



**Executive Board of the
United Nations Development
Programme, the United Nations
Population Fund and the United
Nations Office for Project Services**

Distr.: General
5 July 2011

Original: English

Second regular session 2011

6 to 9 September 2011, New York

Item 7 of the provisional agenda

UNFPA – Country programmes and related matters

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND

Extensions of country programmes in the Arab States region

Note by the Executive Director

Summary

The present note contains information on the one-year extensions of the country programmes for Egypt and the Syrian Arab Republic.

In accordance with established procedures, the Executive Director approves the first one-year extension of a country programme, while requests for second one-year extensions or requests for two-year extensions are submitted to the Executive Board for approval.

The Executive Board may wish to take note of the one-year country programme extensions for Egypt and the Syrian Arab Republic, as indicated in the attached tables.



One-year country programme extensions approved by the Executive Director

Country	Original programme period	Years proposed for extension	Explanation		
			United Nations Harmonization	In-country political development	Implementation and/or other issues
Egypt	2007-2011	2012	At the end of 2010, the United Nations and the Government developed the United Nations Assistance Development Framework (UNDAF), 2012-2016. The UNDAF is based on the common country assessment for Egypt. The previous UNDAF was aligned with the country's sixth national five-year development plan, 2007/2008-2011/2012. Following recent political events in Egypt, the United Nations country team discussed the situation within the context of the country's development. UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP agreed that a request for a one-year extension of their respective country programmes would be prudent, taking into consideration the current political situation and the fact that the new national development plan has not yet been released. A one-year extension of the UNFPA country programme would permit the UNFPA programme to be aligned with those of the other relevant United Nations funds and programmes, as well as with the national development plan.	Political events that occurred in Egypt since January 2011 resulted in the removal of the former President and the formation of a transitional government. Parliamentary elections are planned for September 2011, and a Presidential election is planned for November 2011. New political parties and new development actors and stakeholders have emerged. While many of the common country assessment and UNDAF challenges remain valid, a number of new challenges have appeared. Development priorities may shift as the socio-economic situation and the political situation continue to unfold.	As a result of the changing political context, a number of new national partners have emerged. Young people, faith-based organizations, non-government organizations and civil society are assuming greater roles within the emerging development scene. An examination of the socio-political environment to better identify and engage new stakeholders is required. A number of issues that are integral to the UNFPA mandate, such as family planning, gender issues and female genital mutilation/cutting must be discussed and strategies developed within the larger human rights agenda. UNFPA will be engaged with its United Nations partners in revising the situation analysis and in modifying the UNDAF to reflect the new realities in the country.

One-year country programme extensions approved by the Executive Director

Country	Original programme period	Years proposed for extension	Explanation		
			United Nations Harmonization	In-country political development	Implementation and/or other issues
Syrian Arab Republic	2007-2011	2012	<p>In the light of recent developments, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and the United Nations have decided to extend by one year, through 2012, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). The extension of the UNDAF will permit the United Nations organizations to better assist the country in addressing the impact of current events and their socio-economic consequences.</p> <p>The resulting one-year extension of the UNFPA country programme will ensure the development of a response strategy to challenges that the country is facing.</p>	<p>The Syrian Arab Republic is facing a challenge with the wave of unrest that has spread throughout the country. In response, the Government has introduced a comprehensive reform package. The reform package embraces various spheres, including youth employment and public-private sector partnerships in promoting employment opportunities.</p> <p>In the light of the proposed changes, UNFPA will be able to strengthen its focus and provide assistance in the area of youth.</p>	<p>The one-year extension of the country programme will continue to: (a) strengthen the essential components of emergency obstetric care; (b) strengthen the health-care system to deliver post-natal care and family planning services in coordination with other primary health-care components; (c) enhance the national capacity to address humanitarian concerns; (d) promote strategic partnerships in support of the communication strategy on maternal health and family planning; (e) promote voluntary, confidential HIV/AIDS counselling and testing services; (f) strengthen behaviour change communication efforts that seek to prevent HIV and sexually transmitted infections; (g) strengthen the institutional capacity to provide youth-friendly reproductive health information and services; (h) build the capacity of planners and decision makers to integrate population issues, as well as reproductive health, youth and gender issues into development plans; (i) finalize the national population policy framework and action plan; (j) enhance the policy-oriented analysis of data from the household and health survey, the youth survey and in-depth studies; (k) create an enabling environment to empower youth and enable them to participate in decision-making and planning at central and local levels; (l) support capacity-building for national gender mechanisms; and (m) operationalize a joint gender communications strategy.</p>