

Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS
FIRST REGULAR SESSION 2023
UNFPA Segment – UNFPA Evaluation Item 9
Joint statement
02 February 2023, New York
- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY –

Madam President,

Dear Deputy Executive Director,

Distinguished Members of the Executive Board,

I am speaking on behalf of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Republic of Moldova, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Türkiye, the United Kingdom, Ukraine, the United States and my own delegation Germany.

Let me start by thanking UNFPA for conducting this evaluation. It revealed a lot of constructive insights – for Member States, for UNFPA and the system alike. With this formative evaluation on UN development system reform - the first of its kind in the system - UNFPA demonstrates its commitment to making reform tangible and addressing necessary implementation steps. We encourage other UN entities to follow the trailblazer

role of UNFPA to evaluate their respective engagement as well. This will also be relevant for the 2024 QCPR negotiations.

Let me highlight that UNFPA has shown commendable engagement in implementing the UN Development System reform. The organization has made significant contributions to the design, development, and operationalization of the reform at all levels. For an agency of its size, despite recent limitations imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, UNFPA has strongly engaged in the architecture of the reform, from United Nations Sustainable Development Group task forces through regional issue-based coalitions to results groups at the country level. As Member States, we cannot emphasize enough that we share the understanding of UNFPA that its mandate can only be fulfilled by working with others in the UN family.

We welcome UNFPA management taking the recommendations seriously and identifying clear areas for action. In particular, the focus on aligning internal policies and strategies with system-wide priorities should be highlighted. We encourage UNFPA to develop an overall engagement strategy with the UNDS reform and to ensure that all organizational units that are tasked to implement the recommendations act promptly and decisively. Additionally, a close exchange with DCO and the RC Offices is central to achieving a clear division of labor, in particular in multi-country office environments.

For Member States it is of utmost importance that the recommendations concerning institutionalizing and internalizing the reform and addressing the human resource challenges, in particular the UN reform mindset among UNFPA personnel are thoroughly addressed. This requires an explicit and continuous effort to integrate inter-agency cooperation incentives into the daily work of everyone at UNFPA. MOPAN and other studies on UNDS reform, insights from the System-Wide Evaluation of the UNDS Socio-Economic Response to COVID-19, as well as conversations with UN staff, consistently show the importance of a culture shift toward greater collaboration and a focus on joint results. We regard, among others, continued trainings for all personnel, and strong internal communication from the leadership as meaningful approaches for staff to internalize the spirit of the reform. We urge UNFPA, along with other agencies, to ensure their performance metrics assess how UNFPA staff are contributing to the implementation of the reform. We also reiterate the importance of UNFPA ensuring that those working in humanitarian contexts make best use of UNDS reform, especially to use the reform in working with partners across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. These steps are necessary for the reform to bring about long-term changes and meaningful impact. We encourage UNFPA to frequently update the Executive Board about its activities and the status of implementation of the recommendations.

Let me close by acknowledging that leadership has been a critical factor in implementing the reform and making it a success for UNFPA. This is paired with the strong engagement of all staff working in the spirit of the reform.

It is time to move from building the architecture of reform to building ownership of sustainable change at every level.

Thank you.