

Draft Statement

Mr. Ib Petersen, Deputy Executive Director (Management)

2023 First Regular session of the Executive Board

Agenda: Evaluation of UNFPA engagement in the UNDS Reform and management response

New York, Thursday, 2 February 2023

Mr. President, Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates,

It is my pleasure to present the management response to the formative evaluation of UNFPA's engagement in UN Development System Reform.

As the evaluation report highlights, UNFPA has made important contributions to the design and implementation of the repositioned UN development system in the past years.

This includes our contribution to re-design the former UN Development Assistance Framework, into the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework. And it also includes UNFPA leading in driving the efficiency agenda through the Business Innovation Group.

The evaluation report also highlights that UNFPA has generally benefited from UN reform. For example, in 2022 alone, UNFPA realized \$10.5 million in efficiencies from UNFPA internal and bilateral efforts – and \$27.5 million in efficiencies from the implementation of Business Operations Strategies at country and regional levels.

UNFPA has also benefited from improved coordination at country-level. Based on initial responses from UNFPA's Third internal survey on UN Reform implementation, I am happy to report that UNFPA Country Offices continue to find that:

- Resident Coordinators are improving coordination among UNCT members and are increasingly engaged in the normative issues.
- New Cooperation Frameworks are leading to increased coherence among agencies, and
- UN Reform is leading to more integrated SDG policy support to host governments.

While UNFPA will present a more comprehensive analysis of the survey to the Board in the run up to the annual session, these initial survey results reinforce the system-wide benefits of engagement in UN Reform.

And through the implementation of the evaluation report recommendations, UNFPA will enhance its contribution to the achievement of system wide results.

Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates,

I will now turn to UNFPA's management response to the six recommendations contained in the evaluation report.

First, UNFPA will enhance its strategic approach to UN Reform, within the framework of the current Strategic Plan.

This will include developing a dedicated strategy or an action plan on UN Reform, and further mainstreaming UN Reform across all areas of the Strategic Plan.

While the evaluation recommends a standalone accelerator on UN Reform, UNFPA management believes that the spirit of the Reform would be more effectively realized through enhanced mainstreaming within the Strategic Plan.

Second, UNFPA will broaden the ownership of UN Reform across the organization. This will include tailoring engagement and capacity building efforts, and strengthening the integration of UN Reform into annual planning processes – such as annual Regional Leadership Meetings.

Third, UNFPA will address human resource challenges that may arise from UN Reform. In line with the new 2030 People Strategy, UNFPA will work to strengthen the integration of UN Reform into staff performance indicators as well as staff performance appraisals.

Also, UNFPA will establish a process for providing information and career support where staff may be impacted by Local Shared-Service Centres at country level in cooperation with the UNCTs.

Fourth, UNFPA will continue to work through existing inter-agency processes, to address reform-related challenges and risks for its programme work. This will include working with agencies to further improve derivation of Country Programmes from the Cooperation Framework, and strengthening the inclusion of indicators related to the three transformative results in Cooperation Frameworks.

Fifth, UNFPA will enhance its approach in Multi-Country Office contexts. Building on our previous efforts to increase funding to the Caribbean and the Pacific, we will enhance tailored global support to offices in Multi-Country contexts, and strengthen information sharing among MCOs

Lastly, UNFPA will strengthen the knowledge of staff working in humanitarian contexts on UN Reform.

UNFPA looks forward to providing the Executive Board with an update on our efforts to respond to the evaluation recommendations, through existing reporting on UN Reform, ahead of the Executive Board's annual session.

Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates,

While UNFPA has made significant progress in implementing the reform agenda, the evaluation report highlights that there is still work left to do.

To that end, UNFPA will prioritize strengthening its internal processes, strategic direction and reform ownership of all staff, to more effectively contribute to the repositioning process.

As we move toward the next phase of UN Reform implementation, UNFPA will also increase its focus on results.

Given the increasingly complex global environment, UNFPA will more strategically engage with UN partners, to accelerate progress toward the three transformative results and the SDGs.

It will take all of us, working together, to turn 8 billion people into 8 billion opportunities – and to achieve our common objective for creating a more equal and just world.

We count on the sustained support from Member States, and look forward to continued productive engagement with the Executive Board.

Thank you.
