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Programme, the United Nations
Population Fund and the United
Nations Office for Project Services**

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Organizational matters

**Report of the annual session 2026
(8 to 12 June 2026, New York)**

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I. Organizational matters

1. The annual session 2026 of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS was held from 8 to 12 June 2026.
2. The Executive Board approved the agenda and workplan for its annual session 2026 (DP/2026/L.2), and adopted the report of the first regular session 2026 (DP/2026/11).
3. The decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its annual session 2026 are contained in document DP/2026/25, available on the Executive Board website.
4. The Executive Board approved the tentative workplan for the second regular session 2026.

Statement by the President of the Executive Board

5. The President opened the annual session 2026 of the Executive Board, noting that the Board was meeting at an important juncture for the United Nations development system. He highlighted the role of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS in supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and emphasized the Board's governance responsibilities in providing strategic guidance and oversight. Referring to the UN80 initiative, he underscored the importance of informed engagement by Member States in discussions on the future institutional and operational arrangements of the United Nations development system.

Joint segment

II. Engagement with the UN80 initiative

Potential UNDP/UNOPS merger assessment discussions

6. The Executive Board considered the potential merger assessment of UNDP and UNOPS under the UN80 initiative. In introducing the item, the President recalled the Board's responsibility to provide strategic guidance, oversight and accountability in relation to the organizations under its governance and emphasized the importance of informed engagement by Member States as part of the ongoing reform process. He noted that the discussions on the potential merger assessments formed part of the broader consideration of the UN80 initiative and the future institutional and operational arrangements of the United Nations development system.
7. The Administrator of UNDP and the Executive Director of UNOPS presented their assessments of a potential merger between the two organizations within the broader context of the UN80 reform agenda and the development architecture. They highlighted ongoing efforts to strengthen the effectiveness, efficiency and coherence of the United Nations development system, including through enhanced coordination, shared services, expertise-on-demand mechanisms and strengthened support to resident coordinators. They noted that UNDP and UNOPS possessed distinct but complementary mandates and capacities and each outlined a range of structural and non-structural options with different cost-benefit analyses. The principals emphasized that any future arrangement should contribute to more effective delivery, preserve mandates and maintain support to programme countries while minimizing disruption to ongoing operations.
8. Board members broadly welcomed the opportunity to engage on the UN80 initiative and expressed support for efforts to strengthen the effectiveness, efficiency and coherence of the United Nations development system. Delegations emphasized that any reform process should remain Member State-driven, transparent, inclusive and evidence-based and should ultimately be assessed according to its contribution to development results at the country level.
9. Delegations highlighted the distinct mandates and comparative advantages of UNDP and UNOPS and stressed the importance of preserving these strengths under any future arrangement. Board members emphasized the need to safeguard UNDP's development mandate, policy expertise, country presence and implementation support to nationally-owned programming, while preserving UNOPS' specialized expertise in project implementation, procurement and infrastructure delivery. Delegations stressed the importance of maintaining continuity of operations and ensuring that reforms remained aligned with national priorities and ownership.

10. Several delegations requested further information regarding the rationale for the proposed merger, anticipated efficiency gains, transition and implementation costs, governance and legal implications, operational risks and potential impacts on programme delivery. Delegations called for transparent and comparable analysis of the costs, benefits and risks associated with the options under consideration, including alternatives such as enhanced cooperation, shared services and other operational arrangements. Delegations also highlighted the importance of considering the merger assessment within the broader context of the UN80 initiative and wider United Nations development system reform efforts.

11. In responding to Member States, the Administrator of UNDP and the Executive Director of UNOPS welcomed the guidance provided by the Board and acknowledged the importance of preserving the mandates, strengths and comparative advantages of both organizations. They noted that the assessments had been prepared in response to Executive Board decision 2026/2 and requests from Member States and reaffirmed their commitment to supporting the Board's deliberations. The principals acknowledged that further work might be required regarding costs, benefits, legal implications and transition arrangements and expressed openness to additional independent analysis should Member States so request.

Potential UNFPA/UN-Women merger assessment discussions

12. The Executive Board considered the potential merger assessment of UNFPA and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) under the UN80 initiative. The President welcomed the Executive Director of UNFPA and the Executive Director of UN-Women and recalled the ongoing engagement between the two Executive Boards and their Bureaux on the matter.

13. The Executive Director of UNFPA and the Executive Director of UN-Women presented their reflections on the potential merger assessment within the broader context of the UN80 initiative. They emphasized the importance of a transparent, evidence-based and Member State-led discussion aimed at strengthening impact for women, girls and young people, while preserving support for population data and demographic resilience. They noted that the assessment identified opportunities, potential benefits, implementation considerations and risks, while also highlighting the distinct mandates and comparative advantages of both organizations.

14. The principals emphasized that any future pathway should protect agreed mandates on gender equality, sexual and reproductive health and rights, population dynamics and youth empowerment; preserve operational continuity at country level; assess transition costs, sustainability and resource implications; and align with broader United Nations development system reform and ongoing UN80 workstreams. The Executive Director of UNFPA recalled that UNFPA had shared internal legal advice to support Member States' deliberations regarding the implications of a potential merger. The Executive Director of UN-Women also noted that consultations with resident coordinators had identified potential benefits of closer integration, including stronger political weight, a more coherent country presence, reduced fragmentation and a single entry point for governments and donors.

15. Delegations welcomed the opportunity to engage further on the potential merger assessment and reaffirmed support for reform efforts aimed at strengthening the effectiveness, coherence, efficiency and impact of the United Nations development system. At the same time, delegations emphasized that the process should remain Member State-driven, transparent, inclusive, evidence-based and grounded in country-level delivery.

16. Delegations stressed the importance of preserving the distinct mandates and comparative advantages of UNFPA and UN-Women, including those rooted in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, women and peace and security resolutions and relevant General Assembly mandates. Several speakers cautioned that structural reform should not reopen, dilute or weaken agreed mandates, particularly in a global context of pushback against gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights.

17. Delegations expressed concern that the information available did not yet provide a sufficient basis for decision-making on a merger. Speakers requested further analysis of costs, benefits, risks, legal and governance implications, transition arrangements, financing requirements, staffing implications, donor confidence and impacts on programme delivery. Several delegations also requested credible non-merger

alternatives, including stronger coordination, shared services, joint programming, operational alignment and other arrangements that could strengthen coherence and efficiency while preserving mandates.

18. Delegations underscored the importance of avoiding disruption to country-level delivery, particularly in programme countries and humanitarian and fragile settings. Speakers highlighted the need to protect life-saving services, including maternal health, sexual and reproductive health services, reproductive health commodities, gender-based violence prevention and response, humanitarian support, population data systems and support to women and girls in crisis settings. Several delegations emphasized that transition costs should not be financed at the expense of country programmes or core delivery.

19. Delegations also emphasized the governance and oversight role of the Executive Boards in considering possible structural changes affecting the entities under their purview. Several speakers called for continued consultations, timely information-sharing and adequate opportunities for Member States to consider both the merger assessment and alternative reform options before any decision was taken. Some delegations indicated that, on the basis of the evidence available, they were not in a position to support the proposed merger at that stage, while others expressed openness to further exploration of closer integration, provided that mandates, delivery capacity and operational continuity were fully protected.

20. In response, the Executive Director of UN-Women thanked Member States for their constructive engagement and reiterated that UN-Women and UNFPA would provide further analysis, including on alternative options, as requested by the Boards. The Executive Director of UNFPA thanked delegations for their guidance and noted that the two organizations were working jointly to develop complementary options to strengthen coherence, operational alignment, accountability, and impact within existing institutional frameworks. She reaffirmed the importance of protecting mandates, maintaining operational continuity and country-level delivery, and ensuring that considerations relating to population data, humanitarian responsibilities, gender-based violence response and sexual and reproductive health and rights remained central considerations in the reform discussion.

21. The President thanked the Executive Director of UN-Women for participating in the discussion and noted the importance of continued engagement between the two Executive Boards and their Bureaux.

III. Internal audit and investigations

22. The Executive Board considered the reports on internal audit and investigation activities in 2025 and the related management responses of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS, as well as the reports of their respective oversight advisory committees.

23. In the discussion that followed, delegations reaffirmed the importance of independent and adequately resourced oversight functions as a critical component of accountability, risk management and institutional integrity. Delegations highlighted recurring audit findings in areas including programme and project management, procurement, governance, financial controls and implementing partner oversight, and emphasized the importance of timely implementation of recommendations. Several delegations also requested further information regarding investigation caseloads, fraud risks, whistleblower protection, sexual misconduct cases and the impact of resource constraints on oversight functions.

24. Representatives of the organizations and oversight advisory committees reaffirmed their commitment to maintaining the independence of oversight functions, implementing recommendations in a timely manner and strengthening risk-based approaches to oversight.

IV. Ethics

25. The Executive Board considered the reports on the activities of the ethics offices of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS in 2025 and the related management responses.

26. Delegations emphasized the central role of ethics in promoting accountability, transparency, integrity and trust across the organizations and welcomed continued efforts to strengthen ethics awareness, training, outreach and advisory services. Several delegations underscored the importance of maintaining independent

and adequately resourced ethics offices and highlighted issues relating to whistleblower protection, protection against retaliation, financial disclosure compliance and organizational culture.

27. Representatives of the organizations highlighted ongoing efforts to strengthen ethics guidance, outreach and reporting mechanisms, expand training and awareness initiatives and promote a culture of integrity and ethical conduct.

V. Protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment.

28. The Executive Board received updates from UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on efforts to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment.

29. Delegations reaffirmed their commitment to a zero-tolerance approach and emphasized the importance of survivor- and victim-centered approaches, protection against retaliation, confidentiality, accessible reporting channels and timely support services. Delegations welcomed progress in strengthening prevention, reporting and accountability systems, including through training, victim support, implementing partner engagement and inter-agency collaboration.

30. Several delegations expressed concern regarding persistent underreporting, barriers to reporting and the impact of resource constraints on prevention and response efforts. Delegations also highlighted the importance of child-sensitive approaches and requested continued transparent reporting on allegations, investigations, outcomes and institutional reforms.

31. Representatives of the organizations reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening prevention, protection, accountability and response measures and highlighted ongoing efforts to build trust in reporting mechanisms, strengthen survivor-centered approaches and expand collaboration across the United Nations system.

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

32. The Executive Board received updates from UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on their implementation of the repositioning of the United Nations development system.

33. Delegations reiterated their support for a more coherent, effective and efficient United Nations development system and emphasized the importance of national ownership and alignment with United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks. Delegations stressed the need to preserve the mandates and comparative advantages of individual entities while strengthening system-wide coherence and coordination.

34. Several delegations highlighted the importance of a sustainable and adequately funded resident coordinator system and requested further information on the practical implementation and results of reform efforts, including common services, joint programming and other operational efficiencies.

35. Representatives of the organizations reaffirmed their commitment to advancing United Nations development system reform and highlighted ongoing efforts to strengthen policy coherence, support the resident coordinator system and improve operational effectiveness.

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

36. The Executive Board considered the update on the assessment of how it executes its governance and oversight functions.

37. The co-Chairs of the joint working group established to consider the recommendations contained in the Joint Inspection Unit review of the governance and oversight of the Executive Boards of UNDP, UNFPA, UNOPS, UNICEF and UN-Women presented the interim report of the working group. They recalled that the review contained 10 formal and 21 informal recommendations across six thematic areas: roles and

responsibilities; Board composition and structure; secretariat functions; meeting practices; oversight and advisory committees; and risk management.

38. The co-Chairs reported that the working group had reviewed all recommendations, developed a road map and working methods, consulted the five organizations concerned and engaged regularly with Member States. They emphasized that the working group served in an advisory capacity and that decisions remained the prerogative of the Executive Boards.

39. The co-Chairs highlighted proposals contained in the interim report, including the development of a harmonized delegates' handbook; strengthened engagement between independent oversight functions and the Executive Boards; further exploration of a standing advisory committee on audit, risk, budget and finance; a review of Executive Board working methods; consultation mechanisms related to the appointment, renewal and termination of heads of independent oversight functions; and harmonized terms of reference for the secretariats of the Executive Boards. They indicated that the working group proposed to accept 15 recommendations in full, partially accept seven, not accept seven and consider two completed.

40. The co-Chairs invited the Executive Boards to consider options for guiding implementation of the recommendations, including continuation of the joint working group, establishment of a standing committee on institutional governance or direct oversight by the Executive Boards. They further noted that the working group would revise its proposals in light of Member State feedback and prepare draft decision language for consideration at the second regular session 2026.

41. Delegations welcomed the interim report and commended the work of the co-Chairs and members of the working group. Delegations supported efforts to strengthen governance, accountability and oversight and welcomed the focus on improving existing mechanisms before creating new structures. Several delegations stressed that any new advisory mechanism should demonstrate clear added value, avoid duplication and respect the decision-making authority of the Executive Boards.

42. Delegations expressed support for the proposed delegates' handbook, noting its potential to strengthen institutional memory and support effective participation by Member States. Delegations also welcomed strengthened engagement between the Boards and independent oversight functions and highlighted the increasing importance of risk management in a complex operating environment.

43. Delegations emphasized that the process should remain Member State-driven, inclusive, pragmatic and cost-effective. Several delegations supported continuation of the joint working group as the most practical option for preserving institutional memory and avoiding additional administrative structures and welcomed plans for further informal consultations on the interim report.

44. In response, the co-Chairs thanked delegations for their support and encouraged Member States to provide timely feedback to support finalization of the report and preparation of draft decision language for the second regular session 2026.

UNDP segment

VIII. Interactive dialogue with the UNDP Administrator and annual report of the UNDP Administrator

45. The Executive Board considered the annual report of the Administrator on the results achieved in 2025 and engaged in an interactive dialogue with the Administrator.

46. In his introductory remarks, the Administrator highlighted the cumulative achievements under the Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, including support provided across 170 countries and territories in the areas of poverty reduction, governance, climate action, crisis response, resilience-building, gender equality, digital transformation and sustainable financing. He emphasized that development remained a critical investment in stability, resilience and prosperity in a context of geopolitical tensions, climate-related shocks, economic uncertainty and declining development financing.

47. The Administrator outlined flagship initiatives to accelerate implementation of the Strategic Plan, 2026–2029, including 'Move Beyond Crisis', 'Climate Promise: Forward', 'Jobs for Prosperity Facility',

governance, and the investment accelerator. He highlighted the importance of partnerships, innovation, domestic resource mobilization, private sector engagement and blended finance, and reaffirmed UNDP's role in supporting implementation of the UN80 initiative and broader United Nations development system reform efforts. He also provided an update on internal reform measures, including spending controls, workforce optimization, digital transformation and relocation of posts to Bonn and Madrid, aimed at improving efficiency while protecting oversight, accountability and delivery capacity. He emphasized the importance of core funding in sustaining UNDP's end-to-end programming capacity and enabling UNDP to serve as the backbone of the United Nations development system.

48. During the interactive dialogue, delegations welcomed the results achieved by UNDP and reaffirmed its central role within the United Nations development system. Delegations highlighted the importance of development as a foundation for peace, stability and resilience and expressed support for UNDP's integrated approach linking governance, poverty reduction, climate action, crisis response and sustainable development.

49. Delegations welcomed UNDP's work on climate action, resilience-building, digital transformation, innovation, sustainable finance and support to countries affected by conflict and crisis, including through efforts to strengthen the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. Several delegations emphasized the importance of supporting least developed countries, small island developing States, middle-income countries and other countries facing structural vulnerabilities, debt burdens and development financing constraints. Delegations also highlighted the importance of job creation, youth engagement, entrepreneurship, private sector development and South-South and triangular cooperation.

50. Delegations expressed concern regarding declining core resources and stressed the importance of predictable, flexible and sustainable funding. Delegations welcomed efforts to improve efficiency, accountability and transparency while preserving operational capacity and country-level delivery.

51. Delegations commented on the UN80 initiative and possible institutional reforms involving UNDP and UNOPS. Delegations broadly supported efforts to strengthen the effectiveness and coherence of the United Nations development system while emphasizing that any reform process should remain Member State-driven, evidence-based and transparent, preserve mandates and comparative advantages and strengthen country-level delivery and development effectiveness. Several delegations requested additional information regarding proposals under consideration and stressed the importance of maintaining operational continuity.

52. Delegations also welcomed UNDP's continued efforts to promote gender equality, women's empowerment, governance, access to justice, human rights and social inclusion and highlighted positive experiences from cooperation with UNDP at the country level.

53. In response, the Administrator reiterated the importance of maintaining development at the center of global decision-making and emphasized that investments in development contribute directly to stability, resilience and prosperity. He underscored the continued importance of core resources while highlighting efforts to strengthen domestic resource mobilization, innovative financing, operational efficiency and workforce optimization. He further reaffirmed UNDP's commitment to gender equality, climate action, digital transformation, governance and resilience-building and stressed that any future reform under the UN80 initiative should strengthen implementation and preserve UNDP's ability to deliver effectively at the country level.

54. The Board concluded its consideration of the item.

IX. United Nations Capital Development Fund

55. The Executive Board considered the annual report on UNCDF results in 2025.

56. In his introductory remarks, the Executive Secretary highlighted UNCDF's unique role within the United Nations development system as a provider of catalytic, concessional and first-loss capital in least developed countries, small island developing States and fragile settings. He emphasized UNCDF's work in market development, financial inclusion, local development finance and mobilization of private sector investment, and outlined ongoing organizational reforms to strengthen effectiveness and efficiency.

57. Delegations welcomed the results achieved by UNCDF and reaffirmed the importance of its unique capital mandate. Several speakers highlighted UNCDF's contribution to financial inclusion, local economic

development, climate resilience and support for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, women entrepreneurs, local governments and underserved communities.

58. Delegations welcomed recognition of UNCDF's mandate in the Sevilla Commitment and emphasized the importance of strengthening its role in financing sustainable development. Speakers expressed concern regarding declining core resources and encouraged broader donor support and strengthened partnerships with development finance institutions, the private sector and philanthropic organizations. Several speakers also requested information regarding the implications of the UN80 initiative for UNCDF.

59. In response, the Executive Secretary emphasized UNCDF's distinctive role in supporting higher-risk and underserved markets and highlighted its focus on market creation through catalytic financing instruments. He underscored ongoing efforts to strengthen partnerships and mobilize additional resources while reaffirming the continued importance of core resources and flexible capital for fulfilling UNCDF's mandate.

X. United Nations Volunteers

60. The Executive Board considered the annual report of the Administrator on the United Nations Volunteers programme for 2025.

61. In presenting the report, the Executive Coordinator highlighted that more than 17,000 United Nations Volunteers served across 172 countries and territories in 2025, supporting peacebuilding, humanitarian action, development, governance, climate action and human rights. He emphasized UNV's role as a global shared service within the United Nations system and highlighted progress in gender parity, disability inclusion, the integration of volunteerism into United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks and preparations for the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development in 2026.

62. Delegations welcomed the record deployment of volunteers and reaffirmed the importance of volunteerism in advancing sustainable development and strengthening the effectiveness of the United Nations development system. Speakers highlighted the contribution of volunteers at the community level, particularly in crisis response, humanitarian assistance, recovery efforts and local development initiatives.

63. Delegations welcomed efforts to promote geographic diversity, gender equality, disability inclusion and intergenerational volunteerism and expressed support for preparations for the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development in 2026. Several speakers encouraged strengthened cooperation between UNV, governments and national volunteer organizations.

64. Speakers expressed concern regarding financial pressures facing the programme and emphasized the importance of predictable and sustainable financing, including through the Special Voluntary Fund. Delegations welcomed efforts to improve operational efficiency and deployment processes and encouraged continued support for volunteerism at the national and international levels.

65. In response, the Executive Coordinator expressed appreciation for the continued support and leadership of Executive Board members and Member States, emphasizing that many of the achievements reflected in the report were made possible through partnerships and initiatives led by Member States at the national, regional and global levels. He also thanked Member States contributing to the Special Voluntary Fund and encouraged others to do the same. Furthermore, he invited Member States to meet with United Nations Volunteers serving in and from their countries during forthcoming visits.

XI. UNDP evaluation

66. The Executive Board considered the annual report on evaluation for 2025, the associated management commentaries, the evaluation of UNDP support to electoral capacities and institutional processes and the related management response.

67. The Director of the Independent Evaluation Office reported continued progress in the performance and utilization of the evaluation function, highlighting improvements in the quality of decentralized evaluations, increased use of evaluation evidence and innovation in evaluation methodologies, including the use of artificial intelligence. She noted concerns regarding declining resources for decentralized evaluations and emphasized the importance of maintaining adequate resources for independent evaluation.

68. Presenting the evaluation of UNDP support to electoral capacities and institutional processes, the Independent Evaluation Office highlighted UNDP's contribution to strengthening electoral management bodies, voter registration systems, digital transformation and electoral integrity. The evaluation also identified challenges related to sustainability, inclusion, short-term funding cycles and emerging digital risks, including misinformation and cybersecurity threats.

69. Management welcomed the findings and recommendations of the evaluations and reaffirmed its commitment to accountability, organizational learning and evidence-based decision-making. Management highlighted efforts to strengthen programme and project management, results-based management and support for digital transformation and institutional resilience.

70. In the discussion, delegations welcomed the continued strengthening of the evaluation function and underscored the importance of independent, credible and adequately resourced evaluation systems. Delegations emphasized the value of evaluation for accountability, learning and evidence-based decision-making and highlighted the importance of strengthening national evaluation capacities and ensuring that evaluation findings are effectively integrated into programming and policy decisions.

XII. Gender equality at UNDP

71. The Executive Board considered the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy, 2026–2029, and the annual report on the implementation of the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy, 2022–2025.

72. UNDP presented the annual report and the new strategy, highlighting progress achieved under the Gender Equality Strategy, 2022–2025, including strong institutional performance and continued integration of gender equality across programme delivery. UNDP reported that 75 per cent of programme expenditure contributed to gender equality and highlighted results in expanding access to financial services and basic services for women. UNDP noted that the new Gender Equality Strategy, 2026–2029, had been developed through extensive consultations and positioned gender equality as a driver of broader development outcomes.

73. UNDP emphasized that the new strategy focused on addressing the root causes of inequality through areas where it held a comparative advantage, including social protection and care systems, fiscal policy, governance, environmental action, recovery and peacebuilding. UNDP also highlighted emerging challenges, including technology-facilitated gender-based violence and the risk that digital and artificial intelligence transitions could reinforce existing inequalities. It further emphasized the importance of partnerships and institutional transformation in supporting implementation.

74. Delegations commended UNDP for the results achieved under the Gender Equality Strategy, 2022–2025, and welcomed the new strategy for 2026–2029. Delegations emphasized that gender equality remained both a human rights imperative and an accelerator of sustainable development and welcomed the strategy's focus on higher-impact and system-level interventions.

75. Delegations highlighted the importance of continued implementation in Africa and welcomed efforts related to women's economic empowerment, care systems, gender-responsive budgeting, governance reform, prevention of gender-based violence, natural resource management and women's leadership. Speakers stressed the need for adequate resources, strengthened country-level implementation and continued support for women and girls affected by conflict, climate change and economic vulnerability.

76. Several delegations emphasized the importance of maintaining gender expertise at country level and strengthening collaboration with specialized entities, including UN-Women, as well as with civil society and women's organizations. Delegations also welcomed efforts to address violence against women and girls, including in digital spaces and in the context of emerging technologies.

77. Some delegations expressed support for efforts to remove barriers to women's access to finance, jobs and productive assets and for UNDP's work to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls. One delegation expressed concern regarding aspects of diversity, equity and inclusion-related programming.

78. In response, UNDP reaffirmed that implementation of the strategy would remain country-driven and emphasized that prioritization was intended to strengthen impact rather than reduce ambition. UNDP underscored the importance of partnerships with UN-Women, UNFPA, civil society and women's

organizations and reiterated its commitment to addressing gender-based violence and advancing women's economic empowerment.

79. The Executive Board took note of the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy, 2026–2029, and the annual report on the implementation of the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy, 2022–2025.

XIII. UNDP country programmes and related matters

80. The Executive Board considered the extensions of UNDP country programmes contained in document DP/2026/21.

81. UNDP presented the proposed extensions of the country programmes for Argentina, Kenya, Lebanon, South Sudan and Togo in accordance with Executive Board decision 2014/7. UNDP noted that the proposed extensions were aligned with the respective United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, had been prepared in consultation with national authorities and United Nations country teams and would ensure continuity of programme implementation while the next generation of country programmes was finalized.

82. Delegations welcomed and supported the proposed extensions and emphasized the importance of maintaining continuity of support to national development priorities and preserving alignment with national planning frameworks and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks.

83. Delegations highlighted UNDP's support in areas including democratic governance, inclusive growth, resilience-building, climate action, social cohesion, livelihoods, crisis prevention and recovery and sustainable development. Speakers welcomed the extensions for Kenya and Togo as practical measures to ensure continuity of support while preparations for the next programme cycles were completed.

84. With regard to South Sudan, delegations welcomed the proposed extension and highlighted the importance of continued support for peacebuilding, governance, rule of law, resilience, livelihoods and the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. One delegation raised concerns regarding risk, aid dependency, institutional capacity, corruption and fiscal management. South Sudan welcomed the extension and emphasized the importance of continued support aligned with national priorities and nationally led development efforts.

85. In response, UNDP reaffirmed the importance of national ownership and reiterated its commitment to supporting countries in advancing sustainable development, strengthening governance and expanding opportunities for growth, investment and job creation.

86. The Executive Board took note of the first one-year extensions, as approved by the UNDP Administrator, of the country programmes for Kenya and Togo. The Executive Board approved the second six-month extension of the country programme for Argentina and the second one-year extensions of the country programmes for Lebanon and South Sudan.

UNFPA segment

XIV. Statement by the UNFPA Executive Director and annual report of the UNFPA Executive Director

87. The Executive Board considered the annual report of the Executive Director of UNFPA on the implementation of the UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2022–2025.

88. The Executive Director presented her annual report, highlighting the achievements of the final year of the Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, and the commencement of implementation of the Strategic Plan, 2026–2029. She noted that UNFPA operated in an increasingly complex environment marked by financial pressures, geopolitical tensions, demographic change and accelerating crises. Despite these challenges, and in partnership with Member States, UNFPA continued to deliver for women, girls and young people in places where needs were greatest, supporting sexual and reproductive health and rights, combating gender-based violence and addressing population dynamics.

89. The Executive Director highlighted UNFPA's contributions in maternal health, reproductive health commodity security, prevention of harmful practices, gender-based violence prevention and response, humanitarian action and population data and census support. She emphasized the growing importance of demographic change and population dynamics, reflected in the Strategic Plan, 2026–2029, and highlighted increasing demand from Member States for support in addressing ageing, migration, urbanization, fertility trends and demographic resilience.

90. The Executive Director also highlighted UNFPA's humanitarian response and underscored the importance of flexible and predictable funding in enabling the organization to respond to crises and maintain support in fragile and humanitarian settings. While contributions exceeded the Strategic Plan target, she expressed concern regarding the continued decline in core resources and highlighted ongoing efforts to strengthen partnerships, expand innovative financing approaches and support domestic resource mobilization.

91. Delegations commended UNFPA for the results achieved under the Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, and reaffirmed support for its mandate. Delegations highlighted the importance of sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, maternal health, gender equality, prevention of gender-based violence and harmful practices and support for women, girls and young people.

92. Several delegations welcomed the increased attention given to demographic change and population dynamics under the Strategic Plan, 2026–2029, and encouraged continued support to Member States in addressing demographic transitions through data, analysis and evidence-based policymaking. Delegations also expressed concern regarding declining development and humanitarian financing and emphasized the importance of predictable, flexible and quality funding.

93. Delegations highlighted the importance of maintaining access to sexual and reproductive health services and gender-based violence prevention and response services in humanitarian and crisis settings and emphasized the need to protect gains achieved in these areas.

94. Delegations commented on the UN80 initiative and ongoing discussions regarding the future configuration of the United Nations development system, including the possible merger of UNFPA and UN-Women. Delegations broadly supported efforts to strengthen effectiveness, efficiency and coherence across the United Nations system while emphasizing that any reform process should remain Member State-driven, transparent and evidence-based, preserve mandates and operational effectiveness and avoid disruption to programme delivery. Several delegations requested additional information regarding reform options and emphasized the importance of continued consultation with governing bodies.

95. In response, the Executive Director thanked delegations for their continued support and reaffirmed UNFPA's commitment to advancing sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, gender equality and demographic resilience. She emphasized the importance of continued investment in population data, demographic analysis and national planning capacities and reiterated the need for predictable and flexible funding. The Executive Director also reaffirmed UNFPA's engagement in ongoing United Nations reform efforts and its commitment to supporting informed decision-making by Member States while ensuring that mandate delivery and operational effectiveness remain central to any future reform process.

96. The Deputy Executive Director (Management) highlighted ongoing efforts to strengthen organizational effectiveness through business model reforms, shared services and participation in United Nations system-wide efficiency initiatives. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme), a.i., provided additional information on implementation of the demographic resilience outcome under the Strategic Plan, 2026–2029.

97. In her concluding remarks, the Executive Director thanked Member States for their engagement and support and reaffirmed UNFPA's commitment to advancing the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and delivering results for women, girls and young people, including in humanitarian and crisis settings.

XV. UNFPA evaluation

98. The Executive Board considered the annual report of the Independent Evaluation Office of UNFPA for 2025, the associated management commentaries, the independent evaluation of UNFPA support to the 2020 round of population and housing censuses and the related management response.

99. Presenting the annual report, the Director ad interim of the Independent Evaluation Office highlighted continued progress in the performance of the evaluation function, including improvements in evaluation quality, innovation and efficiency. He noted ongoing efforts to strengthen humanitarian evaluations, promote the use of artificial intelligence and support national evaluation capacity development, while emphasizing that evaluation financing remained below the corporate target.

100. Presenting the evaluation of UNFPA support to the 2020 round of population and housing censuses, the Independent Evaluation Office concluded that UNFPA had provided effective technical support despite resource constraints and operational challenges. The evaluation highlighted UNFPA's technical leadership in census support while identifying challenges related to institutional capacity, knowledge management, sustainability of expertise and the use of census data in policymaking.

101. Management welcomed the findings and recommendations of the evaluations and reaffirmed its commitment to accountability, organizational learning and evidence-based decision-making. Management highlighted ongoing efforts to strengthen evaluation systems, a sustained institutional commitment to the evaluation function despite a constrained environment and growing humanitarian demands, and efforts to promote innovation while maintaining methodological rigour and human oversight.

102. In the discussion, delegations welcomed continued efforts to strengthen the independence, quality and utility of evaluation within UNFPA. Delegations emphasized the importance of evaluation for accountability, learning and programme effectiveness and encouraged continued efforts to strengthen national evaluation capacities and ensure that evaluation findings are effectively integrated into programme design and implementation.

XVI. UNFPA country programmes and related matters

103. The Executive Board considered the extensions of UNFPA country programmes contained in document DP/FPA/2026/9.

104. UNFPA presented the proposed extensions of the country programmes for Kenya and Lebanon. UNFPA noted that the extensions were required to align future country programmes with the respective United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks and national development planning cycles and would ensure continuity of programme implementation while the next programme cycles were being prepared.

105. Delegations welcomed and supported the proposed extensions. Kenya expressed appreciation for UNFPA's continued partnership and support in advancing national development priorities, including sexual and reproductive health, gender equality, prevention of gender-based violence, demographic resilience and population data systems.

106. The Africa Group welcomed the extension of the country programme for Kenya and highlighted UNFPA's contribution to improving sexual and reproductive health outcomes, advancing gender equality, addressing gender-based violence and supporting adolescents and young people.

107. Lebanon welcomed the extensions of the UNDP and UNFPA country programmes and expressed appreciation for UNFPA's continued support in the areas of sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence prevention and response, youth empowerment, demographic intelligence and support to vulnerable groups.

108. In response, UNFPA thanked Kenya, Lebanon and the Africa Group for their support and reaffirmed its commitment to supporting national priorities through continued engagement across the humanitarian-development-peace continuum, including in the areas of sexual and reproductive health, gender equality, gender-based violence prevention and response and demographic resilience.

109. The Executive Board approved the second one-year extension of the country programme for Lebanon. The Executive Board took note of the first one-year extension, as approved by the UNFPA Executive Director, of the country programme for Kenya.

UNOPS segment

XVII. Statement by the UNOPS Executive Director and annual report of the UNOPS Executive Director

110. The Executive Board considered the annual report of the Executive Director of UNOPS on the activities of the organization in 2025.

111. Presenting the report, the Executive Director highlighted the increasingly complex global operating environment, characterized by conflict, climate-related crises, economic instability and declining development financing. He emphasized the role of UNOPS in providing implementation, procurement, infrastructure and operational support services across humanitarian, development and peacebuilding contexts and highlighted the organization's contribution to supporting the delivery of United Nations mandates and national priorities. He noted that UNOPS worked in over 130 countries and territories, with over two-thirds of its work taking place in complex and fragile situations.

112. Further elaborating on UNOPS work in such settings across various countries and regions, the Executive Director underscored UNOPS' contribution to facilitating humanitarian and commercial flows through practical and transparent confidence-building mechanisms, demonstrating the organization's ability to provide tailored operational support in response to evolving global challenges. He also emphasized the organization's contribution to broader United Nations system efforts through operational, technical and logistical support services, noting that 70 per cent of the organization's portfolio was delivered in cooperation with other United Nations organizations.

113. The Executive Director further highlighted that UNOPS had implemented a comprehensive reform programme over the past three years, strengthening governance, accountability, and organizational performance, and noted that progress had been recognized through third-party assessments.

114. Delegations welcomed the scale and scope of UNOPS operational delivery and highlighted the value of its demand-driven, full cost-recovery model and implementation expertise. Speakers emphasized the importance of infrastructure development, procurement, project management, climate resilience, energy access and capacity development in support of sustainable development and national priorities.

115. Several delegations welcomed progress in strengthening governance, accountability, transparency and risk management following implementation of the comprehensive response plan. Delegations encouraged continued reporting on oversight recommendations, process innovation and digitalization efforts and emphasized the importance of maintaining strong financial stewardship and internal controls.

116. Delegations also highlighted the importance of cooperation across the United Nations development system and welcomed UNOPS contributions to humanitarian response, recovery efforts and operational support services. Speakers encouraged continued collaboration while maintaining the organization's responsiveness and country-focused delivery model.

117. A significant number of delegations commented on the UN80 initiative and ongoing discussions regarding possible future structural arrangements involving UNOPS. Delegations broadly supported efforts to strengthen the effectiveness and coherence of the United Nations development system while emphasizing the importance of preserving UNOPS' operational focus, implementation expertise and demand-driven, fee-for-service business model. Several delegations requested additional information regarding the potential costs, benefits, risks and governance implications of options under consideration.

118. In response, the Executive Director reaffirmed UNOPS' commitment to accountability, reform and results. He emphasized the importance of moving from outputs to outcomes in the implementation of the Strategic Plan, strengthening accountability, and measuring results through their impact on people's lives. He also stressed the importance of safeguarding UNOPS' operational neutrality, implementation capacity and demand-driven approach, while continuing to contribute to United Nations reform efforts and strengthening cooperation across the United Nations development system. He further emphasized the importance of United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks and the resident coordinator system in strengthening coherence across the United Nations development system.

XVIII. Implementation of the UNOPS mobility policy

119. The Executive Board considered the report on the implementation of the UNOPS global mobility framework.

120. Introducing the report, the Director of the People and Culture Group outlined the objectives of the framework, highlighting its role in supporting leadership development, knowledge transfer, organizational effectiveness and workforce agility. She noted that the framework established a flexible, vacancy-based approach to mobility supported by talent management measures and digital tools and highlighted efforts to strengthen mobility between headquarters and field locations.

121. In the discussion, delegations welcomed the development of the framework and recognized its potential contribution to organizational effectiveness and leadership development. Delegations emphasized the importance of implementing mobility in a transparent and cost-conscious manner while maintaining a strong field orientation and taking into account duty of care, family circumstances, hardship conditions and staff well-being. Several speakers also encouraged the use of digital tools to broaden access to opportunities across the organization.

122. In response, management reaffirmed its commitment to implementing the framework in a gradual, transparent and equitable manner and highlighted efforts to integrate mobility into workforce planning, recruitment, performance management and leadership development. The Executive Director emphasized that mobility constituted a strategic investment in organizational culture, leadership development and institutional effectiveness.

123. The Executive Board took note of the report on the implementation of the UNOPS global mobility framework.

Joint segment

XIX. Other matters

124. Under agenda item 19, adoption of decisions, the Executive Board considered the draft decisions before it for adoption at the annual session 2026.

125. The Executive Board adopted decisions under the following agenda items: item 2, update on the implementation efforts on the repositioning of the United Nations development system; item 3, internal audit and investigation; item 4, ethics; item 5, protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment; item 6, update on the assessment of how the Executive Board executes its governance and oversight functions; item 7, annual report of the UNDP Administrator; item 9, UNDP evaluation; item 11, United Nations Capital Development Fund; item 12, United Nations Volunteers; item 13, annual report of the UNFPA Executive Director; item 14, UNFPA evaluation; and item 16, annual report of the UNOPS Executive Director.

126. With respect to agenda item 18, engagement with the UN80 initiative, the President informed the Executive Board that agreement had not yet been reached on the draft decision. Finland made a motion to reconvene the Executive Board the following day to allow additional time for negotiations and consideration of the draft decision. The Executive Board agreed to resume its consideration of the item on 12 June 2026.

127. The Executive Board then returned to agenda item 1, organizational matters, and considered the tentative workplan for the second regular session 2026. Following its introduction by the Secretary of the Executive Board, the Executive Board approved the tentative workplan.

128. During the discussion, one delegation, speaking on behalf of a group of Member States and observers, emphasized the governance and oversight responsibilities of the Executive Board and highlighted the importance of providing adequate time and space for presentations, interaction with entities, negotiations and substantive consideration of agenda items, particularly in the context of United Nations development system

reform and the UN80 initiative. The delegation also underscored the importance of consensus-based decision-making and called for maintaining the original duration of Board sessions.

129. In response, the President noted that agendas and workplans were discussed in advance with the Bureau, in which all regional groups were represented. He observed that challenges in concluding negotiations were not always related to the amount of time available and encouraged delegations to focus on substantive outcomes and make effective use of the time allocated. The President thanked delegations, the Bureau and the Vice-Presidents for their engagement throughout the session and informed the Board that it would reconvene the following day to continue consideration of agenda item 18.

130. On 12 June 2026, the Executive Board resumed its consideration of agenda item 18 and adopted decision 2026/16 on engagement with the UN80 initiative.

131. Following adoption of the decision, delegations welcomed the successful conclusion of negotiations and reiterated the importance of the Executive Board's governance and oversight functions. Several speakers highlighted the importance of ensuring adequate time and space for substantive consideration of agenda items and related negotiations and emphasized the value of transparency, inclusiveness and meaningful participation in the work of the Executive Board.

132. In response, the President acknowledged the comments made by delegations and reiterated the importance of continued discussions on the effective use of time and resources in the work of the Executive Board.

133. The annual session 2026 was then declared closed.