommendation 3). While UNFPA agrees that overall implementation of these recommendations would enhance sick leave controls and compliance, it notes that the feasibility of standardizing suchinformation and recording processes may depend on each organization's capacity;the availability ofresources;and the need to avoid excessive administrative costs.UNFPA supports the establishment ofan absence management module, which includes sick leave, for staff with supervisory responsibilities (recommendation 4) and notes that a number of steps were undertaken toaddress this, for example, guidance on using the sickleave management system, and training on the related leave policies provided to all staff on a regular basis. The

development of an online (or similar) training module for all organizations governed by the same leave provisions would advance effectiveness of monitoring staff absences, including sick leave.

36.   UNFPA recognizes the importance of bringing employees with medical conditions back to work as a primary objective of every occupational health service and supports the implementation of a return-to-work policy. UNFPA however suggests its development with system-wide parameters (recommendation 7).Regarding recommendation5, UNFPA welcomes reporting to legislative bodies on sick leave management and the steps undertaken to reduce sick leave absenteeism, and will continue to be guided by the Executive Board.

I.   Staff recruitment in United Nations system organizations: A comparative analysis and benchmarking framework --overview (JIU/REP/2012/4)

37.   The reviewassessed the efficiency, transparency and fairness in the process of staff recruitment in view of the key principles of geographical representation, gender balance and equality of official working languages in United Nations system organizations. The review provideda comparative analysis of staff recruitment processes across the system and presentedcommonalities, differences and good practices identified in current recruitment policies, rules and procedures.

38.   UNFPA welcomes the review's findings and supports the15 benchmarks and four recommendations made to promote more efficient, transparent and fair recruitment processes across the United Nations system organizations, as well asto improve harmonization of recruitment practices. UNFPA is already working towards applying thesebenchmarks in its recruitment and monitoring processes. Work is underway towards developingan effective human resources management framework designed to ensure alignment of recruitment processeswith organizational needs and effectiveness in attracting competent candidates with diverse profiles (benchmark 2); institutionalizing workforce planning (benchmark 5); establishing rosters of candidates for specific functions and categories of occupational groups (benchmark 11); reducing recruitment time to 120 days (benchmark 13); and embedding equitable geographical distribution of staff employment in the organizational culture, regulations and recruitment practices (benchmark 15).

39.   In conducting staff recruitment, UNFPA complies with:the Charter of the United Nations,UNFPA staff regulations and rules and pertinent resolutions of legislative bodies (benchmark 1). UNFPAis guided by detailed written procedures of allrecruitment steps (benchmarks 3 and 10); respects the principles of delegation of authority and accountability (benchmark 4); and uses competency frameworks in recruitment and provides training tohuman resources officers, hiring managers and members of interview panels (benchmarks 6 and 7). UNFPA is governed bywritten procedures regardingjob openings, vacancy postings and pre-screening (benchmark 8); followsharmonized requirements for minimum educational qualifications, work experience and languageskills for professional and general

staff in support tointer-agency mobility and harmonized practices (benchmark 9); and uses an electronic recruitment system to ensure recruitment transparency, effectiveness and efficiency (benchmark 12). UNFPA closely monitors the principles of staff geographical representation, parity of official/working languages and gender balance. UNFPA is fully compliant with the requirement of gender parity (benchmark 14): as of December 2012, the UNFPA workforce is 53 per cent female and 47 per cent male.Furthermore, atthe senior level, two Assistant Secretary-Generalpositions, as well as 45 per cent of the senior management positions (D2 level) are held by female staff members.

40. Of the four recommendations issued, three are relevant to UNFPA, recommendation1 is directed to the Executive Board and recommendations 2 and 5 to the Executive Director. The organization is committed to continuous implementation of all recommendations and already fulfills two of them, namely,regular reporting to the Executive Board on delegated authority for recruitment and related accountability mechanism (recommendation 2); and posting time for vacancies ofno more than 30 days (recommendation 3).

J. Flexible working arrangements in the United Nations system organizations (JIU/NOTE/2012/4)

41. Thereview examined the existence of policies on flexible working arrangements (FWAs) and sought to review their pitfalls and good practices. It determinedhow often various types of FWAs were actually used and by what percentage of staff and if other FWAs could be adapted to the United Nations system. The findings identifieda discrepancy in definitions and interpretations of FWAs by various organizations; poor staff knowledge and understanding of the various types of FWAs; lack of management support for FWAs;and issues regarding the use of the clocking systems for monitoring FWAs and the management of staff on FWAs in a results-based organization.

42. Theonly recommendation issuedand relevant to UNFPA is directed to the Executive Director. UNFPA generally agrees with the findings of theJIU note and supports the principle espoused therein that the United Nations system should address the inconsistency in the approaches taken across the system in the application of FWAs. However, the case made in the note that system-wide harmonized policies be adopted, in which maximum flexibility is offered within very broad parameters and specificstobe negotiated between individual staff and supervisors, rather than detailed guidanceprovided in the policies, may pose practical challenges.TheFWAs in place in organizations within the common systemare customized to suit their different business models and modes of operation(admittedly with varying degrees of success). Successful implementation of highlyflexible arrangements requires appropriate supporting systems such as robust performance management focused on delivery of outputs. The organizations within the common system are at varying stages of evolution in this respect.

43. It is arguable that within a broad, system-wide policy, organizations could, in practice, approve the FWAs with which they agree, and notthose which they consider impractical. However, there is a risk of an increase in staff disputes (although FWAs are considered neither a benefit nor a right) if an organization believes that certain elements of the policy would not work in its context and does not subscribe to them, butthe system-wide policy allows those elements.If a system-wide policy is established, it is also foreseeable that advisory services requested from human resources units would increase. Perhaps creating an appropriate forum (for example,a community of practice) where different organizations could share information about their current arrangements, good practices, issues encountered and mitigation actions would serve better.

K. Review of individual consultancies in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2012/5)

44. The comparative review assessedtheuse of individual consultants in the United Nations system by analysing relevant policies and practices. While the review focused on the use of individual consultancies, it also includeda broader analysis of non-staff contractual modalities and confirmed that consultants and other non-staff categories of personnel are sometimes used interchangeably. The reviewrevealedthat the overuse of non-staff contracts and the lack of overarching criteria for choosing between staff andnon-staff contract modalities expose the organizations to several risks, including the reputational risk of not being aligned with the best international labour practices. Furthermore, the reviewfoundthat the consultancy policies and practices of organizations are quite diverse, and it calledfor increased system-wide attention to harmonize them, taking into account international labour principlesand good practices. The review also stressed the need for more effective monitoring and oversight by secretariats and legislative bodies of the use of individual consultants.

45. The report included13 recommendations, of which 12 are relevant to UNFPA. Of these, 11 are directed to the Executive Director (recommendations 1 to11); and one is for consideration by the Executive Board (recommendation 12).UNFPA agrees with many of thereview's findings and conclusions. Based on their applicability and relevance for the organization, UNFPA will consider the suggestions and recommendations in the ongoing review of its human resources policies for consultancies and associated business processes.

L. Enterprise resource planning systems in United Nations system organizations (JIU/REP/2012/8)

46. The review aimed at helping organizations improve their enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems, and at identifying opportunities to share, harmonize and standardize ERP operations in order to maximize synergies across the United Nations system. The review foundthat, in most organizations, ERP systems are highly customized, which negatively impacts usability and accessibility. Theyaregenerally implemented over budget and

schedule; and the benefits, cost savings and cost avoidance related to ERP are not quantitatively measured. Additionally, each organization measured ERP costs differently, making it difficult to assess the total cost of ownership of ERP systems andgiving suppliers a disproportionate amount of negotiating power in the ERP market.

47.   The review suggested that the organizations should effectively re-engineer their business processes and limit ERP customization, taking the opportunity of upgrades to revisit their business processes. Organizations should define a realistic costplan, including the total cost of ERP ownership, as well as contingencies. The efforts of HLCM to harmonize business processes across the United Nations system should be speeded up, and HLCM should establish a task force to identify system-wide opportunities for ERP collaboration. As ERP projects represent major investments, governing bodies should exercise their monitoring and oversight role on the respective ERP projects on an ongoing basis, including with regard to implementation, maintenance and growth policy, cost-efficiency, and achievement of the overall objectives of the projects.

48.   Ofthe four recommendations issued, three are of direct relevance to UNFPA: two are addressed tothe Executive Director (recommendations 1 and 3);and oneto the Executive Board (recommendation 2).

49.   Regarding theERP training for staff members and appropriate resource allocation for training needs, UNFPA provides online training to all staff; basic courses are a mandatory requirement for ERP use (recommendation 1). UNFPA supports the view that governing bodies should exercise their monitoring and oversight role regarding ERP projects (recommendation 2). Regarding recommendation 3, UNFPA conducts regular monitoring of the implementation of its ERP-related projectsthroughout their lifecycle; the results are regularly reported to/through individual project boards. Overall, ERP governance is the responsibility of the executive sponsors group, the ICTDirectors of the ERP partners, and the change control board.

M.   Lump-sum payments in lieu of entitlements (JIU/REP/2012/9)

50.   The system-wide review analysed whether the current and possible future applicationof the lump-sum option for selected entitlements reduced overhead costs and provided greater flexibility for staff without any significant financial implications. The review suggested the need to harmonize existing lump-sum procedures and to establish acceptable and consistent calculation criteria and procedural rules, particularly to ensure fairness to staff working in different United Nations system organizations, and especially those in the same duty station.

51.   The focus of the review was on the use of the lump-sum option in two main areas: home leave travel and other statutory travel and shipment of personal effects in addition to reviewing the payment of the daily subsistence allowance (DSA) on official travel as the

latter is granted in advance in lieu of reimbursement for actual expenses incurred and thus can be considered a lump-sum amount. The findings suggested that some organizations do not strictly adhere to the DSA allocation; for instance, in cases when accommodation is provided, the DSA is reduced by 50 per cent instead of the applicable percentage; others require documentary proof of paid accommodation, which is contrary to the lump-sum principle.

52.   The report containedfive recommendations, four of which are relevant to UNFPA: two are directed to the Executive Director (recommendations 2 and 5) and two to the Executive Board (recommendation 1 and 3).

53.   UNFPA fully complies with the International Civil Service Commission DSA rates, which include reducing the DSA by the relevant percentage for meals and incidental expenses when accommodation is provided (recommendation 2); the organization provides staff members with a lump-sum to cover all travel-related expenses, including the cost of an air ticket, when a staff member and his/her eligible family members undertake home leave travel(recommendation 5). UNFPA supports recommendations 1 (reporting on the use of the lump-sum option for home leave) and 3 (suspension of additional DSA) and considers that they will be addressedin close consultation with the Executive Board.

N.   Financing for humanitarian operations in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2012/11)

54.   The review covered the entire universe of funding mechanisms and sources of humanitarian operations within the United Nations system. While a number of reform initiatives and new mechanisms have led to improvements, the review identified a number of gaps and duplications, principally deriving from the co-mingling of development aid and humanitarian funding as well as the blurred demarcation between humanitarian assistance and the use of military assets for the protection of civilians. The review's key recommendations aim at providing a holistic governance framework to more strategically plan financing humanitarian operations among the organizations of the United Nations system, and better link short-term financing with longer-term financing, thus bringing about improved efficiency and accountability of humanitarian financing for emergency response and transition to early recovery and to reconstruction.

55.   The eight recommendations included in the report focus on improving humanitarian financing for the United Nations system, inter alia, to: (a) better mobilize adequate resources on a timely, predictable and sustainable basis and meet the holistic needs of affected countries and funding for core humanitarian coordination through the regular budget in particular for the services of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs; (b) increase transparency and accountability in the use of military assets; (c)define common procedures for humanitarian assistance and recovery conferences to ensure adequate funding for under-funded disaster assistance; and (d) under the General Assembly's mandate, develop a set of good humanitarianfunding principles based on soft

earmarking and a participatory approach, taking into account the experience gained through the good humanitarian donorship(GHD) initiative, as well as adopt a capacity-building policy to assist disaster-affected countries in developing national disaster insurance schemes.

56.   Of the five recommendations pertinent to UNFPA, one is addressed to the Executive Board (recommendation 3); and four to the Executive Director (recommendations 1, 5, 7 and 8).

57.   UNFPA agrees that the consolidated appeals process should be developed as an instrument to generate a strategic financial planning framework to meet all resource requirements, and enable all humanitarian actors to participate in the commonly agreed evidence-based needs assessment (recommendation 1). UNFPA also supports the introduction of system-wide general guidelines on the establishment, replenishment and provision of agency-specific emergency and recovery funds and reserves to extend quick and timely assistance, and to bridge the gap between the commitment and mobilization of the required funds (recommendation 5). Furthermore, UNFPA agrees that the development of harmonized humanitarian portfolio databases at the country level would be helpful (recommendation 7). UNFPA supports the establishment of a joint management unit at the country level to ensure cost-effective, accountable and systematic management and harmonization of processes, reporting data formats and methodologies on humanitarian and related development projects; however, UNFPA is mindful of limited budgetary resources (recommendation 8).This structure could be best located within the United Nations country team secretariat, under the direct supervision of the Resident Coordinator or Humanitarian Coordinator, with responsibility formonitoring and evaluation of humanitarian projects.

O.   Strategic planning in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2012/12)

58.   The system-wide review examined the different approaches and tools employed for strategic planning in the United Nations systemorganizations. After reviewing the origins and evolution of their strategic planning, the review identified two approaches that should be reconciled: (a) corporate strategic plans to respond to the specificities of each organization's mandate with a shorter timehorizon; and (b) high-level issue-based systemic strategic frameworks to respond to broad long-running overarching mandates, including: gender equality, human rights, humanitarian assistance, health, environment, sustainable development, peace-building and peacekeeping, among others.

59.   The report recommended action by executive heads and Member States to: (a) foster coherence and synergies in their activities and avoid overlap and duplication of organizations' services to Member States through system-wide strategic planning frameworks; (b) ensure the implementation of the long-term goals and core mandates of the United Nations system entities emanating from the 2005 World Summit Outcome, as per General Assembly resolution 60/1, as well as those resulting from global conferences; and

(c) develop such frameworks by theme and by sector, designed to govern cross-cutting cooperation and coordination to achieve the aims of operational activities for development, articulated by the quadrennial comprehensive policy review process, and the Millennium Development Goals and their successor goals.

60.   The report also recommendedstrengthening the United Nations Strategic Planning Network; establishing a peer review process, under CEB aegis, to develop common methodologies and business practices among organizations;harmonizing terminology; strengthening results-based management;improving monitoring, evaluation and reporting tools; harmonizingmodalities of planning cycles coupled with a system-wide coherent vision; and buildingin-house substantive and administrative capacity of the organizations to achieve corporate objectives.

61.   Of the five recommendations issued, four are relevant to UNFPA: two are directed to the Executive Director (recommendations 1 and 3); and two are for consideration by the Executive Board (recommendations 4 and 5).

62.   UNFPA welcomes the review. However,it notes that the findingsare mainly focused on the type of activities performed by the United Nations Secretariat.Few references are offered concerning development activities of the United Nations funds and programmes, and the challenges associated with UNFPA work in particular. For example, the importance of national priorities and country programme development, aligned with national planning cycles, and the challenges that this poses for the strategic planning cycles are barely mentioned. Nor does the analysis focus on the inherent challenges of corporate-driven strategic plans and nationally-driven country programmes.Also, further analysis is required regarding the challenges associated with voluntary funding. As a result, the review's conclusions and recommendations are more geared towards a regular, normative planning process, and bring limited valueto UNFPA.

III.   Status of UNFPA implementation of Joint Inspection Unit recommendations issued during 2010-2011

63.   In accordance with United Nations General Assembly resolution 60/258 requesting the JIU to enhance dialogue with participating organizations and thereby strengthen the implementation of its recommendations,the JIU requested information on the follow-up to recommendations issued in 2011 and 2010. Annexes 2 and 3of the present report provide an update of the implementation status of these recommendations.

64.   Of the 49 recommendations issued by the JIU in 2011 that are relevant to and accepted by UNFPA, 44 recommendations (90 per cent) had been implemented by the end of 2012. Similarly, of the 51 recommendations issued in 2010 and relevant to UNFPA, 48 recommendations (94 per cent)were implemented by the end of 2012.Furthermore, as indicated in annexes2 and 3,some recommendations issued in 2011 and 2010, after review

in December 2012, were deemed not relevant in view ofthe current UNFPA organizational structure or operations modality and were therefore indicated as such. Further details are provided in the web-based JIU follow-up system accessible to Member States.

65. UNFPA is committed to following up on the implementation of the remaining recommendations relevant to UNFPA and to continuing its contribution to the various JIU initiatives inthe future.

Annex 1
**Summary of reports/notes issued by JIU in 2012 and reports carried overfrom
earlier years**∗

Report symbol	Report name	Total recommendations	Relevant to UNFPA	Recommendations directed to the Executive Board
JIU/REP/2009/9	The role of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General and Resident Coordinators: A benchmarking framework for coherence and integration within the United Nations system	1	1	1
JIU/REP/2010/8	Inter-agency staff mobility and work/life balance in the organizations of the United Nations system	10	4	1
JIU/NOTE/2011/1	Procurement reforms in the United Nations system	18	16	0
JIU/REP/2011/4	Multilingualism in the United Nations system organizations: Status of implementation	15	12	4
JIU/REP/2011/7	The investigation function in the United Nations system	8	7	2
JIU/REP/2011/9	Information and communication technology (ICT) governance in the United Nations system organizations	11	10	1
JIU/REP/2011/10	Staff-management relations within the United Nations	6	4	0
JIU/REP/2012/2	The management of sick leave in the United Nations system	7	6	1

∗JIU reports issued in 2012, but not relevant to UNFPA
JIU/REP/2012/1: Review of management and administration in the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.
JIU/REP/2012/3: Evaluation of the UN-Oceans.
JIU/REP/2012/6: Review of management,administration and decentralization in the World Health Organization, Part I.
JIU/REP/2012/7: Review of management,administration and decentralization in the World Health Organization, Part II.
JIU report, for UNFPA information
JIU/REP/2012/10: Staff-management relations in the specialized agencies and the United Nations common system.

JIU/REP/2012/4	Staff recruitment in the United Nations system organizations	4	3	1
JIU/NOTE/2012/4	Flexible working arrangements in the United Nations system organizations	5	1	0
JIU/REP/2012/5	Review of individual consultancies in the United Nations system	13	12	1
JIU/REP/2012/8	Enterprise resource planning systems in United Nations system organizations	4	3	1
JIU/REP/2012/9	Lump-sum payments in lieu of entitlements	5	4	2
JIU/REP/2012/11	Financing for humanitarian operations in the United Nations system	8	5	1
JIU/REP/2012/12	Strategic planning in the United Nations system	5	4	2
Total for 2012		**120**	**92**	**18**

Annex2
Status of Implementation of JIU recommendations issued in 2011*

Report symbol	Report name	Total number of recommendations	Relevant to UNFPA	Implemented or ongoing	Partially implemented/to be started
JIU/REP/2011/1	Medical service in the United Nations system	7	0**	0	0
JIU/NOTE/2011/1	Procurement reforms in the United Nations system	18	16	16	0
JIU/REP/2011/3	South-South and triangular cooperation in the United Nations system	12	1**	0	1
JIU/REP/2011/4	Multilingualism in the United Nations system organizations	15	8**	8	4
JIU/REP/2011/5	Accountability frameworks in the United Nations	7	5		
JIU/REP/2011/6	Business continuity in the United Nations system	9	7		
JIU/REP/2011/7	The investigation function in the United Nations system	8	7	7	0
JIU/REP/2011/9	Information and communication technology (ICT) governance in the United Nations system organizations	11	10	10	0
JIU/REP/2011/10	Staff -management relations within the United Nations	6	4	3	0
Total for 2011		**93**	**49**	**44**	**5**

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*JIU reports relevant to UNFPA, carried over from 2011 and issued in 2012:
JIU/REP/2011/10: Staff-management relations within the United Nations.
JIU/REP/2011/9: Information and communication technology (ICT) governance in the United Nations system organizations.
JIU/REP/2011/7: The investigation function in the United Nations system.
JIU/REP/2011/4: Multilingualism in the United Nations system organizations: Status of implementation.
JIU reports issued in 2011, not relevant to UNFPA:
JIU/REP/2011/11: Evaluation of the scope, organization, effectiveness and approach of the work of the United Nations in mine action.

JIU/REP/2011/8: Review of management and administration in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

JIU/REP/2011/2: Transparency in the selection and appointment of senior managers in the United Nations secretariat.

**The number of recommendations reported herein was revised after the review of implementation progress as of December 2012 (details are available in the web-based JIU follow-up system).

Annex 3
Implementation status of relevant JIU recommendations issued in 2010∗

Report symbol	Report name	Total number of recommendations	Relevant to UNFPA	Implemented or ongoing	Partially implemented/ to be started
JIU/REP/2010/1	Environmental profile of the United Nations system organizations	12	3**	3	0
JIU/REP/2010/2	Review of travel arrangements within the United Nations system	9	7	7	0
JIU/REP/2010/3	Ethics in the United Nations system	17	9**	7	2
JIU/REP/2010/4	Review of enterprise risk management in the United Nations system	3	2	2	0
JIU/REP/2010/5	The audit function in the United Nations system	18	14	14	0
JIU/REP/2010/6	Preparedness of United Nations system organizations for the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS)	3	3	3	0
JIU/REP/2010/7	Policies and procedures for the administration of trust funds in the United Nations system organizations	13	9	9	0
JIU/REP/2010/8	Inter-agency staff mobility and work/life balance in the organizations of the United Nations	10	4	3	1
Totalfor 2010		**85**	**51**	**48**	**3**

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∗**JIU reports issued in 2010, but not relevant to UNFPA**
JIU/REP/2010/9: United Nations corporate partnership: The role and functioning of the Global Compact.
JIU/REP/2010/10: Review of management and administration in the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNDOC).
**The number of recommendations reported herein was revised after the review of implementation progress as of December 2012 (details are available in the web-based JIU follow-up system).

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