



## Joint Statement

### Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS – Agenda Item 10

#### ANNUAL SESSION 2019

#### Evaluation function

30 May to 7 June 2019, New York

Mr President

I make this statement on behalf of Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and my own country Switzerland.

We thank the Evaluation Office for its annual report. The clear, well-structured and easy to read report in front of us is a valuable instrument allowing member states to easily follow developments of UNFPA's evaluation function.

In this intervention we would like to highlight some elements that are of particular importance to us:

*First, on the performance, resource allocation and learning:* we congratulate the Evaluation Office and are pleased to comment on an overall very positive picture of UNFPA's evaluation performance. We are particularly pleased with the significant improvement of **coverage and implementation rate of decentralized program-level evaluations**. Past financial constraints are being addressed successfully by a cooperation of the Evaluation Office and the Policy and Strategy Division, notably through the **financial ring-fencing mechanism** benefiting in particular small country offices. We value and request to continue these efforts. Accordingly, **financial investment** in the evaluation function has increased in the last year, even more for decentralized evaluations. With an actual expenditure of 0.96% we are getting closer to the 1.4 to 3% of total program expenditure as defined target in the recently renewed evaluation policy. We look forward and anticipate to see this trend continue. As the

quality of the evaluations in 2018 deviate from the positive trend observed in the last years, we encourage the Evaluation Office to make efforts to prevent a potential negative trend. The quality of the evaluations must be safeguarded, including by monitoring any potential continuing decline of the percentage of programme-level evaluations rated 'good' or 'very good'.

Furthermore, we are pleased that **implementation of recommendations by management** continues to increase. We believe this is a key element to ensure that evaluation findings lead to learning. In this sense, we also welcome the introduction of the new key performance indicator on the **use of evaluation in program development**. As mentioned in the report, support for better use of evaluation findings is needed; therefore we also encourage the Evaluation Office to finalize in 2019 its strategy to strengthen evaluation use.

*Secondly, on system-wide and joint work:* we highly value UNFPA's Evaluation Office' commitment and active support to the reform agenda and joint and system-wide evaluations. We continue to strongly encourage UNFPA, in collaboration with its sister-agencies, to further support **independent system-wide evaluation mechanisms**, as members of the UNEG as well as under the leadership of the Secretary General. While we have always been supportive of the establishment of an independent unit to undertake independent system-wide evaluations, we learn now from the report of the Secretary General on the progress on the UNDS reform, that, based on the initial proposal of this unit, a revised strategy would clarify roles and responsibilities and identify options for a new mechanism in support of system-wide evaluation. We would like to receive clarification on where this progress stands, what options of responsibilities, mechanisms and funding are being discussed and/or envisaged. Moreover, we are pleased to note that the **joint evaluation of the common chapter** of the Strategic Plans of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN-Women is now included in the quadrennial budgeted evaluation plan, scheduled for 2019 to 2020/21. We welcome that an inter-agency group under the guidance of the four directors of evaluation has been tasked to this specific evaluation and are looking forward to its result.

We remain committed to supporting UNFPA's evaluation function in its important role in fostering learning, accountability and evidence-based decision-making and programming

Thank you for your attention.

