



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

Distr.: General  
31 October 2022  
Original: English

**First regular session 2023**

30 January to 3 February 2023, New York

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

**Organizational matters**

**Report of the second regular session 2022  
(29 August to 1 September 2022, New York)**

Contents

| <i>Chapter</i>   | <i>Page</i> |
|--|-------------|
| I. Organizational matters .....  | 2           |
| <i>UNDP segment</i>  |             |
| Interactive dialogue with the UNDP Administrator .....   | 2           |
| II. Structured funding dialogue .....  | 5           |
| III. Country programme and related matters .....   | 6           |
| <i>UNFPA segment</i>   |             |
| Statement by the UNFPA Executive Director .....  | 7           |
| IV. Structured funding dialogue .....  | 10          |
| V. Country programme and related matters .....   | 11          |
| <i>UNOPS segment</i>   |             |
| VI. Statement by the UNOPS Acting Executive Director and financial, budgetary and administrative matters ..... | 12          |
| <i>Joint segment</i>   |             |
| VII. Update on oversight matters .....   | 14          |
| VIII. Field visits .....   | 16          |



## I. Organizational matters

1. The second regular session 2022 of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS was held in person at United Nations Headquarters from 29 August to 1 September 2022.
2. The Executive Board adopted the agenda and workplan for its second regular session 2022 (DP/2022/L.3), as orally amended, and approved the report of the annual session 2022 (DP/2022/26). The Board took note of the draft annual workplan for 2023 (DP/2022/CRP.2) and approved the tentative workplan for the first regular session 2023.
3. Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at the second regular session 2022 appeared in document DP/2023/3, which was available on the [Executive Board website](#).
4. The Executive Board agreed in decision 2022/23 to the following schedule for sessions of the Executive Board in 2023:

|                         |                               |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| First regular session:  | 30 January to 3 February 2023 |
| Annual session:         | 5 to 9 June 2023              |
| Second regular session: | 28 August to 2 September 2023 |

### Statement by the President of the Board

5. In her opening remarks, the President of the Board said the second regular session offered an opportunity for Board members to navigate out of the difficult issues discussed during the annual session 2022. The world continued to see the damaging effects of climate change and the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic while conflicts continued to drive up the price of food and fuel, disrupting global supply chains. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 seemed ever more difficult. The international community and the United Nations system had to show their resolve and determination through greater collaboration and coordination at all levels, building on their comparative advantages to ensure the greatest impact with limited resources. There was no time to waste on fragmented interventions and competitions. Investments in innovation had to go hand-in-hand with proper risk management and due diligence. Bold actions and ideas were urgently needed. The President drew attention to the main issues to be discussed at the session, including: (a) financing and funding the United Nations development system, commitments to the United Nations funding compact, the importance of the structured funding dialogues, and how to stimulate innovative partnerships to achieve the Goals; (b) continuing to address the failures of UNOPS raised at the annual session, building on the discussions of the working group mandated at the annual session 2022, which required continuous, swift and decisive action, to rebuild the crumbled trust; and (c) strengthening the oversight mechanisms of all New York-based organizations to ensure they were able to deliver on their mandates.

## UNDP segment

### Interactive dialogue with the UNDP Administrator

6. In his opening remarks ([available on the UNDP website](#)), the UNDP Administrator unpacked the unprecedented multiple, complex crises that were impacting and setting back years of hard earned development gains across the globe. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, numerous conflicts, devastated economies, famine and starvation, debt accumulation, and the continuing crisis of faith in multilateralism. All of these defined the global ‘uncertainty complex’. Against that backdrop, he stressed that decisions made today would determine the lives of current and future generations – and those decisions related to finance would be among the most significant. Sufficient, well-aligned public and private finance, steered by the right international and national policies, he asserted, would largely determine whether humanity lived in peace and prosperity or insecurity and constant want. He underscored, in that vein, how all UNDP efforts to advance human development and security depended on the right international and national financing

decisions. He in turn described how UNDP was propelling major shifts in those financing choices across the broader landscape of development finance, both public and private. Despite the menace of multiple crises, he stressed that the international community could – through the right financing and policy choices – meet the daunting challenges and succeed. Money per se was not the issue but rather where money was spent and by whom, and who benefitted or not. Otherwise, a focus on short-term gains and simply resolving crises – without investing in development – would continue to undercut multilateral commitments and imperil trust and goodwill on a global scale. Finance had to work towards inclusive and sustainable development that minimized uncertainty and risks. UNDP, he stated, was already demonstrating practical solutions to rethink and reorient billions of dollars and put development back on the right track.

7. Members of the Bureau of the Board underscored that ongoing global crises were a reminder of how crucial the United Nations development system and UNDP were for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. They called for a renewed commitment by all Member States to multilateralism and to the United Nations development system in accordance with respect for national ownership and nationally defined priorities. They encouraged all Member States to double their efforts to support the United Nations development system at the political, financial and programmatic levels to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of United Nations interventions. They also strongly encouraged UNDP to continue to innovate, build partnerships, and find new opportunities for joint approaches with other United Nations organizations. They stressed that international development was not only a comprehensive part of a common approach to supporting countries in crisis but was also the right path to address root causes, undertake structural transformation, and prevent additional crises. They called on Member States to jointly work towards improving the quality and quantity of development funding, especially flexible regular (core) resources, to ensure UNDP was able to fulfil its mandate, respond to programme countries priorities, and support the achievement of the Goals.

8. A cross-regional group of developing countries stressed that while current geopolitical challenges were daunting, there were opportunities to unite in international solidarity. They reiterated the call made at the annual session 2022 for Member States not to turn their backs on collective action in the United Nations development system, which played a key role in supporting countries in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. They said there was a dire need for the United Nations development system to have predictable, adequate and sustainable funding and, in that regard, they reiterated their concern with the trend of cuts in regular resources. They stressed that prioritization of emergency responses should not come at the expense of immediate and long-term development investments, which would undermine the ability to address the root causes of crisis. Furthermore, humanitarian responses should not be financed by defunding development. They reemphasized that the mandate set by the General Assembly in the 2020 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (resolution 75/233) had to be fully implemented by the United Nations system and the Executive Board had to play its oversight and guidance role to ensure full compliance. The group welcomed the assessment by the independent Office of Audit and Investigation on its independence and noted the high international standards of transparency of UNDP. In closing, they underscored that: (a) poverty eradication had to remain the overarching focus of the United Nations development system; (b) basic principles such as national ownership and leadership were critically important for the delivery of effective results; and (c) there should be no one-size-fits-all approach, and each programme had to reflect the realities and needs of programme countries.

9. A regional group of countries reiterated the central role UNDP and the United Nations development system played in efforts to achieve the Goals and made a strong appeal for appropriate and predictable levels of funding in line with commitments made by Member States, including the urgent need to balance regular and other (non-core) resources. They stressed that financing had to be the top priority of development and multilateral cooperation discussions, focused on making the world sustainable, equitable, just, peaceful and secure. They expressed grave concern with trends to cut development financing and stressed that joint action was

necessary to ensure the quantity and quality of funding for development. This was especially true for flexible regular resources funding, which allowed UNDP and the United Nations development system to address the self-identified priorities of programme countries focused on the interconnected priorities of people and planet.

10. Another regional group of countries also expressed concern with the trends in cuts to regular funding and the continued failure to meet funding commitments. They stressed that divergence of funding to specific issues directly impacted the resources available for countries in Africa and the broader development system. They underscored that developed countries had a responsibility to provide sufficient and predictable funding to the United Nations development system and UNDP. They also stressed that UNDP and other United Nations system organizations should ensure funds were not diverted in a reactionary manner to audit and oversight functions and activities, but rather they should find the optimal balance between oversight and development.

11. In other interventions, delegations drew attention to the catalytic impact of UNDP interventions across sectors, including the humanitarian-development-peace continuum and in areas such as digitalization. They reiterated their appreciation for UNDP support to the United Nations system-wide response to the COVID-19 pandemic and called on UNDP to continue to invest in prevention and resilience and in human security-focused development assessments. Delegations called on UNDP to ensure its engagement with private sector industries met with the highest transparency, accountability and oversight standards.

12. In response, the Administrator began by underscoring that UNDP was deeply committed to working with Governments as part of their national development processes through a partnership grounded in decades-long trust, assisting national policymaking to address vulnerabilities and investment priorities. This included working with a host of United Nations and other partners to support some 80 countries in designing integrated national financing frameworks, thereby aiming at influencing around \$500 billion in public finance related to the Sustainable Development Goals and other related international agreements, over the course of the Strategic Plan, 2022-2025. He stated that UNDP was one of the most present institutions globally able to connect development decision-making at the country level – through the national sovereignty lens – with national commitments at the global level. In this spirit, he appealed to Member States to convey to their capitals the political, economic and diplomatic significance of development finance and the urgent measures needed to address the world's multiple intersecting crises. Likewise, he appealed to Member States, under the agreed principles of United Nations reform, to adhere to their commitments under the United Nations funding compact, while underscoring that UNDP had delivered on the majority of its funding compact-related commitments, despite the major impact of the reform on UNDP.

13. The Administrator highlighted the close engagement of UNDP, as a major partner to Governments, with the private sector, as a multilateral, publicly financed institution that invests in local and global public goods. He stressed that while UNDP engagement with the private sector was necessary, any move in the direction of direct funding from the private sector would require careful interpretation and interrogation. UNDP, he highlighted, actively sought to engage with the Board in a fully transparent manner and had proven its commitment to approach oversight issues – including evaluation, ethics, and environmental and social compliance – with the utmost seriousness, regularly reviewing its policies and making amendments as needed, in response to recommendations, while reducing overhead costs as much as possible for greater gains and efficiencies. The Administrator also spoke of the UNDP 'portfolio logic' that had grown out of its climate promise and that made it possible to interconnect individual climate projects at the national level, bring about closer communication among countries, and elevate the nationally determined contributions to guide national development investments. He drew attention to the local-level nature and capacity of much of UNDP work, from the least developed countries to the small island developing States, where innovative approaches were being implemented. The UNDP accelerator labs played a central role in those efforts in some 92 countries, supporting the

creation of start-up businesses. Similarly, in 2022 UNDP had established a sustainable energy hub to leverage those assets and help millions of people gain access to clean and affordable electricity – an aspirational goal of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2022-2025.

## II. Structured funding dialogue

14. The Director, Bureau of External Relations and Advocacy, UNDP, presented the report on the structured dialogue on financing the results of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 and 2022-2025 (DP/2022/28) and the Executive Secretary, United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) presented the annual review of the financial situation of UNCDF, 2021 (DP/2022/29).

15. A group of delegations said global crises were placing severe pressure on the UNDP ability to implement its normative and programmatic work. Adequate resourcing, with flexible and predictable multi-year funding, was key to supporting the effectiveness of the United Nations development system, as were commitments made by Member States under the United Nations funding compact and the allocation and promotion of flexible regular (core) resources. The group: (a) underscored that expanding and diversifying the regular resources contributor base had to be an important UNDP objective, including by further engaging partners such as the private sector, the international financial institutions, and government partners not members of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and by improving the visibility and accountability of regular resources funding; (b) expressed concern that the downward trend in regular resources could jeopardize the ability of UNDP to deliver on its mandate; (c) stressed that pooled and thematic funding allowed for better instrumentalization of comparative advantages and could serve as an accelerator for the implementation of United Nations reform and, in that light, expressed concern at the recent decline in pooled funds and joint programmes; (d) recognized UNDP work in South-South and triangular cooperation and encouraged UNDP to continue cooperate with other United Nations organizations, especially the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation; and (e) expressed appreciation for UNDP efforts in collaborating with UNFPA, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) to improve the structured funding dialogues by strengthening reporting and engaging the executive boards.

16. In other interventions, UNDP efforts to develop its financing structure and unlock resources to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals were welcome, especially its portfolio approach at the country level and its work on the integrated national financing frameworks. That said, there was continuing concern with the drop in regular resources, which it was noted could jeopardize the ability of UNDP to deliver its mandate, both in crisis and long-term development settings. A more balanced approach to managing the multilateral system and multilateral institutions such as UNDP was urgent. UNDP was urged to broaden its regular resources donor base and Member States to adhere to their shared commitments and responsibilities in that regard.

17. On the UNCDF front, delegations underscored the Fund's catalytic investment model focused on least developed countries and potential key role in achieving the Goals. They commended UNCDF for substantially increasing its resources, proof of its success and relevance in addressing development challenges across the globe and at the local level. They regretted however that a large portion of UNCDF resources consisted of earmarked funding while its regular resources base remained below the agreed objective. They strongly encouraged Member States to increase their regular resources contributions to UNCDF and for UNCDF to continue to broaden its donor base for regular resources.

18. In response, the Director, Bureau of External Relations and Advocacy, UNDP, said that to broaden its regular resources donor base UNDP had to be able to showcase that Member States funding of UNDP was an effective and efficient way to invest in the United Nations. UNDP was closely engaged with a broad range of DAC and non-DAC members and seeking ways to leverage funding at the country level through government cost-sharing for its global and portfolio work.

UNDP was also engaged with the international financial institutions to bring partners together in a strategic effort through the integrated national financing frameworks. Similarly, UNDP continued to work with the private sector and had proven successful in leveraging public investments for development and climate finance – an approach, she suggested, that UNDP should explore further in lieu of exerting its energy seeking private funding for UNDP, which came with risks and liabilities. While recognizing concern expressed over the decline in pooled funding, she highlighted that though it continued to use the modality in humanitarian settings UNDP had handed over their management in many cases but continued to work with partners when pooled funding was a good option.

19. The Executive Secretary, UNCDF, said UNCDF was working across the globe to broaden its regular resources donor base, including through outreach to new and emerging partner Governments and by communicating about the value of investing in UNCDF and its unique value proposition as a catalytic financing entity in the United Nations development system. More broadly, the Executive Secretary highlighted UNCDF approaches to mobilizing other (non-core) resources from the private sector and its continued efforts to focus on innovative finance approaches to mobilize financing for the Sustainable Development Goals in least developed countries, including from local and global capital markets and through, for example, the use of guarantees and bond structures. The Blue Peace Bond was mentioned as one example under development to raise capital for sustainable infrastructure investments. UNCDF also engaged with the international financial institutions and other partners to support development and de-risking of pipelines of bankable sustainable development investments. In terms of its direct loans, it was clarified that UNCDF traditionally focused on the last mile, with loan sizes generally below \$500,000, a good size investment for local-level development, prepping the terrain for local banks and the international financial institutions. UNCDF also aimed to expand its capital markets work to explore more sizable transactions in countries.

20. The Executive Board adopted decision 2022/18 on the UNDP structured funding dialogue.

### **III. Country programmes and related matters**

21. In her statement to the Board, the Associate Administrator, UNDP, provided an overview of the country programme documents for Ghana, Niger, South Sudan, Zambia, India, Mongolia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Kyrgyzstan, Montenegro, the Republic of Moldova and Tajikistan; the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Guinea, Myanmar and Ukraine; and the second one-year extensions of the country programmes for Burkina Faso, Chad and the Sudan.

22. In turn, the regional directors for Africa, Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Arab States, and Asia and the Pacific provided details from the regional perspective.

23. The Executive Board approved, in accordance with its decision 2014/7, the country programme document for Ghana (DP/DCP/GHA/4), Niger (DP/DCP/NER/4), South Sudan (DP/DCP/SSD/4), Zambia (DP/DCP/ZMB/4), India (DP/DCP/IND/4), Mongolia (DP/DCP/MNG/4), Pakistan (DP/DCP/PAK/4), Sri Lanka (DP/DCP/LKA/4), Egypt (DP/DCP/EGY/3), Jordan (DP/DCP/JOR/4), Libya (DP/DCP/LBY/4), Saudi Arabia (DP/DCP/SAU/4), Yemen (DP/DCP/YEM/3), Kyrgyzstan (DP/DCP/KGZ/4), Montenegro (DP/DCP/MNE/3), Republic of Moldova (DP/DCP/MDA/4) and Tajikistan (DP/DCP/TAJ/4).

24. The Executive Board took note of the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Guinea, Myanmar and Ukraine, as approved by the Administrator, as presented in document DP/2022/30.

25. The Executive Board approved the second one-year extensions of the country programmes for Burkina Faso, Chad and the Sudan, as presented in document DP/2022/30.

## UNFPA segment

### Statement by the UNFPA Executive Director

26. In her opening remarks ([on the UNFPA website](#)), the UNFPA Executive Director highlighted that the world population set to reach 8 billion in 2022 was a call to action to come together to tackle multiple intersecting challenges – through people-centred population policies with sexual and reproductive health and rights at their core. Guided by the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action, UNFPA would continue to help countries address demographic challenges by enhancing rights and choices and investing in the capacity of all people. In that spirit, UNFPA would continue to push to achieve the three transformative results and stay true to its promise to provide hope to the “10-year-old girl”. The 30-year review of the ICPD, coming up in 2024, offers opportunities to raise awareness and to accelerate progress. In its work to achieve those goals, in the small island developing States (SIDS), for instance, UNFPA aimed to increase resilience to present and future challenges. More broadly, UNFPA urges countries to recognize the importance of age-appropriate life skills and comprehensive sexuality education, helping to prevent gender inequalities, reduce HIV, early and unintended pregnancies and harmful practices, and seize the demographic dividend.

27. The Executive Director stressed UNFPA was operating extensively in humanitarian settings, working in cooperation with other United Nations organizations in over 60 countries, including in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Ukraine and Somalia, expanding its capacity to deliver integrated sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence services. UNFPA was committed to the highest standards of accountability and transparency, as well as zero tolerance for wrongdoing, while deepening its investment in oversight functions (notably audit and investigation, evaluation and ethics), with full respect for their independence. UNFPA also takes seriously its accountability to the women, girls and communities it serves, to deliver on the promise of Cairo and on the Sustainable Development Goals.

28. UNFPA had its strongest financial performance to date in 2021, reaching \$1.464 billion, well above the strategic plan targets. The funding situation, however, remained mixed: while other (non-core) resources had seen steady growth, core funding did not increase. The imbalance between regular (core) and other resources was of growing concern and could jeopardize the ability of UNFPA to deliver on the three transformative results and the ICPD Programme of Action. She appealed to Member States to step up contributions to regular resources and to meet their commitments under the United Nations funding compact.

29. The Regional Director, West and Central Africa, noted in that region high fertility rates were continuing to drive rapid population growth. Girls’ empowerment programmes, supported by UNFPA and Governments, contributed to reductions in the prevalence of child marriage. Such investments in women and young people remained critical in helping countries reap the demographic dividend. She spoke of numerous overlapping crises in the Sahel and how the climate crisis was threatening progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Appealing to partners to step up support for the Sahel to safeguard development gains and empower young people, she underlined the importance of UNFPA work in the region on female genital mutilation on reintegrating former combatants into their communities, and on innovative financing.

30. Members of the Bureau of the Board commended UNFPA for its efforts to accelerate the three transformative results. They welcomed the healthy financial situation, with contributions to regular and other resources reaching above the strategic plan 2022-2025 targets, as well as the scaling up of innovations and partnerships with other United Nations organizations, international financial institutions, the European Commission and private-sector contributors. They recognized the organization’s progress, achieving or surpassing most output targets in the strategic plan, while maintaining the positive trend in ensuring gender equality and women's empowerment. They commended UNFPA activities through its thematic funds and joint programmes and for increasing humanitarian action. They welcomed its successful strategic outreach and mobilization

efforts that has increased the number of donors to regular resources. They concurred that the decline in regular funding was a challenge, along with the ever-growing humanitarian needs. They encouraged UNFPA to continue to expand its donor base and agreed to support austerity measures, if needed, to ensure financial sustainability. They encouraged Member States to continue to support UNFPA, including through flexible funding.

31. A group of delegations said countries required reliable data to meet the needs of diverse populations, ensure individuals realized their full potential, leave no woman or girl behind, and said that access to comprehensive sexuality education, contraception and safe abortion are key to save and improve millions of lives. The group expressed support for an integration of a climate lens into UNFPA programming to make women and girls adaptable and resilient to future threats and uncertainties. A strong gender focus was needed in climate adaptation and advocacy strategies, as well as for reducing the negative impacts on the climate and environment of UNFPA programmatic activities. The group sought clarity on the capacity of UNFPA in climate and the environment efforts and how these were mainstreamed into programming.

32. In individual interventions, delegations welcomed UNFPA leveraging of United Nations development system reform in contributing to the achievement of the Goals, and UNFPA recognition that synergistic action was needed among United Nations organizations and partners, based on their respective comparative advantages, and tailored to self-defined national priorities and the 2020 quadrennial comprehensive policy review. UNFPA had demonstrated exemplary cooperation with other United Nations organizations through joint analysis, joint planning and joint work – a model that should lead the way forward, including in the humanitarian-development-peace continuum.

33. Delegations drew attention to the importance of UNFPA work at the country level – amid the pandemic, rising global poverty and the climate crisis – in improving health care systems, ensuring access to sexual and reproductive health and family planning services, and addressing gender-based violence, including in humanitarian settings and among refugee and displaced populations. They applauded UNFPA work in fragile settings to uplift and empower women and girls, advocate for bodily autonomy, improve access to quality contraception and ensure safe delivery.

34. While the robust financial performance of UNFPA was welcomed, a concern in the decline in regular resources led some delegations to urge UNFPA to continue to motivate donors to increase flexible, predictable regular funding levels and Member States to fulfil their commitments under the United Nations funding compact. They welcomed UNFPA work to further expand and diversify the donor base, including by working with the international financial institutions, the private sector and individual donors, as well as through South-South and triangular cooperation. They highlighted the twofold increase in contributions by developing countries and called on UNFPA, given the funding landscape, to strengthen and differentiate its comparative advantage, including in the humanitarian area, in its discussions with donors. They commended UNFPA promotion of domestic resource mobilization and called for greater efforts to raise the visibility and recognition of Member States' contributions, especially to regular resources and the thematic funds.

35. Delegations expressed support for UNFPA prevention and response to sexual abuse, exploitation and harassment, and encouraged the organization to continue strengthening its culture of 'zero tolerance'. UNFPA should continue to work with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) to promote comprehensive sexuality education based on scientific evidence. They recognized UNFPA advocacy work to counter hate speech and disinformation on the rights of women and other populations, including racism and other forms of discrimination. They commended UNFPA work and policies to promote and ensure the rights of women and girls of African descent, Indigenous peoples and young people. They commended UNFPA work in Africa overall, including on the youth bulge and the demographic dividend, and stressed the need for



increased partnerships in training and capacity development to leverage local expertise and accelerate achievement of the three transformative results.

36. Delegations welcomed the continued support of UNFPA to national censuses through improved data collection to ensure no one is invisible, and its development of reliable demographic statistics. The organization was encouraged to improve its capacity for population data collection and analysis, expand investment in big data collection through innovative means, and increase availability and timeliness of data on key indicators. They encouraged UNFPA to continue to develop its professional expertise, thematic studies and exchanges of useful experiences and practices in addressing low fertility and ageing societies. Transparency and accountability of UNFPA audit, investigation and oversight functions were key, and UNFPA was asked to provide the Board with assurances on its governance risk management and control processes in a timely manner.

37. In response, the Executive Director stressed the UNFPA focus on the three transformative results, and particularly gender-based violence and harmful practices, was grounded in data, including geo-referenced data. That data allowed it to tailor its work to local contexts and support government leadership while engaging with partners skilled to help achieve the three transformative results and work with country-level statistical departments. Global demographics was evolving to become ever more diverse, prompting UNFPA to address the issues of longevity, low fertility, ageing and population decline. In that effort, UNFPA supported centres of excellence for civil registration and vital statistics to help countries promote universal health coverage through a life-course approach that was inclusive and gender-responsive. UNFPA would continue to leverage its thematic funds to achieve those goals while strategically reaching out to new partners and maintaining its strong relationship with existing donors. A strong, flexible regular resources base was nevertheless crucial for the achievement of the three transformative results and for enabling UNFPA to respond to gender-based violence and crisis situations. Meanwhile, UNFPA focused on training staff to respond to the constantly changing, complex development landscape and ensuring the highest international standards of accountability and transparency, including through its independent oversight functions; that included 'zero tolerance' and a strong speak-up culture. UNFPA is committed to working on climate change and had created an interdivisional technical working group to help apply a climate lens to the strategic plan, 2022-2025. At the country level, UNFPA was focused on community-level resilience and planning to face the impacts of climate change, in collaboration with other United Nations organizations; this community-level focus was also central to its humanitarian mandate to create safe spaces for women, girls, youth and the most vulnerable in crisis settings.

38. On its work in comprehensive sexuality education, the Executive Director underscored the importance of giving young people life skills grounded in the principle of bodily autonomy. Preparing young people for present and future challenges and making them agents of change and peacebuilders was central to that effort. Regarding UNFPA work with vulnerable groups, this included supporting people of African descent and Indigenous peoples. Regardless of a country's situation, UNFPA promotes the principle that women have the right to determine their choices and exercise their rights over their sexual and reproductive health.

39. The Deputy Executive Director (Management) noted UNFPA had developed a climate strategy, in line with the United Nations Secretary-General's reform efforts, to reduce its carbon footprint globally. That effort included UNFPA exploring, at the country level, new 'green' premises and shared premises, for example.

40. The Director, Division of Communication and Strategic Partnerships, emphasized that broadening partnerships and diversifying the resource base was central to UNFPA efforts to achieve the three transformative results. Noting that the revenue in the UNFPA thematic funds had increased by 9 per cent during 2020-2021, he stressed the diverse set of thematic funds allowed UNFPA to receive funding, manage them efficiently and deliver results effectively. The thematic funds were valuable because they complemented and strengthened the regular resources

base, allowing UNFPA to do more on the ground. UNFPA was exploring how the private sector could contribute to the thematic funds while it sought to increase individual giving to regular resources.

41. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme) noted the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ICPD Programme of Action in 2024 presented an opportunity for Member States to reflect on achievements and to envision the way forward. She called on Member States to work with UNFPA to accelerate progress against its strategic plan, 2022-2025, focusing on its important normative role. She underscored the need for UNFPA to effectively address gender-based violence across in all country settings, an effort that required the participation of all sectors of government.

#### **IV. Structured funding dialogue**

42. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management), followed by the Director, Division of Communication and Strategic Partnerships, presented the report on the structured funding dialogue, 2021-2022 (DP/FPA/2022/10) in response to General Assembly resolution 75/233 to further improve the functioning and effectiveness of structured dialogues on how to fund the development results agreed in the strategic plans, including through the implementation of the United Nations funding compact commitments.

43. A group of delegations encouraged UNFPA to expand and diversify its regular resources contributor base and pursue a broader, more diversified donor base overall, noting it should focus on further engaging partners such as the private sector, international financial institutions, and government partners that were not members of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) – while strengthening strategic dialogue with potential and present regular resources funders and improving the visibility and accountability of regular resources funding, including at the country level. The group expressed concern that further reductions in regular resources risked weakening the ability of UNFPA to deliver on its mandate and its commitment to transparency and accountability. They underscored that delivery of programmes through joint initiatives and pooled and thematic funding allowed for better instrumentalization of the respective comparative advantages and served as an accelerator for the implementation of United Nations development system reform. In that regard, they expressed concern with the decline in funding for pooled funds and joint programmes. They recognized the potential of South-South and triangular cooperation in accelerating inclusive and effective implementation of the strategic plan, 2022-2025, and the organization's work to accelerate implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. UNFPA was encouraged to continue its work in that regard, especially in cooperation with other United Nations development system entities. They commended UNFPA efforts to continuously improve the structured funding dialogue through strengthened reporting and engagement with the Executive Board.

44. In a separate intervention, a delegation commended UNFPA for exceeding its 2018-2021 revenue targets for regular and other resources and welcomed UNFPA efforts to sustain and diversify its funding base through its strategic resource mobilization campaign. UNFPA was encouraged to provide a more complete picture of resource mobilization for its humanitarian interventions for 2021 as well as details on who was contributing and under what mechanisms. UNFPA was also encouraged to utilize the Executive Board, including through the structured funding dialogues, to set out the comparative advantages of the various flexible funding instruments to support humanitarian delivery, including the emergency fund. Clarity was sought on the specific benefits and added value of each funding mechanism.

45. In response, the UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) appealed to Member States to step up contributions to regular resources, which allowed UNFPA to respond to crises as needed and in a timely manner. UNFPA also sought to expand and diversify its donor base, including through the private sector and individual giving. UNFPA was working to reverse the

decline in contributions to pooled funds in collaboration with other United Nations organizations and appealed to Member States to adhere to their commitments in the United Nations funding compact.

46. The Director, Division of Communication and Strategic Partnerships, welcomed the suggestion to continue the strategic dialogue with key donors and highlighted that UNFPA had developed a strong package of media resources for country offices to use to foster contributions to regular resources. He highlighted that the UNFPA emergency fund was funded through regular resources, which allowed UNFPA to bridge the gap in crisis situations, while the humanitarian trust fund received voluntary contributions as other resources.

47. The Director, Humanitarian Office, noted that because most maternal mortality and gender-based violence cases occurred in humanitarian settings, it was critical that UNFPA enhance its humanitarian intervention capacities. Furthermore, despite the urgent need for care for millions of women affected by gender-based violence, only 20 percent of these needs are funded. The emergency fund and the humanitarian trust fund gave UNFPA the high-quality funding and flexibility to respond to this urgent need. UNFPA uses the emergency fund (funded from regular resources) and the humanitarian trust fund (funded from other resources, and which has the advantage of lower indirect cost recovery compared to bilateral other resources funding). She appealed to Member States to step up contributions to the humanitarian trust fund.

48. The Director, Technical Division, underscored UNFPA had long supported South-South and triangular cooperation at the country level. South-South cooperation was ideal in that it built on existing national expertise, initiatives and solutions and was cost effective. In its strategic plan, 2022-2025, UNFPA posited South-South and triangular cooperation as an accelerator of development progress. UNFPA actively shared its South-South and triangular cooperation lessons and solutions across the United Nations development system, in collaboration with the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation.

49. The Executive Board adopted decision 2022/19 on the UNFPA structured funding dialogue.

## V. Country programmes and related matters

50. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme) presented an overview of the UNFPA country programme documents for Ghana, India, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Morocco, Niger, Pakistan, Republic of Moldova, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Yemen and Zambia; the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Angola, Guinea, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea and Ukraine; the two-year extension of the country programme for Djibouti; and the second one-year extensions of the country programmes for Burkina Faso, Chad, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and Sudan. In turn, the regional directors for Asia and the Pacific; Eastern Europe and Central Asia; East and Southern Africa; West and Central Africa; and the Arab States provided details from their regional perspectives.

51. The Executive Board approved, in accordance with its decision 2014/7, the UNFPA country programme documents for Ghana (DP/FPA/CPD/GHA/8); India (DP/FPA/CPD/IND/10); Jordan (DP/FPA/CPD/JOR/10); Kyrgyzstan (DP/FPA/CPD/KGZ/5); Mongolia (DP/FPA/CPD/MNG/7); Morocco (DP/FPA/CPD/MAR/10); Niger (DP/FPA/CPD/NER/10); Pakistan (DP/FPA/CPD/PAK/10); Republic of Moldova (DP/FPA/CPD/MDA/4); South Sudan (DP/FPA/CPD/SSD/4); Sri Lanka (DP/FPA/CPD/LKA/10); Tajikistan (DP/FPA/CPD/TJK/5); Yemen (DP/FPA/CPD/YEM/6); and Zambia (DP/FPA/CPD/ZMB/9).

52. The Executive Board took note of the first one-year extensions, approved by the UNFPA Executive Director, of the country programmes for Angola, Guinea, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea and Ukraine, and it approved the two-year extension of the country programme for Djibouti and the second one-year extensions of the country programmes for Burkina Faso, Chad, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Sudan, as contained in document DP/FPA/2022/11.

## UNOPS segment

### VI. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

#### Statement by the Acting Executive Director

53. In his opening remarks ([available on the UNOPS website](#)), the UNOPS Acting Executive Director drew attention to UNOPS progress in implementing the 10-point action plan presented at the annual session of the Board in June 2022 and designed to address the reported failures associated with the sustainable investments in infrastructure and innovation (S3i) initiative. The aim of the action plan was to restore trust and ensure such failures never recurred. He indicated that UNOPS had already implemented three of the 10 points. UNOPS had: (a) suspended all S3i investments, consolidated and frozen the operational reserves, and rebalanced its underlying investment portfolio; (b) completed an internal assessment of the independence of its audit and investigation functions, the findings of which were reported to the Board at the present session; (c) developed a timeline to implement all outstanding recommendations of the United Nations Board of Auditors, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), and the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU); and (d) issued requests for proposals for two third-party reviews in response to the Board request that UNOPS provide reviews on oversight for S3i and its internal control systems. He indicated that the multinational audit firm KPMG had been selected to carry out the reviews and had already begun its work. He looked forward to continuing to work with the working group established by the Board at the annual session 2022 to guide UNOPS in its endeavour to address the S3i failures.

54. The Acting Executive Director said that while the third-party reviews were underway UNOPS was acting internally to change its governance and control environment, focused on accountability mechanisms, internal audit and investigation, the ethics function, UNOPS reserves, pricing policy, communication with its partners, its Client Board, and Sustainable Development Goals impact. He stressed that UNOPS continued to take the failures of the S3i initiative extremely seriously and, while doing so, it also continued to help people build better lives and countries achieve peace and sustainable development. Likewise, UNOPS staff on the ground continued to deliver on the principle of leaving no one behind with staunch commitment and a willingness to go the last mile. In that light, the time was right to restate the UNOPS value proposition within the context of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

55. Across the board, delegations welcomed the 10-point action plan, the proposed timeline to implement outstanding recommendations, and steps UNOPS was taking under the leadership of the Acting Executive Director to address the reported failures associated with S3i. But they reiterated their deep concern with the reported misconduct within UNOPS in managing the initiative and in interfering with its internal oversight function. They welcomed the work of the working group established by the Board at the annual session 2022 and encouraged UNOPS to continue to work closely with the working group to set things straight and rebuild trust.

56. Members of the Bureau of the Executive Board stressed the importance of the third-party reviews and the progress UNOPS was making in addressing the issue and implementing Board decision 2022/13. They underscored the complexity of the task, including the long road toward rebuilding trust and accountability – not only in UNOPS but the whole United Nations system. They urged the timely completion of the 10-point action plan, including but not limited to the recovery of funds as guided by the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs, the implementation of all outstanding recommendations by the United Nations Board of Auditors, the ACABQ and the JIU, and the completion of the third party-assessments by KPMG so they could feed into the work of the working group set up by the Board at the annual session 2022. They stressed the need for parallel processes to address structural and cultural inefficiencies within UNOPS, ensuring accountability for perpetrators as a top priority.

57. A group of delegations stressed the role of the Board in guiding UNOPS towards a better future with renewed global credibility and trust and a focus on improving the lives of the world's most vulnerable populations. They would continue to support UNOPS and its staff in their work in continuing to deliver for beneficiaries under very challenging circumstances. They reassured UNOPS staff they were a top priority for the Board and they looked forward to renewing staff motivation and enthusiasm to deliver a new UNOPS mandate worldwide. The delegations were committed to seeking full accountability for what transpired within UNOPS, crucial to restoring its global credibility. UNOPS needed to establish a more transparent business model that left no doubt about its mandate, motivations and commitment to delivering results for its intended beneficiaries. They underscored that future Board decisions regarding UNOPS reserves could only come after full accountability was achieved; the Board would continue to restrict UNOPS reserves to the operational reserve for daily operations only. They called on the Acting Executive Director to ensure the third-party reviews conducted by KPMG were thorough, independent and provided the analysis the Board needed to take future action that would support the best interests of UNOPS. They expected the results of those reviews to be presented to the Board at the earliest possible time to allow for immediate discussion and follow up.

58. Another group of delegations welcomed the new format for the UNOPS annual report and efforts to clarify its contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals. They also welcomed the third-party reviews by KPMG. They reiterated the importance of ensuring that any wrongdoing and corruption was fully investigated, and that all involved were held fully accountable regardless of their status in the organization. They emphasized the need to establish a transparent, accountable and healthy organizational culture where staff felt safe to raise issues of concern. It was important for the internal audit and investigation functions to have full independence and for the ethics and compliance office to have adequate human and financial resources and capacity and be given full access to information and data to carry out their work in an independent manner. Protecting whistle-blower rights and accountability in the United Nations system as a whole was crucial.

59. Other delegations said that in a time of triple crises – finance, environment, and food – UNOPS had a pivotal role to play in providing quality infrastructure and innovative procurement and management and in building national and local capacities. They welcomed the concrete measures UNOPS was taking to restore trust through the time-bound implementation of the 10-point action plan. The key to overcoming the UNOPS crisis was openness and transparency. They therefore welcomed UNOPS steps to remedy the shortcomings in the governance, management and internal control systems. Regret was nevertheless expressed that UNOPS had not yet made greater progress and taken more decisive action to address the S3i failures. A sign of more explicit and in-depth changes within UNOPS was urgently needed, including more comprehensive structural revisions of its business model. The United Nations Secretariat was urged to share the independent investigative report on UNOPS with Member States and the Executive Board.

60. One delegation, on behalf of the working group established by the Board to address the S3i failures, presented the working group's report and a detailed account of its progress to date. The working group had agreed on the terms of reference for the third-party reviews for UNOPS internal control systems, risk management and overall governance structure, as well as the terms of reference for UNOPS oversight mechanisms for the S3i initiative. The report explored UNOPS history as well as Board decisions and UNOPS reports that dealt with the progressively growing financial irregularities. The delegation said UNOPS was highly cooperative and responded rapidly to the working group's requests. As part of its report, the working group provided the Board options for the use of UNOPS reserves. Going forward, the working group sought continued Board guidance to ensure a more focused report at the first regular session 2023.

61. On the annual statistical report on the procurement activities of the United Nations system (DP/OPS/2022/6), also presented during the UNOPS segment, one delegation noted that large volumes of United Nations organizations' budgets were used for procurement of goods and

services and welcomed that the United Nations had played a major role in the procurement and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines and medical equipment. The delegation welcomed capacity-building efforts to strengthen the sustainable procurement systems of Governments and partners and urged UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to strengthen the capacity of partner countries to ensure they comply with procurement rules and systems, especially given that procurement was a risk area for irregularities, mismanagement and corrupt practices.

62. In response, the Acting Executive Director assured the Board that UNOPS would: (a) follow the 10-point action plan with the highest transparency; (b) accelerate the work of the independent reviews of the S3i failures ensuring their timeliness and quality; and (c) continue to manage UNOPS so that it delivered on and maintained the integrity of its existing portfolio. He stressed the importance of reviewing and re-establishing as soon as possible UNOPS strategic position, business model and value proposition. On the procurement front, he said the present crisis within UNOPS offered the opportunity for it to reengage more closely with other United Nations organizations to strengthen common procurement and common capacity development, and to strengthen its own procurement practices in greater transparency. He reiterated that UNOPS would be fully transparent in progress reporting to ensure the Board was able to hold management at all levels accountable for the change needed in the organization.

63. The Executive Board adopted decision 2022/20 on the annual statistical report on United Nations procurement, 2021.

64. The Executive Board adopted decision 2022/21 on UNOPS: progress on actions addressing the situation of the sustainable investment in infrastructure and innovation (S3i) initiative.

## **Joint segment**

### **VII. Update on oversight matters**

65. The UNFPA Director ad interim, Office for Audit and Investigation Services (OAIS), the UNDP Director, Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI), and the UNOPS Director, Internal Audit and Investigations Group (IAIG), provided assessments on the independence of their offices, as requested in Board decision 2022/15; this was followed by the management responses from the UNDP Director, Bureau for Management Services, the UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) and the UNOPS Acting Executive Director.

66. Members of the Bureau said the Board had requested the organizations' self-assessments as part of efforts to strengthen their internal governance systems, identify risks and address possible systemic issues. They recognized that, according to the self-assessments, the independence of the UNDP and UNFPA oversight bodies conformed to their charters and to international standards in audit and principles and guidelines on investigations. They expressed alarm, however, at the assessment of the independence of the UNOPS IAIG and the reported interference from senior management in IAIG audit and investigation functions, which had led to its reform. That, the Bureau said, was an unacceptable transgression of the integrity of UNOPS governance. Strong reforms were therefore needed to address what seemed to have become normal practice. The Bureau welcomed initial steps taken by UNOPS and called on the Board to provide further guidance and action. They were pleased to see similar discussions taking place at the executive boards of UNICEF and UN-Women and encouraged the organizations' oversight bodies to continue exchanging experiences and practices and to harmonize practices to the highest standards whenever possible. It was the joint responsibility of United Nations organizations and their executive boards to establish mechanisms that ensured similar irregularities never recurred.

67. A cross-regional group of countries said the Board needed to critically examine whether it was sufficiently executing its oversight responsibilities and functions. Oversight had to be an ongoing conversation between organizations and their governing bodies. They expressed their commitment to engaging with management and internal oversight functions to strengthen

oversight, accountability and transparency throughout the organizations and the chain of programme delivery to ensure joint efforts to strengthen governance were based on international best practices and standards. The Board, they stressed, needed to execute its oversight function in a more proactive, thorough manner and ensure it served the best interests and expectations of programme beneficiaries, organizational staff and taxpayers. They welcomed management efforts to facilitate direct channels of communication between the audit and investigation offices and the Board, and they expressed gratitude for the quick response to Board decision 2022/13 requesting a self-assessment of internal audit and investigative functions. The group recognized the following common trends from the assessments: (a) some audit and investigation services of the New York-based organizations were structurally underfunded and overworked; (b) offices had full access to the documents and individuals required to conduct their work, though in certain instances access had been limited; and (c) the reported interference by UNOPS management in audit and investigation activities and in IAIG management jeopardized IAIG independence. The delegations stressed that serious reforms and a change in organizational culture were urgently needed, along with continuous discussion with and within the Board on how it could strengthen the oversight function. They called on UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS and the Board to establish a sustainable and independent channel of communication between the Board and key oversight stakeholders and entities to supplement management engagement and ensure that the annual calendar regularly included robust and appropriate discussion on oversight matters.

68. In other interventions, delegations expressed grave concern with the fiscal irregularities and reported interference of UNOPS management in audit and investigation activities. They welcomed the results of the organizations' self-assessments and the transparent leadership and actions of the UNOPS Acting Executive Director to address the issue. The situation pointed to the need for fully resourcing audit and investigation functions and investing in additional mitigation measures. It also showed the need for the Board to strengthen its governance and oversight role. They stressed that all steps to address the situation had to be done in a responsible manner, focused on preventive actions that avoided more expenditure than needed. It was underscored that the strengthening of internal control systems should not be pursued at the detriment of adequate funding of the implementation of the organizations' strategic plans and the Goals. They looked forward to a rehabilitated UNOPS that would work for efficient and effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

69. In response, the UNDP Director, OAI, said the UNOPS crisis had given the United Nations development system an opportunity to more broadly reflect on how oversight could be managed. The global development challenges required more than ever a United Nations development system that had a well-resourced and competent oversight function. The need to strengthen the oversight function of the Board was central to that effort. While recognizing the need for the Board to have a more operational role in the organizations' oversight and governance functions, the OAI Director said the Board had insufficient technical capacity to explore complex oversight issues. He encouraged the Board to reflect on how it could better fulfil a comprehensive oversight role. The audit and investigation units in the organizations were ready to support the Board in that endeavour, and in addressing future crises in a measured and proportionate manner. He also appealed to the Board to reflect on the consequences of and potential solutions to the issues of structural underfunding and overworked staff and asked for the support of the Board in resourcing the investigation function sufficiently. In closing, he said it would be beneficial for the OAI Director to attend, as an observer, UNDP Executive Group management meetings; this would allow OAI to remain independent while gaining a better understanding of issues on which it was to provide oversight.

70. The UNDP Director, Bureau for Management Services, said management was ready to engage with the Board in its discussions on a more operational oversight role of the organizations' audit and investigation functions. On the resources front, UNDP had always responded favourably to OAI funding requests. UNDP allocations to OAI had in fact outgrown regular resource contributions by more than 72 per cent. Given the joint interest in ensuring good stewardship of

the funds entrusted to UNDP, she said entities within UNDP had to take optimal advantage of the resources made available to them. She pointed out that any increase in resources to OAI had to include a parallel increase in resources to services that worked with OAI, such as legal and human resources. UNDP would continue to ensure OAI had access to all the documentation it needed and was ready to discuss including OAI in UNDP management meetings on oversight.

71. The UNFPA OAI Director ad interim agreed the Board should reflect on how to strengthen its oversight responsibilities and pursue more proactive engagement with the organization's audit and investigation function and management. She commented that risk management was not only about mitigating risk but also about seizing the opportunity to better achieve corporate objectives – a point that should be reflected in Board decisions. On the issue of resources, OAI would undertake a comprehensive analysis of cases to stratify their nature and thereby make a better business case for the budgetary and staffing resources needed. As OAI Director, she participates in meetings of the Executive Committee as an observer and provides advice as she determines.

72. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) underlined the strong commitment of UNFPA management to continue to strengthen and work with OAI, including by ensuring its full independence. UNFPA looked forward to a continuous conversation and engagement with the Board on audit and investigation functions and on strengthening the oversight role of the Board. UNFPA had increased resources to OAI in the Integrated Budget, 2022-2025, and prior to that too, and would review allocations to OAI during the midterm budget review. He stressed that there was complementarity between strengthening oversight functions and strengthening operational delivery. UNFPA would also continue to strengthen its enterprise risk management policy.

73. The UNOPS Director, IAIG, said the IAIG budget had increased by 87 per cent in 2022 based, one, on the ratio of the number of cases to the number of investigators and, two, on 'process', by determining if a case in question fell under IAIG jurisdiction or another office. He informed the Board that the Acting Executive Director had already approved the recommendations to strengthen IAIG independence. As a consequence, the revised audit charter had been approved and promulgated. He confirmed that, as agreed with management, IAIG was an ex officio member able to participate in management meetings as it deemed necessary. IAIG was actively working with the UNOPS legal office to determine how to update its policy on sanction with the aim of resorbing the gap between the severity of the issues and the level of sanctions. Furthermore, the Director, IAIG informed the Board that he would work with the Legal Group in setting up a rebuttal mechanism. IAIG was also working with UNOPS management to bring about the cultural change needed in response to the financial irregularities.

74. The UNOPS Acting Executive Director welcomed the frank exchange between the organizations and the Board on audit and investigation functions and looked forward to broader discussions on how oversight could develop within the United Nations system. He said the United Nations had made significant investments in digitalization, and he pointed to the potential role of artificial intelligence and other such mechanisms in helping to automate certain controls and begin shifting the audit and investigation function in the direction of performance auditing on progress in delivering the Sustainable Development Goals.

75. The Executive Board adopted decision 2022/22 on the update on oversight services.

## **VIII. Field visits**

76. The Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the United Nations introduced the report of the Executive Board field visit to Bangladesh (DP/FPA/OPS/2022/CRP.1) that took place from 26 to 30 June 2022. The delegation was led by the President of the Executive Board and visited the cities of Dhaka and Cox's Bazar. The objective of the field visit was to help Board members better understand how the United Nations was working with the Government to deliver on national development priorities. The delegation met with government representatives, the United



Nations country team and a diverse range of partners and gained a good overview of achievements on the ground.

77. The delegation of the host Government said the field visit demonstrated how excellent outcomes were possible if national development initiatives were prioritized and complemented by the United Nations system and other development partners. Bangladesh was able to withstand the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic with active collaboration of the United Nations development system, though recent spikes in food and fuel prices and the dwindling flow of international finance were an important cause of concern. He requested that the international community undertake a stronger, more coordinated response to ensure the safe and voluntary return of Rohingya to their homes in Myanmar. He also requested that all development partners complement the country's initiatives to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the climate crisis and conflict. Bangladesh sought targeted market support and assistance with its economy's structural transformation through South-South and triangular cooperation to avoid backsliding and to prepare for least developed country graduation in 2026.

78. In another intervention, a delegation welcomed the outcome of the field visit but said the report did not fully explain coordination dynamics between United Nations system entities on the ground. The delegation said it would like to find more information on how the United Nations Resident Coordinator was able to enhance United Nations development system effectiveness and coordination, indicating that this analysis be done retrospectively to give a better understanding of United Nations coordination at the country level. It said there was a lack of transparency in field visit preparations and pointed out that its delegation had not been informed of the trip – in violation of the principle of equitable access to the field visit – and sought clarity on how to avoid such situations in the future. The delegation also expressed concerns about diversification in regional representation and requested that in future visits the Bureau seek to ensure greater balance in the composition of delegations in field visits.

79. In response, the Secretary of the Executive Board said the Secretariat would investigate the comments related to communication during the preparations for the field visit and respond to the concerned delegation accordingly.

80. The Executive Board took note of the report of the Executive Board field visit to Bangladesh (DP/FPA/OPS/2022/CRP.1).