

INFORMATION NOTE

UNFPA

Executive Board annual session 2026

Implementation of General Assembly resolution 72/279 on repositioning of the United Nations development system in the context of General Assembly resolution 75/233 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system and General Assembly resolution 76/4 on the review of the functioning of the reinvigorated resident coordinator system, including its funding arrangement

I. Introduction

1. This information note provides an update on UNFPA support to the repositioning of the United Nations development system (UNDS) in the context of the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) and subsequent General Assembly guidance on the resident coordinator system. It covers the period April 2025 to March 2026 and complements previous updates provided to the Executive Board.
2. During this period, UNFPA continued to contribute to system-wide reform efforts aimed at strengthening a more coherent and effective development system. The organization's engagement reflects both the priorities of the 2024 QCPR and the implementation of the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2026-2029, while also responding to reform discussions underway under the UN80 agenda.
3. In a context marked by demographic shifts, climate pressures, geopolitical tensions, complex intergovernmental dynamics, constrained space for human rights, and tightening development resources, UNFPA remains committed to strengthening collective United Nations (UN) system delivery and to continue to be a champion of reform and a model of efficiency. As custodian of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), the organization contributes to advancing integrated approaches that support countries in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

II. Aligning the Strategic Plan with UNDS reform and advancing leadership on demographic change

4. The UNFPA Strategic Plan (2026-2029), adopted by consensus by the Executive Board, reinforces the organization's commitment to a strengthened United Nations development system and aligns closely with QCPR priorities on coherence, collaboration and results. It positions UNFPA as actively shaping the United Nations development system under UN80, with a focus on delivery, impact, and system-wide value. The plan sharpens focus on a smaller set of high-impact priorities - maternal health, gender-based violence prevention and response, humanitarian sexual reproductive health services, and demographic resilience, ensuring resources are concentrated where the organization delivers the greatest value.
5. The Plan further advances the reform of the United Nations development system, reinforcing the organization's role within a more coordinated and effective UN architecture. It emphasizes collaboration with resident coordinators, UN country teams, and system-wide processes such as Common Country Analysis and Cooperation Frameworks. By embedding its priorities within these

mechanisms, UNFPA ensures that its technical and normative leadership on sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender equality, and population dynamics is systematically integrated into collective UN support for advancing national development priorities and progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals. This alignment also supports the broader reform objective of delivering more coherent, results-focused and country-driven development support.

6. A key element of the new Strategic Plan is stronger leadership on population dynamics and demographic change, in line with the QCPR call for the United Nations development system to better support countries in addressing demographic trends and their implications for sustainable development. The Plan introduces a fourth strategic outcome focused on demographic change in response to evolving demographic trends, including shifts in fertility, population ageing, migration, and changing age structures. This outcome aims to help countries better anticipate demographic transitions, respond to associated challenges, and harness opportunities - including those linked to the demographic dividend and population ageing - while addressing emerging social and economic pressures. It positions demographic change as a system-wide public good that informs integrated policy, programme response and financing across the UN system.

7. Through this focus, UNFPA positions itself as the UN system's lead on demographic intelligence and population data, supporting governments with evidence-based and rights-based policies. This reinforces the UNFPA normative mandate under the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and ensures that demographic change is addressed as a key driver of inclusive development, gender equality, and human rights.

8. UNFPA is advancing this work, including through its co leadership of the UN High Level Committee on Programmes' task team on demographic change, which has already produced a set of common messages on policy responses to demographic change for the UN system. As a next step, the focus is on translating these messages into practice by strengthening the integration of demographic analysis into Common Country Analysis and Cooperation Frameworks. This helps governments and UN country teams anticipate and navigate complex demographic transformations and their policy implications, including for labour markets, social protection systems, migration policies, and investments in health, education and human capital, while advancing sustainable development and the well-being of women, adolescents and young people.

III. Strengthening United Nations country teams, coordinated delivery and humanitarian action

9. UNFPA continues to support the empowered and independent resident coordinator system as a cornerstone of coherent United Nations country level action. Across programme countries, UNFPA offices remain actively engaged in United Nations country team coordination, including through leadership of results groups, participation in joint programmes and contributions to collective results reporting.

10. Country level experience indicates that the resident coordinator system has strengthened collaboration and strategic alignment across agencies. At the same time, effective coordination requires maintaining clear roles and responsibilities so that coordination complements the technical expertise and operational capacities of individual entities. The resident coordinator system should continue to function as a strategic convening and coordination platform, while agencies retain their technical leadership and implementation responsibilities.

11. As discussions on future UN country configurations advance under the UN80 agenda, UNFPA supports approaches that strengthen delivery while safeguarding human rights principles and internationally agreed development commitments. There is increasing recognition that country presence should reflect the mandates and expertise required to deliver development results. Country presence should therefore reflect not only expenditure levels but also the specific expertise that

agencies bring to deliver measurable country-level impact in response to national priorities and needs. Technical leadership on issues such as gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive health and population data and demographic foresight contributes to achieving collective development outcomes, particularly in politically sensitive and capacity-constrained environments. Efforts to rationalize country presence should be driven by programmatic needs and development outcomes, not solely by efficiency considerations.

12. A differentiated approach to country presence remains particularly important in Least Developed countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, Small Island Developing States and fragile settings, where sustained technical engagement is often required to support national institutions and development priorities. Over-consolidation risks weakening technical depth, reducing support in areas requiring specialized normative and technical expertise - including on “so-called” sensitive mandates, and limiting responsiveness to complex needs of these countries.

13. UNFPA also underscores the continued importance of Country Programme Documents (CPDs) as key accountability instruments linking agency mandates to Member State approved programming and Executive Board oversight. In many contexts, CPDs provide an important framework for addressing complex development challenges requiring specialized normative and technical expertise, translating internationally agreed commitments into nationally tailored programmes and ensuring accountability to Member States. Preserving CPDs remains essential to safeguarding mandate integrity and accountability.

14. UNFPA supports efforts that enhance efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian response, recognizing that these efforts are complementary to the distinct mandates, comparative advantages and operational independence of specialized agencies. In crisis settings, UNFPA’s leading role in providing lifesaving sexual and reproductive health services, and preventing and responding to gender-based violence - underpinned by its work in demographic and needs data - is essential to ensuring principled humanitarian responses that prioritise the protection and health of women and girls.

15. Ongoing discussions within the New Humanitarian Compact as part of UN80 reform must be firmly grounded in humanitarian principles, while strengthening linkages across humanitarian, development and peace efforts. In this regard, UNFPA continues to strengthen efforts to promote impartiality, reduce duplication, enhance efficiencies and integrated approaches that address immediate humanitarian needs and the protection of women and girls, while supporting longer term resilience and recovery.

16. As these discussions evolve, UNFPA will continue to engage with Member States and humanitarian partners to ensure that reforms to the humanitarian system strengthen collective response capacity while safeguarding the principles, mandates and specialized capacities that underpin effective humanitarian action. This includes ensuring that women and girls remain central to any future humanitarian architecture, including under a simplified cluster system, and that efforts to streamline coordination do not erode the expertise and specialization needed for effective response.

IV. Regional reset and strengthening system wide expertise

17. Discussions on the regional reset under the UN80 agenda are closely linked to the discussions on country configurations. Strengthening the regional level offers an opportunity to enhance country level delivery by linking global expertise more effectively to country implementation and ensuring that resident coordinators and United Nations country teams can draw on specialized expertise, surge capacity and cross border support.

18. UNFPA supports regional reforms that are anchored in country needs and focused on effective and timely delivery and impact, rather than structural consolidation. The United Nations system regional architecture can evolve into platforms of clustered expertise that reinforce country

implementation through functional integration, shared services and clearer division of labour across entities.

19. Regional platforms can provide “expertise-on-demand” to country teams in areas such as demographic analysis, population data, gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights. Coordination arrangements should be guided by the mandates and comparative advantages of United Nations entities, ensuring that their specialized expertise is preserved within a more integrated system. In some cases, regional economic commissions may not hold social mandates and coordination arrangements should therefore ensure that appropriate technical expertise is available to support countries.

20. UNFPA also supports strengthening regional analytical capacity through data and knowledge platforms linked to Cooperation Framework implementation. Establishing regional demographic and data hubs could further strengthen system wide access to population data and demographic foresight in support of national planning.

21. Protecting mission-critical regional capacities including technical leadership, humanitarian surge support and cross-border coordination remains important, particularly in fragile and crisis contexts. Over-consolidation driven solely by efficiency considerations risks weakening responses to complex and transboundary challenges and reducing support for mandate-critical areas requiring specialized normative and technical expertise.

V. Driving efficiencies and operational innovation

22. Strengthening efficiencies and operational innovation remains a key priority for the repositioning of the United Nations development system, including in the context of ongoing UN80 reform discussions. Building on its longstanding leadership in advancing UN reform, UNFPA resumed its role as co-chair of the UNSDG Business Innovation Group in 2024 and supports system-wide efforts to advance common business operations, shared services and more integrated delivery models.

23. UNFPA actively participates in common operational arrangements at country level. All country offices participate in Business Operations Strategies, 82 per cent operate from common premises, and all offices engage in common back-office service arrangements, strengthening collaboration and reducing operational duplication across agencies.

24. UNFPA has also been an early adopter of Global Shared Services, including treasury and payroll, and has advanced the relocation of selected headquarters support functions to Nairobi, including through integration into the UN Office at Nairobi’s common back office, while continuing to expand its participation in additional shared service offerings.

25. These efforts are delivering results. In 2025, UNFPA generated \$27.7 million in operational efficiencies, nearly doubling from \$14.7 million in 2024.

26. Since 2019, UNFPA has realized cumulative efficiencies of \$105.5 million, driven primarily by in-house initiatives (\$64.2 million), complemented by bilateral collaboration with UN partners (\$11.4 million) and Business Operations Strategies (\$29.9 million)

27. Country level reporting indicates continued progress in the uptake of shared services, with 81 per cent of offices reporting measurable efficiency gains in 2025, up from 77 per cent in 2021. These efforts contribute to simplifying operational processes while allowing greater focus on programmatic delivery and results at country level.

28. Operational efficiencies help ensure that a larger share of resources can be directed toward programme delivery and development results. UNFPA stresses that efficiency efforts must preserve

technical capacity and mandate delivery while avoiding weakening mission-critical support functions.

VI. Financing and partnerships for collective impact

29. In a context of rising needs and constrained development resources globally, UNFPA is strengthening how it mobilizes, allocates and leverages resources and partnerships to sustain delivery and maximize impact at country level. Despite these efforts, overall resource mobilization has remained relatively stable, supported by active engagement in joint and pooled financing and a diverse partnership base. However, the funding mix remains imbalanced, with a declining share of flexible core resources that are essential for timely and coordinated system-wide responses.

30. In 2025, UNFPA mobilized approximately 1.4 billion dollars in total contributions, including 340 million dollars in core resources from 81 countries and over 1 billion dollars in non-core funding. While overall funding levels remained relatively stable, the share of core resources declined to around 24 per cent of total contributions, below the 30 per cent Funding Compact target for 2027.

31. Humanitarian funding has grown significantly over the past decade, with its share of total contributions rising from 22 per cent in 2020 to 35 per cent in 2024. In 2025, humanitarian funding declined to approximately \$400 million, representing 28 per cent of total contributions, primarily reflecting the withdrawal of contributions from a major bilateral donor, compounded by the inherent volatility of humanitarian financing.

32. Also in 2025, UNFPA continued with its successful trajectory of diversifying resources through partnerships with the private sector and philanthropies. UNFPA mobilized \$60.8 million in non-core contributions from the private sector and \$2.7 million in-kind contributions, largely surpassing the Strategic Plan target of \$28 million for the year. Additionally, the Individual Giving Programme raised USD 11.8 million in gross contributions.

33. Multi-year funding agreements continue to support predictability, with 48 per cent of core contributions in 2024. Joint and pooled financing mechanisms - including the Peacebuilding Fund, SDG Fund, and Multi-Partner Trust Fund - also play an important role in supporting integrated United Nations responses. In 2025, UN system contributions to UNFPA totalled close to 200 million dollars, reflecting strong engagement in joint programming linked to Cooperation Framework implementation. Structured funding dialogues with Member States remain an important mechanism to strengthen transparency, mutual accountability and alignment with Funding Compact commitments, with 91 countries having held funding compact dialogues by late 2025.

34. UNFPA continues to expand diversified and sustainable financing through partnerships with international financial institutions, vertical funds, private sector, philanthropic organizations and innovative financing mechanisms. Sustaining efficiency gains, while strengthening flexible and predictable financing and strategic partnerships will be essential to enable coordinated United Nations support to countries.

VII. Strengthening knowledge, data and human rights across the system

35. UNFPA supports efforts to strengthen collaboration on knowledge, data and policy analysis across the United Nations development system to enable integrated, evidence-based policy support, strengthen system-wide coherence and enhance delivery of results at the country level.

36. Discussions under the UN80 reform agenda have highlighted the potential of joint knowledge platforms to bring together expertise and analytical capacity across the system. These platforms should be demand-driven and integrated, without diluting mandates or technical leadership of UN entities.

37. UNFPA contributes to these discussions by promoting stronger integration of demographic analysis, population data and foresight into system wide policy work. Strengthening demographic foresight as a shared analytical resource complements UNFPA leadership on demographic change under the High-Level Committee on Programmes task team and ongoing work on regional expertise platforms.

38. UNFPA underscores that human rights must be embedded as a core pillar of UN80 reform - not as a standalone track, but structurally integrated across country and regional reset, expertise-on-demand models and knowledge hubs - so that rights-based approaches are built into how the system delivers at country level.

39. In this context, UNFPA supports the establishment of the new Human Rights Group under the UN80 reform agenda as a platform to strengthen system-wide coordination and ensure that human rights considerations remain systematically reflected across reform discussions, while safeguarding normative mandates.

40. At a time when rights-based development priorities face increasing pressure in some contexts, stronger coordination across the United Nations system will be important to safeguard human rights principles, protect sensitive mandates and support collective engagement on gender equality, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and related development priorities. This is critical to maintaining the credibility and legitimacy of the United Nations development system.

41. Building on models such as the UNFPA-OHCHR Framework of Cooperation (2026-2030), UNFPA remains committed to advancing a more coordinated UN response that aligns normative and operational functions, safeguarding rights-based commitments, including sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, and reinforces human rights as central to system-wide coherence and country-level impact.

VIII. Conclusion

42. The repositioning of the United Nations development system remains central to strengthening multilateral cooperation and accelerating progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly in a context of growing demands and tightening development resources.

43. Through the implementation of its Strategic Plan 2026 to 2029, UNFPA will continue to contribute to system wide reform by strengthening demographic foresight, supporting rights-based development approaches and advancing integrated humanitarian, development and peace responses, with a focus on maximizing impact and efficiency.

44. As discussions under the UN80 agenda evolve, UNFPA stands ready to work with Member States and UN partners to ensure that reforms translate into stronger country level delivery in a constrained resource environment.

45. Strengthening coordination, predictable and flexible financing and sustained technical expertise will be essential to ensuring that the United Nations development system remains fit for purpose, delivers greater value for money, and is capable of supporting countries in navigating demographic change and advancing sustainable development.