

Policy for Information Disclosure

Purpose

1. The United Nations Population Fund (“UNFPA”) is committed to making information about its programmes and operations available to the public. UNFPA considers public access to information a key component of effective participation of all stakeholders, including the public, in the achievement of its mandate. UNFPA recognizes that there is a positive correlation between transparency, including through information-sharing, and public trust in UNFPA-supported development activities.
2. As a custodian and steward of donor funds, UNFPA is accountable, *inter alia*, to the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board, which is comprised of United Nations Member States. It is considered that public access to UNFPA information further facilitates UNFPA’s transparency and accountability.
3. The Information Disclosure Policy of UNFPA (“Policy”) is intended to ensure that information concerning UNFPA programmes and operations is available to the public, except for information that is subject to limitations of disclosure as further set out in this Policy. To the extent that UNFPA information is already available to the public through various means, including through the UNFPA global website and individual UNFPA country office websites, this Policy explains existing principles, practices and procedures.

Definition of “Information”

4. For purposes of this Policy, “information” shall mean any produced¹ content, whatever its medium (paper, electronic or sound, visual or audiovisual recording), concerning a matter relating to the policies, activities and decisions of UNFPA.

Substantive Scope of Application

5. This Policy shall apply to all information in the possession of UNFPA.

Personal Scope of Application

6. Any person may access or request information, subject to the limitations set forth in this Policy.

¹The Policy therefore excludes data that exist in raw form, either physically or electronically. UNFPA is not in a position to respond to any request that requires the selection and/or manipulation of data to produce content.

General principle

7. Information should be accessible and may be disclosed, subject to the limitations set forth in this Policy.

Type of information available

The package of information that is available to the public includes the following:

8.1 Information about UNFPA Country Programme Management:

Common Country Assessments/ United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (CCA/UNDAF)

Country programme documents or “One Plan” documents

Country programme action plans

Project documents

Project performance reports

Evaluation reports

8.2 Information about UNFPA Operations:

UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board

UNFPA Executive Office

UNFPA financial information

UNFPA procurement

UNFPA staffing

For further details of each type of information material above see Annex I.

Limitations

9. Confidential information is not subject to disclosure in accordance with this Policy. As defined in the UNFPA Oversight Policy, the following information is considered confidential:

- (a) Information received from or sent to third parties, under an expectation of confidentiality;
- (b) Information whose disclosure is likely to endanger the safety or security of any individual, violate his or her rights or invade his or her privacy;
- (c) Information whose disclosure is likely to endanger the security of Member States or prejudice the security or proper conduct of any operation or activity of the organization;
- (d) Information covered by legal privilege or regulatory proceedings, or that subjects the organization to an undue risk of litigation, or is related to due process rights of individuals involved in internal audits and investigations;
- (e) Internal inter-office or intra-office documents, including e-mails and draft documents;
- (f) Commercial information, if disclosure would harm either the financial interests of the organization or those of other parties involved;
- (g) Information which, if disclosed, in the organization's view would seriously undermine the policy dialogue with Member States or implementing partners;
- (h) Other kinds of information, which because of their content or the circumstances of their creation or communication must be deemed confidential.

10. Strictly confidential information is not subject to disclosure in accordance with this Policy. As defined in the UNFPA Oversight Policy, strict confidentiality:

... refers to information or material whose unauthorized disclosure could reasonably be expected to cause exceptionally grave damage to or impede the conduct of the work of UNFPA. This includes information or material deemed particularly sensitive relating to third parties or a country, government or administration, or that could compromise pending action and where such is likely to endanger the safety or security of any individual, violate his or her rights or invade his or her privacy.

11. If only parts of the information are subject to a limitation of disclosure, UNFPA may decide, at its discretion, that the remaining part of the information concerned may be disclosed.
12. Other UNFPA or United Nations policies, procedures or practices may contain information disclosure limitations. Nothing in or relating to this Policy shall be deemed in any way to abridge, modify or abolish the application of those policies, procedures or practices. Furthermore, nothing in or relating to this Policy shall be deemed a waiver, express or implied, of any of the privileges and immunities of the United Nations, including its subsidiary organs.

Accessibility of Information

13. Information accessible to the public shall be made available, as much as possible, reasonable and practical, on the UNFPA global website, the websites of UNFPA regional and subregional offices, country offices, or websites of the United Nations system.²
14. Furthermore, any person may request information from UNFPA directly. Information requests shall be submitted by email.³

Processing of Information Requests

15. Requests for information shall be handled solely at UNFPA headquarters through a designated focal point. Information requests received by UNFPA staff members shall be forwarded through the head of division, office or unit to the focal point, following the procedure set out in Annex II of this policy.
16. All information requests shall be handled promptly. The requestor should receive an acknowledgement of receipt of his/her request within 10 working days. Depending on the complexity of the request, UNFPA shall endeavor to handle all requests within 30 days. For information requests that involve the reproduction of material, UNFPA may charge a fee for material and labor cost, which will be communicated to the requestor in advance.
17. UNFPA may partially or wholly deny a request, as follows:
 - (a) In accordance with the limitations set out in paragraphs 8 to 11 (above);
 - (b) If the request is deemed by UNFPA to be an excessive demand upon UNFPA's resources; or

² For information purposes, a comprehensive overview of UNFPA information that is readily accessible is given in Annex I. This annex will be updated whenever the type of accessible information and/or its source changes.

³ Contact details will be given through a "contact us" link, shown on the UNFPA global website.

(c) If the request, in the judgment of UNFPA, altogether appears to be non-serious or ill-considered.

18. If a request is denied, the requestor may seek the review of the decision by addressing a letter to the UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (External Relations, United Nations Affairs and Management). The Deputy Executive Director (External Relations, United Nations Affairs and Management) shall review the decision and shall address a reasoned response to the requestor.

Reproduction of Information

19. The implementation of this Policy shall be subject to existing rules on intellectual property and other proprietary rights including, but not limited to, patents, copyrights, and trademarks, which may, *inter alia*, limit a third party's right to reproduce or exploit information.

Languages

20. This document will be available in all official United Nations languages.

Disclaimer

21. No representation is made or warranty given, express or implied, as to the completeness or accuracy of information in UNFPA's possession. The requestor shall apply discretion when using the information. UNFPA will not be liable for any direct or indirect loss arising from the use of the information.

Entry into Force

22. This Policy shall enter into force on 1 January 2009

ANNEX I**Overview of UNFPA information available to the public on dedicated UNFPA or United Nations websites****I. Information about UNFPA programmes**

a) Country Programme documents, Country Programme Action Plans

Country programmes, country programme action plans, in combination with the annual work plans (AWP), constitute the legal agreement between the programme country government and UNFPA to implement UNFPA-funded assistance. These documents are available on the website of the UNFPA Country Office concerned. Country programmes are approved by the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board and therefore also available at the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board website. In some countries, where there is no AWP, the UNFPA programme consists of project documents. These constitute the formal agreement between UNFPA and the government concerned to jointly implement a project. Such project documents can be made available by the country office on request.

b) Global and Regional Programme documents

Global and regional programmes are available at the [UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board website](#).

c) Standard Progress Report (SPR)

The SPR provides information on progress in achieving country programme outputs and their contribution to country programme outcomes as well as to UNDAF outcomes. The SPR is prepared as part of the UNDAF Annual Review.

d) Evaluation Reports

On overview of the UNFPA evaluation activities is prepared biannually and presented by the Executive Director to the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board. These reports can also be found at the UNFPA global website page under [oversight services](#). Global, thematic and/or programme evaluations are available under the [publications](#) section of the UNFPA global website. At the moment, there is no central repository of project level evaluations and the management responses to evaluations. This facility will be added in the future.

II. Information about UNFPA operations

a) UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board

All documentation, based on the program work of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board, is available on the [Executive Board website](#). Executive Board documents prior to 2000 can be found on the United Nations [Official Document System website](#). Executive Board documents are prepared to help the Board carry out its mandate as formulated in United Nations General Assembly resolution 48/162. The documents cover a wide range of issues – policy and strategic (including the UNFPA strategic plan), financial, budgetary, administrative, programming and operational matters, evaluations, and organizational and procedural issues. These reports are later issued as official documents of the United Nations and are available through the United Nations's documents website. A permanent record of all deliberations and decisions of the Board is also available on the Executive Board website. In addition, an archive of the Executive Board predecessor, the UNDP/UNFPA Governing Council, with documents dating back to 1966 is available on the website.

b) UNFPA Executive Office

Statements and speeches by the Executive Director are available to the public through the [UNFPA global website](#).

c) UNFPA Financial Information

All relevant documentation on UNFPA budgets for management and programme activities approved by the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board, including the financial report and audited financial statements, the annual review of the financial situation and the annual report of UNFPA's Division for Oversight Services are publicly accessible at the [Executive Board website](#). UNFPA's audited financial statements are also published and posted every biennium on the [United Nations General Assembly website](#). Information on funding sources is available as well in the [Annual Report of the Executive Director](#). Financial information of direct donor-supported projects and programmes is available at the UNFPA country or regional and subregional offices and at the UNFPA headquarters for global programmes. UNFPA country office financial information, in terms of expenditures related to programme and administration is available at the country office concerned.

d) UNFPA Procurement

UNFPA makes public all its procurement solicitation notices online. Bids for international procurement and contracts awarded are listed at [the United Nations Global Marketplace](#). Procurement notices and contracts awarded for locally issued contracts are listed on the country office websites. [The UNFPA global procurement](#)

[website](#) provides procurement data by vendor, country, amount, type of services/goods, etc.

e) UNFPA Policies and Procedures

All UNFPA policies and procedures, contained in the policies and procedures manual (PPM), are available to the public at the UNFPA global website.

f) UNFPA Human Resources

The following human resources information is available at the UNFPA global website:

- Statistics on the composition of UNFPA staff, i.e. figures on staff working in headquarters, regional offices and in each country;
- An organization chart of UNFPA, showing the various divisions and units and the positions authorized in the biannual budget;
- United Nations staff rules and regulations

Other human resources information is provided in the Executive Director's Annual Report as well as in the Board of Auditors report listed on the [United Nations General Assembly website](#).

g) UNFPA Financial Rules and Regulations

ANNEX II**Procedures to be followed by UNFPA following a request for information**

- 1) If the information requested falls into one of the types of information that is available to the public on UNFPA's website, or other United Nations websites, as listed in Annex I, the request does not need to be relayed to the focal point. The office, unit or division receiving the request should direct the requester to the appropriate section of the website.
- 2) If the information is not already publically available, under paragraph 15 of the policy, it must be forwarded to the UNFPA focal point, through the head of division, office or unit that received the request.
- 3) The focal point for processing information requests is the Director of Information and External Relations.
- 4) Paragraph 16 of the policy sets out the time frame for the focal point to determine the request. An acknowledgement of the request must be received by the requester within 10 working days. The acknowledgement of the request should be given by the unit, office or division that received the request.
- 5) Paragraph 17 of the policy sets out the process that must be followed in determining the request, and whether any of the three reasons to decline the request apply. Those three reasons are:
 - (a) if the request is for information that is confidential, strictly confidential, or partly confidential (under paragraphs 9 to 11 of the policy); or
 - (b) if the request is deemed to be an excessive demand upon UNFPA's resources; or
 - (c) if the request appears to be non-serious or ill-considered.
- 6) In making the determination under paragraph 17, the focal point shall seek the views of the office, division or unit that holds the information. In addition, the focal point should also seek the views of other relevant divisions or offices, including:
 - The Resource Mobilization Branch (where a donor, or the interests of a donor, is involved);
 - The Executive Board and External Relations Branch (where the request is related to, or could become a part of, political debate in the Executive Board or United Nations bodies);
 - The Media and Communications Branch (if the request may become public);

- The relevant country office and regional office (where a specific programme is involved);
- The Office of the Executive Director;
- The Division of Human Resources and Legal Advisor (if there are any issues relating to privacy, legal privilege, or commercial confidence);
- The Division for Oversight Services (if the request is for information related to audit or oversight mechanisms).

7) In seeking the views of relevant divisions, units or offices, the focal point should make clear requests for views on whether any of the specific grounds of limitation apply, as set out in paragraphs 9 to 11, and paragraph 17 of the policy.

8) If none of the grounds for denying a request apply, the request shall be granted. If one or more of the grounds apply, the request shall be denied, or denied in part.

9) Once the focal point has made the determination, it shall be referred to the relevant units, offices or divisions prior to the decision being communicated to the requester, for concurrence.

10) Once the determination is final, the focal point shall direct the office, unit or division that received the request, to communicate the decision, and the relevant information (if approved) to the requester.