

## UNFPA

### Policies and Procedures Manual

#### Issuance of Policies and Procedures, tools and guidance notes

Issuance

Policy Title	Policy and Procedures for Development, Approval and Issuance of Policies, Procedures, Tools and Guidance Notes
Previous title (if any)	Issuance of Policies and Procedures, Tools and Guidance Notes
Policy objective	The Issuance Policy outlines the process for approval and issuance of UNFPA's policies, procedures, tools and guidance notes.
Target audience	The policy applies to all UNFPA personnel involved in the development, approval and issuance of policies, procedures, tools and guidance notes.
Risk control matrix	Controls of the process are detailed in the <a href="#">Risk Control Matrix</a>
Checklist	
Effective date	16 April 2019
Revision History	Revision number: 4 Revision 3: April 2018 Revision 2: June 2017 Revision 1: September 2014 Originally Issued: July 2010
Mandatory revision date	April 2022
Policy owner unit	Policy and Strategy Division
Approval	<a href="#">Link to signed approval template</a>

**Table of Contents**

<b>I.</b>	1	
<b>II.</b>	1	
<b>III.</b>	2	
A. Development and Approval		2
B. Issuance		5
C. Translation		5
<b>IV.</b>	6	7
<b>VI.</b>	8	
Annex I: Policy Committee Submission Template		9
Annex II: Terms of Reference: UNFPA Policy Committee		10
Annex III: Policy Approval Template		13

**POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR DEVELOPMENT, APPROVAL AND ISSUANCE OF POLICIES, PROCEDURES, TOOLS AND GUIDANCE NOTES**

**I. Purpose**

This policy outlines the development, approval and issuance process of all content entered into UNFPA’s policies and procedures manual (PPM) and PPM website.

The Policies and Procedures Manual (PPM) is the sole authoritative source for all of UNFPA’s approved regulations, rules, policies and procedures. The PPM can be found on the UNFPA PPM website, which also includes UNFPA tools and guidance notes. The PPM and [PPM website](#)<sup>1</sup> are maintained by the Policy and Strategy Division.

**II. Policy**

This policy outlines UNFPA’s process for developing, approving and issuing policies, identifies control actions to mitigate potential risks associated with the business process and establishes the following:

- a) All UNFPA policies and procedures<sup>2</sup> shall enter into force upon the date specified therein and shall remain in force until superseded or amended by another policy of the same or higher level and promulgated in accordance with the provisions of this policy.
- b) All policies and procedures, tools, guidelines and guidance notes for the PPM shall be authored in a consultative manner, revised, approved and issued according to the procedures outlined in the steps below, unless so determined by the Executive Director.
- c) The PPM Secretariat is responsible for the overall management of the PPM and PPM website and is responsible for quality assurance and the coordination of policy approval and issuance.
- d) Controls to manage risks must be mainstreamed in all policies and must be documented in a risk control matrix, unless the PPM Secretariat, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, approves to forego a risk control matrix.
- e) Approval of all UNFPA policies and procedures rests with the UNFPA Executive Director. Approval can be delegated to the Deputy Executive Directors (DEDs). Approval of non-material policy revisions has been delegated to the respective director of the unit that has policy ownership.
- f) Circulars and e-mails from individual units to UNFPA personnel that contain a policy directive is not considered official policy and therefore, is not binding. Any change to a policy, or new policy directive must be drafted, approved and issued according to the procedures outlined below.
- g) Only policies and procedures issued by the Office of the Executive Director as a PPM update are recognized as official UNFPA policy.
- h) Policy owners shall undertake the following:

---

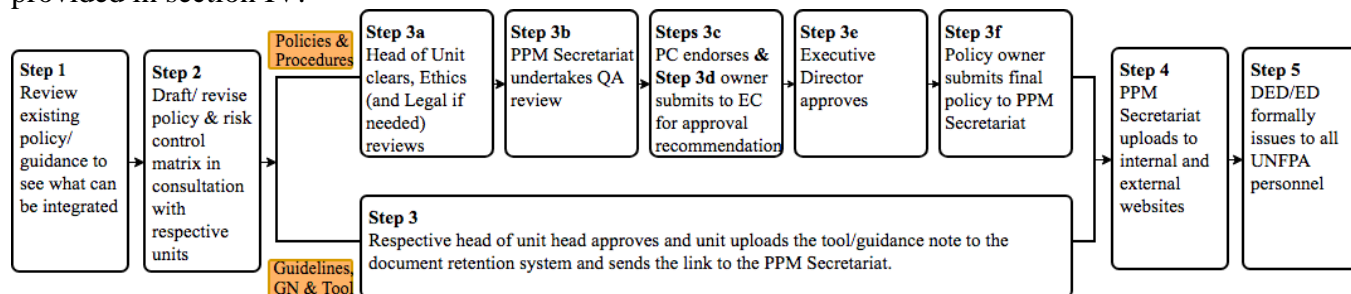
<sup>1</sup> The PPM Secretariat maintains an internal website that includes all policies, tools and guidance notes, and an external PPM website for policies and procedures only. For the sake of this policy, PPM website means the internal site only.

<sup>2</sup> Such content intended for general application may be contained in documents/texts entitled “policy”, “procedure” “regulation” “rule” falls within the meaning of this definition.

- 1) a mandatory annual *review*, initiated by the PPM Secretariat, of policies to determine validity/status and update policy text, if necessary
- 2) a mandatory *revision* of policies every 3 years, unless the policy owner, in consultation with the PPM Secretariat, determines a revision is not necessary.
- i) The official [PPM website](#) is the only authoritative source for approved UNFPA policies and procedures.
- j) Exceptions to the above may be authorized by the Executive Director as follows:
  - o Policies and procedures approved and promulgated by other duly constituted bodies of the United Nations or UNFPA, such as the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Executive Board<sup>3</sup> or other entity with binding authority over UNFPA.
  - o Policies and procedures issued by the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) and applicable to UNFPA are endorsed by UNFPA without further submission and approval. If needed, the respective Deputy Executive Director will issue clarifying guidance. The policy will be incorporated into the PPM with a link to the policy text on the UNSDG website and issued by the Office of the Executive Director as a PPM update.

### III. Procedures

All documents that are prescriptive and normative in nature, and intended for general application (i.e., policies and procedures) must follow steps 3a-3f outlined below. All documents intended to serve as corporate guidance or offer clarification must follow the guidelines, guidance notes and tool outlined below as step 3. The nomenclature of each document must follow the definitions provided in section IV.



#### A. Development and Approval

**Step 1:** Identify the need for a new or revised policy and procedure/guideline/guidance note/tool and determine the overall objective and scope of the document. Review existing documents located on the PPM website to determine if the new material can be integrated into any of them. The PPM Secretariat, located in the Policy and Strategy Division, may be contacted for assistance in identifying PPM sections for integration.

- If integration can occur, the organizational unit works with the current policy owner to update the relevant section of the existing policy and follows steps 2-5.
- If *no* integration is possible, concerned organizational unit selects a *new* policy owner before proceeding.

<sup>3</sup> E.g., UNFPA Financial Regulations and Rules are approved by the Executive Board and can therefore be published immediately as policy text.

Revisions to policy text stored in the PPM shall be made subject to the following:

- a) If the change is not material (e.g., minor update, adjustment, clarification, no change in policy or substantial change in procedure), changes are made by the policy owner, approved by the relevant head of unit<sup>4</sup> and issued *without* the endorsement of the Executive committee and approval of the Executive Director (skip step 3).
- b) If the change is material (e.g., organizational change to policy, substantial change to procedure, major update or revision, far-reaching textual changes) steps 2-5 shall apply.

The determination as to whether or not a change is material is made by the concerned organizational unit in consultation with the PPM Secretariat and with the office of the respective Deputy Executive Director. The heads of unit are accountable for changes initiated without resubmission to the Executive Committee.

**Step 2:** Policy owner drafts/revises document in consultation with respective units, regional and country offices, inter-agency working groups, United Nations Agencies, Funds, Programmes or subsidiary bodies, as may be necessary. This includes consulting with the owner of the enterprise risk management (ERM)/internal control framework (ICF) process to ensure controls are mainstreamed in the policy. It is advisable that each policy owner submits the respective document to a peer review. This can be done by requesting the PPM Secretariat to post a request for comments from all UNFPA personnel on the PPM website<sup>5</sup>.

The Staff Association must be consulted on human resource policies that have staff implications. The Ethics Office must be consulted on any policy drafts/revisions to ensure that they reinforce and promote the standards of integrity called for under the Charter of the United Nations.

Policies and procedures must:

- address a real organizational objective;
- be comprehensive and reflect input from the consultative process;
- attempt to simplify the process, as much as possible;
- be consistent with the United Nations system harmonization efforts;
- take into consideration the findings of internal and external audits, formal or informal evaluation, lessons learned and other experiences;
- be based on a risk assessment and mainstream controls in the policy to mitigate those risks, include a risk control matrix and identify control activities in accordance with the Internal Control Framework (ICF);
- be concise, practical and include clear directives on what is required of personnel, including clear roles and responsibilities;

<sup>4</sup> The UNFPA head of unit refers to the representative, division director, regional or subregional director, country director or the chief of operations (or the delegated officer), as appropriate.

<sup>5</sup> Peer review by all UNFPA increases buy-in to the document and may provide the owner with useful input regarding the application of the policy.

- include a clear policy statement and definitions, if needed;
- include information on delegation of authority, segregation of duties and oversight functions, where relevant;
- utilize flowcharts and diagrams to the extent possible;
- provide hyperlinks to documents referenced within the text; and
- be drafted in accordance with the [PPM template and style sheet](#).

**Step 3:**

<p><i>Approval Procedure for policies and procedures<sup>6</sup>:</i></p> <p><b>3a:</b> Organizational head of unit clears the draft policy and the policy owner sends the draft to the Ethics Office and, if needed, to the Legal Unit for comments. Policy owner integrate comments and obtains final clearance from head of unit.</p>	<p><i>Approval Procedure for guidance notes and tools:</i></p> <p>Organizational head of the unit approves the document and uploads tool/guidance note to the document retention system and sends the link to the PPM Secretariat. (Go to step 4)</p>
<p><b>3b:</b> Head of unit or policy owner submits the policy to the PPM Secretariat for quality assurance review at least 8 weeks prior to a scheduled Policy Committee meeting and integrates comments. If there are substantive comments, the PPM Secretariat may request resubmission for additional quality assurance review(s).</p>	
<p><b>3c:</b> Policy owner completes and sends the request for policy committee submission template (annex I), along with the final policy draft, to the PPM Secretariat at least 6 weeks prior to a scheduled Policy Committee Meeting. PPM Secretariat submits both documents to the <b>Policy Committee</b> (annex II) for review/comments and subsequent endorsement. At the meeting<sup>7</sup>, the Policy Committee shall i) discuss and endorse the policy if agreement is reached, or (ii) endorse the policy pending policy owner’s integration of relevant comments<sup>8</sup>, or (iii) request a later re-submission in case <i>substantial</i> revision is required<sup>9</sup>.</p>	

<sup>6</sup> Please see annex II for detailed submission timeline

<sup>7</sup> Endorsement of the policy either can take place during a scheduled meeting or, circulated virtually for comments and endorsement. Deadline for comments/endorsement via virtual circulation is 10 working days from receipt. If there is not sufficient time at a policy committee meeting, it will be circulated virtually at the end of the meeting rather than be deferred to the next meeting.

<sup>8</sup> Policy does not need to be resubmitted to the policy committee. It is up to the owner to incorporate the relevant comments.

<sup>9</sup> Resubmission should be the exception.

<p><b>3d:</b> Policy owner uses the policy approval template (annex III) to submit the endorsed policy to the Executive Committee for approval recommendation. Executive Committee discusses the policy only if one of the EC members asks it to be included in the substantive agenda, otherwise the policy is regarded as recommended for approval by the EC.</p>	
<p><b>3e:</b> The Executive Director approves<sup>10</sup> the policy or delegates approval authority to one or both of the Deputy Executive Directors.</p>	
<p><b>3f:</b> Once approved, the policy owner submits the final policy (in word and PDF) and the signed approval document to the PPM Secretariat who uploads them into the document retention system.</p>	

## B. Issuance

**Step 4:** The PPM Secretariat adds content to the internal and external PPM website(s), where appropriate.

**Step 5:** The content is formally issued by the respective Deputy Executive Director after the following process has been followed:

- a) PPM Secretariat, in coordination with policy owner drafts formal issuance letter using [issuance template](#) which outlines changes to the document, if revision, or key points if new<sup>11</sup>.
- b) PPM Secretariat sends draft issuance letter to the office of the concerned Deputy Executive Director.
- c) Concerned Deputy Executive Director sends PPM announcement to all staff members with a link to the policy/guidance note on the PPM website.

## C. Translation

- The policy owner is responsible for the translation of policy documents, where sufficient funds are available, in accordance with the [UNFPA Policy for Translation of Official Documents](#).
- Translated version of the policy shall be sent to the PPM Secretariat for uploading into the document retention system and issued according to established procedures outlined above.
- In case there is any conflict in meaning between the English language version and any translation, the English language version shall prevail.

<sup>10</sup> Via signature on the policy approval template.

<sup>11</sup> Text of issuance memo is linked to the PPM in the announcements section and the policy itself.

#### IV. Other - Definitions

*Guidance Note:* A guidance note provides clarification on a given topic. Although the guideline may contain references to mandatory policies, procedures, etc., by definition, a guidance note is not mandatory.

*Guideline:* A description of a recommended and expected course of action in support of a set of principles and specific to a particular area. It aims to streamline a particular process and provide advice to assist in accomplishing a given task. Although the guideline may contain references to mandatory policies, procedures, etc, by definition, a guideline is not mandatory.

*Policy:* Normative and prescriptive instructions intended for general application which guide decisions to achieve a desired outcome. Policies are derived from regulations and rules and are officially approved by the Executive Director following established procedures or other duly constituted bodies of the United Nations or UNFPA. Policies require mandatory compliance.

*Policy owner:* A person who, on behalf of a headquarter division or unit, has the ultimate responsibility for the content of a policy or procedure, including ensuring policies are up to date, obsolete policies are abolished with minimum delay and new issuances or amendments follow this policy.

*Procedure:* A written document which describes a systematic sequence of events needed to implement a policy and to carry out the organization's basic functions, such as programme management, personnel recruitment and management, procurement and financial management. It also includes clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Procedures are approved by the Executive Director following established procedures or other duly constituted bodies of the United Nations or UNFPA. Procedures require mandatory compliance.

*Regulations* United Nations staff regulations are established by the General Assembly (Art. 101, para. 1, United Nations Charter) and may be supplemented or amended by the General Assembly (United Nations Staff Regulation 12.1). They apply directly to UNFPA staff members (Staff Regulation 1.1(e); ST/SGB/2004/10, section 2.1). UNFPA financial regulations are promulgated, and amendments and exceptions may be made, by the Executive Board (UNFPA Financial Regulation 1.2). Regulations require mandatory compliance.

*Rules* United Nations staff rules are issued by the Secretary General. Such rules apply directly to UNFPA staff members (ST/SGB/2004/10, section 2.1). UNFPA financial rules are established by the Executive Director (UNFPA Financial Regulation 14.1(a)). Rules require mandatory compliance.

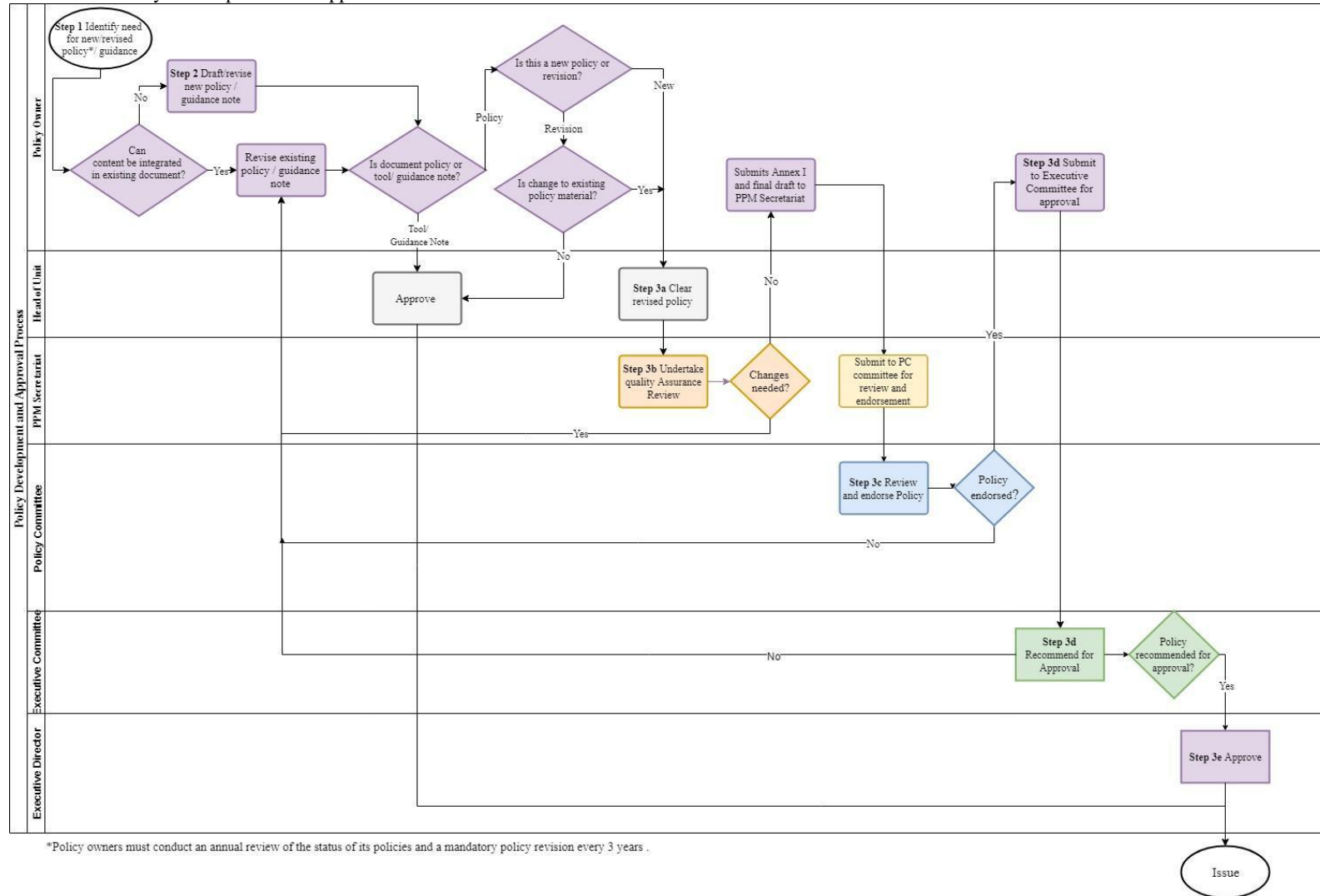
*Stand-alone document:* Document with cross-cutting implications issued on its own without integrating vital content into pre-existing, relevant policies. Stand-alone documents should be avoided.

Questions regarding this policy can be sent to the [Integrated Service Desk](#).

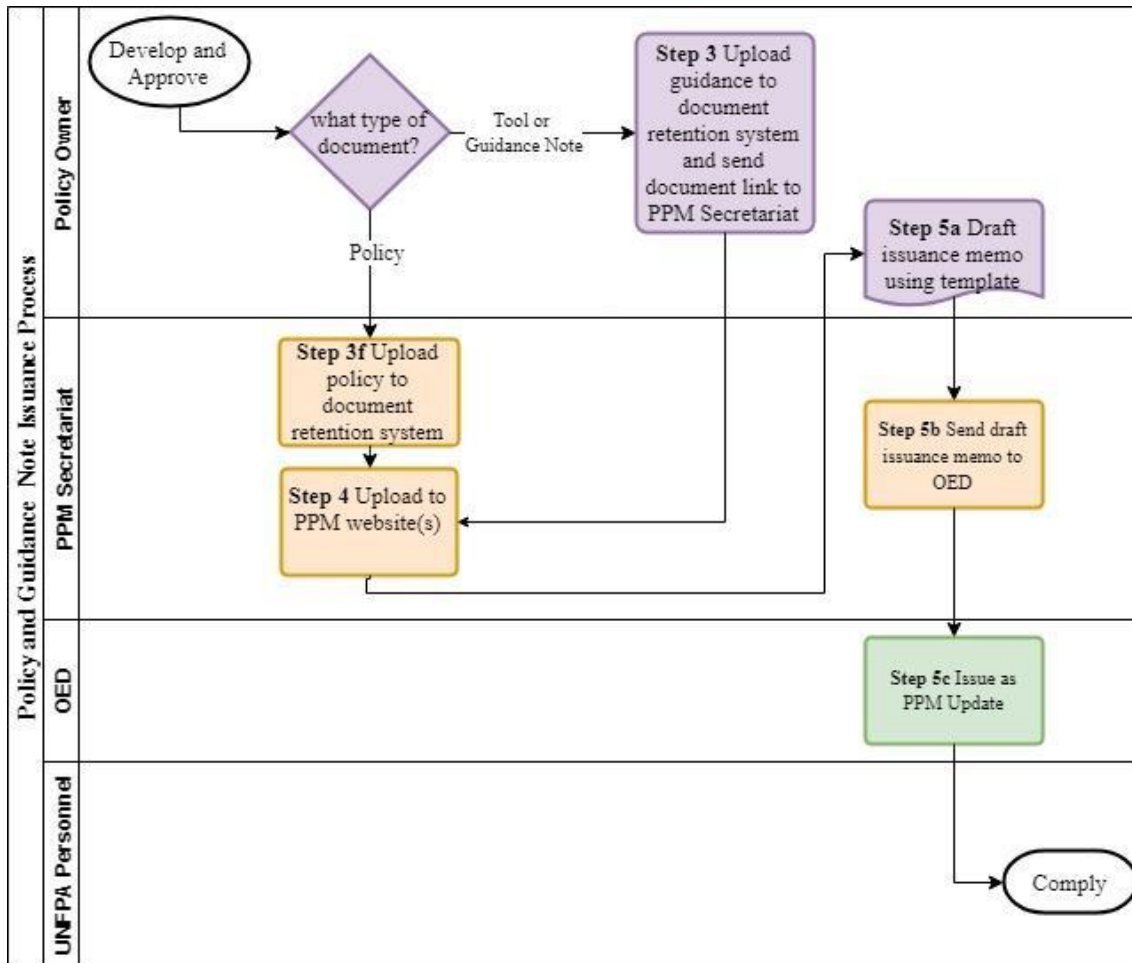


V. Process Overview Flowchart

Flowchart 1 Policy Development and Approval Process



Flowchart 2: Issuance Process



**VI. Risk Control Matrix**

Draft risk control matrix available here:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=15xardZ244iWofJuyU8haJtRWPJkT7tK7>

**UNFPA**

**Annex I: Policy Committee Submission Template**

<b>Name of Policy</b>	<b>Submission date:</b>						
<b>Submitting Unit</b>	<b>Name, title and email of policy owner</b>						
<b>Policy was reviewed by Ethics Office?</b> Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Policy underwent quality assurance review by PPM Secretariat?</b>						
<b>Policy was reviewed by Legal Unit?</b> Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/> N/A: <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/>						
<p><b><u>Select one</u></b></p> <table style="width:100%; border:none;"> <tr> <td style="width:50%; padding: 5px; vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>New Policy</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Please indicate date and name of any policies integrated into this policy:</i></p> </td> <td style="width:50%; padding: 5px; vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>Policy Revision</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Please indicate date and name (if different) of policy it replaces:</i></p> </td> </tr> </table>		<p><b>New Policy</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Please indicate date and name of any policies integrated into this policy:</i></p>	<p><b>Policy Revision</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Please indicate date and name (if different) of policy it replaces:</i></p>				
<p><b>New Policy</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Please indicate date and name of any policies integrated into this policy:</i></p>	<p><b>Policy Revision</b> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><i>Please indicate date and name (if different) of policy it replaces:</i></p>						
<p><b>For <u>new</u> policies, please provide bulleted highlights of the policy</b></p> <p><b>For <u>revised</u> policies, please provide a summary of changes using the following table form:</b></p> <table border="1" style="width:100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin: 5px 0;"> <thead> <tr style="background-color: #d9e1f2;"> <th style="width:33%; padding: 5px;">Old Policy</th> <th style="width:33%; padding: 5px;">New Policy</th> <th style="width:33%; padding: 5px;">Changes</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="height: 40px;"></td> <td></td> <td style="vertical-align: top; padding: 5px;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> <li></li> </ul> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Old Policy	New Policy	Changes			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> <li></li> </ul>
Old Policy	New Policy	Changes					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> <li></li> </ul>					
<p><b>Policy contains a risk control matrix:</b> Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/>.</p> <p><b>If no, on what basis was approval given to forego the matrix:</b></p>							
<p><b>Provide a list of units who collaborated/ provided comments on policy draft:</b></p>							
<p><b>Please provide a short 1 or 2 sentence <i>description</i> of policy for external PPM site:</b></p>							
<p><b>Please provide a short <i>summary paragraph</i> (2-8 sentences) for external PPM site:</b></p>							
<p><i>For virtual circulation only:</i></p> <p>Deadline for comments/endorsement: _____ (10 working days from submission date)</p>							

## Annex II: Terms of Reference: UNFPA Policy Committee

### Purpose

The inter-divisional UNFPA Policy Committee will be responsible for endorsing policies for approval by the Executive Director. The PPM Secretariat in the Policy and Strategy Division will coordinate the meetings and support the committee.

### Composition

The Policy Committee will be comprised of one<sup>12</sup> functional expert nominated by the head of unit from each regional office and headquarters division and the Chief of Staff. The nominees from headquarters must have sufficient knowledge of their own unit's policies and procedures. All committee members have been delegated authority to endorse the policy(s), including the risk control matrix, under discussion on behalf of the unit. Depending on the policy to be discussed, members from other units may be invited to attend the meeting and/or a unit may opt to not attend. If a unit opts not to send a member to the meeting, this is considered a *de facto* endorsement of the policy.

The committee will be coordinated by the PPM Secretariat and meetings will be chaired by the respective DED. If neither DED is available, the DED will delegate an alternate chair. The chair has the authority to endorse the policy if unanimous endorsement cannot be reached but there is a majority consensus.

### Frequency

Meetings will be scheduled for the second Thursday of every month<sup>13</sup>. The PPM Secretariat will confirm or cancel the meeting at least 2 weeks in advance. Meetings can be in person or virtually. Ad hoc meetings can be scheduled, if needed.

### Scope

All policies, unless otherwise determined by the Executive Director, must be subject to review and endorsement by this committee.

### Tasks and Responsibilities

Task	Person Responsible	Time Frame
Submit final policy draft and Policy Committee submission template (annex I) to PPM Secretariat (ppm@unfpa.org)	Policy Owner	Minimum of 6 weeks prior to scheduled meeting

<sup>12</sup> The functional expert is nominated based on the policy to be discussed. Therefore, the functional expert may vary from meeting to meeting. If multiple policies are to be discussed, more than one functional expert per unit can be nominated.

<sup>13</sup> Meetings can be held more frequently, if expedience requires it.

## UNFPA

Distribute documentation (final policy and submission template) to policy committee members	PPM Secretariat	Upon receipt from policy owner
Submit name of functional expert(s) who will represent unit at Policy Committee meeting to PPM Secretariat	Head of unit	Within 2 days of receipt of documentation
Review policy and solicit comments from own unit (and, for regional offices, country offices), if needed. Discuss any major comments with policy owner.	Policy Committee member	Upon receipt of documentation and within 17 working day review period
Discuss comments, as needed with units and incorporate comments, where possible.	Policy Owner	During 17 working day review period
Revise policy based on comments received	Policy Owner	5 working days after close of review period
Submit final draft, in word form, to PPM Secretariat in preparation for meeting (or virtual circulation)	Policy Owner	At end of 5 working day revision period. Deadline to be communicated by PPM Secretariat. For virtual circulation, the policy committee has 10 working days to comment and endorse the final draft of the policy
Submit final draft to Policy Committee for endorsement at the meeting	PPM Secretariat	Upon receipt of final draft from owner (5 working days prior to scheduled meeting date).
Obtain respective head of unit clearance of the final draft in preparation for the policy committee meeting	Policy Committee member	Upon receipt of final draft
Review to discuss any outstanding comments and endorse or recommend resubmission of the policy	Policy Committee	At meeting
Submit the endorsed policy and completed approval template	Policy Owner	Upon endorsement of the policy

## UNFPA

(annex III) to the Executive Committee for final approval		
Approve policy using template in Annex III.	ED or delegated DED	Within 1 week of EC approval.

### **Guiding principles for review**

The reviewer should take the following principles into account:

- Relevance
- Quality
- User-Friendliness
- Controls are mainstreamed throughout the policy to address all relevant risks related to the process
- Lack of contradictions/overlap with other UNFPA regulations, rules, policies and procedures.

To assess a policy's relevance, the reviewer will ensure the proposed policy is relevant to the current business processes and addresses a policy need.

To promote quality and user-friendliness, the reviewer will ensure the policy is clearly written, contains diagrams and flow charts, where possible, and does not contain overly complex business processes.

To ensure there are no contradictions with other UNFPA regulations, rules, policies and procedures, the Policy Committee should confirm there are no contradiction with existing policies, particularly those that fall under the responsibility of the Policy Committee member's own unit.

**Annex III: [Policy Approval Template](#)**

Name of Policy	
Name of Policy Owner	
Summary of Policy	
Date recommended for approval by Executive Committee	
Executive Committee comments (if any)	
Effective date of policy (if different than approval date)	

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Approval signature – Executive Director or delegated DED)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved