

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

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# Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its annual session 2021

Contents

Annual session 2021 (7 to 11 June 2021)

Number		Page
2021/4	Cumulative review of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, and annual report of the Administrator for 2020	2
2021/5	UNDP evaluation	2
2021/6	Report on results achieved by the United Nations Capital Development Fund in 2020	4
2021/7	United Nations Volunteers programme: Report of the Administrator	5
2021/8	Implementation of the UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2018-2021: Report of the Executive Director	5
2021/9	UNFPA evaluation	6
2021/10	United Nations Office for Project Services	6
2021/11	Reports of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on internal audit and investigations, and management responses	7
2021/12	Reports of the ethics offices of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS	8
2021/13	Overview of decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its annual session 2021	9





### 2021/4

## Cumulative review of the Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, and annual report of the Administrator for 2020

#### The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the cumulative review of the Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 and annual report of the Administrator for 2020 (DP/2021/16) and its annexes, the report of UNDP on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit in 2020 (DP/2021/16/Add.1) and its annexes, and the statistical annex (DP/2021/16/Add.2);

2. Commends the rapid local and global support of UNDP to programme countries in response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, including as the technical lead for the implementation of the United Nations framework for the immediate socioeconomic response to COVID-19, and welcomes the inclusion of new reporting measures, harmonized with the United Nations development system, to capture results related to the response to the pandemic;

3. *Takes note* of the continued progress made by UNDP against its Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, building on learning from the midterm review and recognizing that UNDP achieved its second-highest programme delivery rate in six years in 2020;

4. *Encourages* UNDP to continue to accelerate progress in the remaining period of the Strategic Plan, drawing on the agile measures put in place in response to the pandemic, and to draw upon the lessons from this experience in designing the strategic plan for the period 2022-2025;

5. *Welcomes* the strong commitment of UNDP to delivering integrated, systemic support to countries to accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals as part of a reformed United Nations development system, and encourages UNDP to continue to work closely with United Nations agencies to support countries' efforts through the common objectives of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks;

6. *Recognizes* the thirtieth anniversary of the Human Development Report and Human Development Index and encourages UNDP to continue its efforts to pioneer data-driven, inclusive and sustainable ways of measuring human development progress.

11 June 2021

## 2021/5 UNDP evaluation

#### The Executive Board

With regard to the annual report on evaluation, 2020 (DP/2021/19) and the management commentaries thereto:

1. Takes note of the annual report on evaluation (DP/2021/19) and the management commentaries thereto, welcomes the additional analysis provided on key findings and lessons from evaluations carried out in 2020 and requests UNDP to address the issues raised;

2. *Recognizes* the expanded efforts of the Independent Evaluation Office to work with UNDP country offices to improve the quality and coverage of decentralized evaluations, and acknowledges the efforts of UNDP to work with the Independent Evaluation Office to improve decentralized evaluations, encourages UNDP to continue this effort to identify and build evaluation capacities and resources to increase the satisfactory rating of decentralized evaluations significantly;

3. *Recognizes* the promising new Global Evaluation Initiative that the Independent Evaluation Office has launched with the World Bank Independent Evaluation Group and other partners, to foster a global evaluation culture and support the efforts of Member States and other stakeholders to strengthen government monitoring and evaluation frameworks and capacities;

4. *Takes note* of the quality of recommendations from the Independent Evaluation Office as well as progress achieved in the implementation of management actions arising from evaluation findings and recommendations, and encourages UNDP to continue taking further actions to address overdue recommendations and to implement future evaluation recommendations consistently and in a timely manner;

With regard to the evaluation of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 (DP/2021/20) and the management response thereto (DP/2021/21):

5. *Takes note* of the evaluation of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 (DP/2021/20) and the management response thereto (DP/2021/21);

6. *Commends* UNDP for its ability to adapt to the extraordinary circumstances of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, demonstrating agility in its pivot of country programming to help countries respond and plan for recovery;

7. *Recognizes* the concerted efforts of UNDP to promote integrated development solutions and collaborative partnerships to support and leverage financing for the Sustainable Development Goals, while mainstreaming the principle of leaving no one behind;

8. *Takes note of* the commitment of UNDP to further articulate how it will expand and achieve the concrete benefits of integrating gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as a catalytic development accelerator for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

9. *Acknowledges* the progress made by UNDP to become more client-oriented through streamlining of processes and investing in digital transformation and innovation;

10. *Recognizes* that the transformations envisioned in the 2030 Agenda and the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 require more predictable and flexible funding, and notes a stable influx of other resources and increases in regular resources, as well as the agile mobilization and repurposing of funds by UNDP to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, and encourages UNDP to continue to build on progress, to improve its operational and administrative systems and practices, including agility and flexibility for adaptive management and funding, and to continue its efforts to expand and diversify programme funding sources and advocate for flexible and predictable funding;

11. *Requests* UNDP to better define its role and value proposition in support of the 2030 Agenda and the COVID-19 pandemic response, ensuring that its aim to build forward better pays due consideration to the principles of inclusiveness and sustainability;

12. *Encourages* UNDP to design its Integrated Results and Resources Framework in line with applicable guidance of the 2020 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (QCPR) and requests UNDP to harmonize, where appropriate, its Integrated Results and Resources Framework with other United Nations entities, with a focus on all results levels, and maximize the use of common results indicators, all with the goal of advancing United Nations development system contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals and to further strengthen system-wide evaluation;

13. *Requests* UNDP to provide in a timely manner, ahead of the second regular session of 2021, more-detailed information on the Integrated Results and Resources Framework, including on its relationship to the QCPR monitoring and reporting framework;

14. *Encourages* UNDP to continue to improve results-based management and to design its results monitoring and reporting framework and systems to support the effective implementation of the strategic plan, 2022-2025, so as to provide timely and relevant data, methods and indicators to help countries accelerate achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and monitor UNDP progress in this regard;

15. *Requests* UNDP to take into account, as appropriate, the recommendations of all relevant evaluations when formulating the next strategic plan for the period 2022-2025 and related regional programmes;

With regard to the third joint Global Environment Facility-UNDP evaluation of the Small Grants Programme (DP/2021/22) and the management response thereto (DP/2021/23):

16. *Takes note* of the third joint Global Environment Facility (GEF)—UNDP evaluation of the Small Grants Programme (DP/2021/22) and the management response thereto (DP/2021/23);

17. *Takes note of* the evaluation's findings and conclusions acknowledging the significant role and contribution of UNDP in implementing the Small Grants Programme, a GEF corporate programme that contributes to global environmental and socioeconomic benefits in 126 countries, while noting areas for further strengthening;

18. *Requests* UNDP to collaborate closely with the GEF, providing support and inputs to a consultative process to develop an updated long-term vision for the Small Grants Programme and to review the programme's "upgrading policy";

19. *Requests* UNDP to collaborate closely with the GEF to strengthen the multistakeholder governance of the Small Grants Programme through its global and national steering committees;

20. *Further requests* UNDP to improve and incentivize innovation and businessoriented approaches at the project and country levels, and to promote better synergies between UNDP country offices and the Small Grants Programme, to ensure the sustainability of results, capacities and goodwill.

11 June 2021

#### 2021/6

## Report on results achieved by the United Nations Capital Development Fund in 2020

### The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the report on results achieved by the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) in 2020 (DP/2021/24);

2. *Commends* UNCDF for the progress made in implementing its Strategic Framework, 2018-2021;

3. *Welcomes* its commitment to and role in delivering innovative and blended financing approaches to leave no one behind;

4. *Notes* the catalytic role of UNCDF in supporting least developed countries to respond to and build forward better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic;

5. *Recommits* to supporting UNCDF, including through fully funding its resource requirements as enumerated in the Strategic Framework, 2018-2021, including capitalizing its investment fund with \$50 million.

11 June 2021

## 2021/7

## United Nations Volunteers programme: Report of the Administrator

The Executive Board

1. *Encourages* the United Nations Volunteers programme (UNV) to continue to promote the conducive environment for volunteerism and volunteers to enhance the sustainability of development results;

2. *Takes note* of the results achieved by UNV in 2020, including a rapid and effective response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, as reflected in the report of the Administrator (DP/2021/25);

3. *Reaffirms* the crucial role of the Special Voluntary Fund in delivering the UNV Strategic Framework, 2018-2021 and in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, and calls upon all development partners in a position to do so to contribute to the fund;

4. *Commends* UNV for being well embedded in the United Nations system as exemplified by its cooperation with 60 United Nations organizations;

5. *Commends* UNV for the results achieved through its Strategic Framework, 2018-2021, as highlighted in its independent evaluation, and further requests UNV to develop its next strategic framework building on its organizational results and in full alignment with General Assembly resolution 75/233;

6. *Asks* UNV to continue its successful efforts towards the organization's digital transformation in the next strategic framework for 2022-2025 and beyond;

7. *Requests* UNV to continue being a strong advocate for the inclusion of persons with disabilities;

8. *Expresses appreciation* to all United Nations volunteers for their outstanding contributions to the pandemic response and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development during 2020.

11June 2021

## 2021/8

## Implementation of the UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2018-2021: Report of the Executive Director

## The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the documents that make up the report of the Executive Director for 2020: DP/FPA/2021/4 (Part I, Part I/Add.1 and Part II);

2. *Notes with appreciation* the progress made by UNFPA in achieving the results of the UNFPA strategic plan, 2018-2021, pursuant to the integrated results and resources framework, during the penultimate year of its implementation;

3. *Notes with concern* the widening financing gap in achieving the three transformative results as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and in this regard calls on UNFPA to set ambitious yet prudent income projections, coupled with a pragmatic yet achievable resource mobilization strategy for the next strategic plan, 2022-2025.

## 2021/9 UNFPA evaluation

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the present report on the evaluation function, and of the programme of work and budget of the Evaluation Office in 2021;

2. *Welcomes* the efforts made by UNFPA and the progress achieved in strengthening the evaluation function, in actively adapting the evaluation function to the COVID-19 crisis, in contributing to United Nations system-wide evaluation efforts and in fostering national evaluation capacity development;

3. *Reaffirms* the role played by the evaluation function and underscore the importance of highquality, independent evaluative evidence in the context of the UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, and its contribution to the development of the new UNFPA strategic plan for 2022-2025, and implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

4. *Encourages* UNFPA to design its integrated results and resources framework in line with applicable guidance of the 2020 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (QCPR), and requests UNFPA to harmonize, where appropriate, its integrated results and resources framework with other United Nations entities, with a focus on all results levels, and maximize the use of common results indicators, all with the goal of advancing United Nations development system contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals and to further strengthen system-wide evaluation;

5. *Requests* UNFPA to provide in a timely manner, ahead of the second regular session of 2021, more detailed information on the integrated results and resources framework, including on its relationship to the QCPR monitoring and reporting framework;

6. *Encourages* UNFPA to continue to increase investments towards an allocation of at least 1.4 per cent and up to 3 per cent of its total programme expenditure to the evaluation function, as articulated in the UNFPA Evaluation Policy of 2019.

11 June 2021

## 2021/10

## **United Nations Office for Project Services**

#### The Executive Board

1. *Recognizes* the contributions of the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) in 2020 to the operational results of the United Nations, Governments and other partners, through efficient management support services and effective specialized technical expertise, expanding the implementation capacity for sustainable development;

2. *Welcomes* the progress made in implementing the UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2018-2021;

3. *Takes note of* the annual report on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit and the progress made in implementing recommendations relevant to UNOPS;

4. Takes note of the information on the progress achieved with sustainable infrastructure impact investment (S3I) activities in the UNOPS mandated areas and *requests* UNOPS, in continuing its work, to further enhance its reporting on those activities;

5. *Takes note of* the contributions of UNOPS to response and recovery activities related to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

11 June 2021

## 2021/11

## Reports of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on internal audit and investigations, and management responses

#### The Executive Board

1. *Welcomes* the progress of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS in addressing audit-related management issues in 2020;

2. *Notes with appreciation* efforts to implement outstanding audit recommendations from previous reports;

3. *Appreciates* that UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS have provided information on financial losses due to fraud, and encourages UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS management to continue to improve their anti-fraud measures and fraud recovery rates;

4. *Notes* that the implementation of decision 2020/10 remains in progress, and in this regard calls on the offices of internal audit and investigation of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to work with UNICEF, UN-Women and the World Food Programme and agree on harmonized definitions and reporting for audit and investigation matters, where applicable, to provide the Executive Boards with a more coherent overview of findings and results;

5. *Encourages* the offices of internal audit and investigation of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to share with the Executive Board the outcomes of the working group on audit reporting, and encourages them to include analysis on longer-term trends in internal audit and investigation findings in their annual reports to the Executive Board;

6. *Encourages* the offices of internal audit and investigation of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to continue holding regular informal briefings for Member States, as needed, including in advance of the annual session of the Executive Board;

With regard to UNDP:

7. *Takes note* of the annual report of the Office of Audit and Investigations on internal audit and investigation activities in 2020 (DP/2021/14) and its annexes, and the management response thereto;

8. *Recalls* decision 2021/1, and reiterates its encouragement to UNDP to continue with its organization-specific anti-fraud strategy and to advance the implementation of the fraud risk management action plan, and also reiterates its encouragement to UNDP to coordinate its actions in response to the Board of Auditors recommendations with its actions to address the Office of Audit and Investigations audit entitled "Performance Audit of UNDP Global Environmental Facility (GEF) Management";

9. *Expresses* continuing support for the internal audit and investigation functions of UNDP;

10. Takes note of the annual report of the Audit and Evaluation Advisory Committee;

11. *Takes note of* the continued number of audit recommendations related to programme management, procurement and financial management, including management of implementing partners, and encourages UNDP to take continued steps to address recurring recommendations;

## With regard to UNFPA:

12. *Takes note* of (a) the report of the Office of Audit and Investigation Services on UNFPA internal audit and investigation activities in 2020 (DP/FPA/2021/6); (b) the opinion, based on the scope of work undertaken, on the adequacy and effectiveness of the UNFPA framework of governance, risk management and control (DP/FPA/2021/6/Add.1); and (c) the management response to the report of the Office of Audit and Investigation Services and the report of the Oversight Advisory Committee;

13. *Takes note* of the annual report of the Oversight Advisory Committee (DP/FPA/2021/6/Add.2);

14. *Expresses* continuing support for the strengthening of the internal audit and investigation functions at UNFPA, notes with concern the number of investigation cases carried over from past years, and calls on UNFPA management to provide sufficient resources for the investigation function to effectively deploy these resources to reduce the caseload;

15. Acknowledges and supports the Office of Audit and Investigation Services in joint audit and investigation activities;

16. *Notes* the ratings for audits concluded in 2020, and encourages management to continue to take steps to implement new and outstanding audit recommendations and to address areas of recurring recommendations;

With regard to UNOPS:

17. *Takes note* of the annual report of the Internal Audit and Investigations Group for 2020 (DP/OPS/2021/2) and the management response;

18. Takes note of the significant progress made in implementation of audit recommendations;

19. *Takes note* of Internal Audit and Investigations Group compliance with international standards as confirmed in an external quality assessment of its investigation function;

20. *Takes note* of the opinion, based on the scope of work undertaken, on the adequacy and effectiveness of the organization's framework of governance, risk management and control (in line with Executive Board decision 2015/13);

21. *Takes note* of the annual report of the Audit Advisory Committee for 2020 (in line with Executive Board decision 2008/37).

11 June 2021

## 2021/12 Reports of the ethics offices of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the reports of the ethics offices of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS (DP/2021/15, DP/FPA/2021/7 and DP/OPS/2021/3);

2. *Notes* the progress made by the UNDP Ethics Office in strengthening the ethical culture of UNDP;

3. Welcomes the continued progress in the work of the UNFPA Ethics Office;

4. *Notes* the progress made by the UNOPS Ethics and Compliance Office in strengthening the ethical culture of UNOPS.

11 June 2021

## 2021/13

## Overview of decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its annual session 2021

The Executive Board

Recalls that during its annual session 2021, it:

## Item 1 Organizational matters

Adopted the agenda and approved the workplan for the annual session 2021 (DP/2021/L.2 and Corr.1);

Adopted the report of the first regular session 2021 (DP/2021/12);

## Joint segment

## Item2

## Update on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 72/279 on the repositioning of the United Nations development system

Took note of the update on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 72/279 on the repositioning of the United Nations development system;

## Item 3

## Internal audit and investigation

Adopted decision 2021/11 on the reports of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on internal audit and investigation, and management responses;

## Item 4

## Ethics

Adopted decision 2021/12 on the reports of the ethics offices of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS;

## Item 5

## Protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment

Took note of the presentations made by UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment;

## **UNDP** segment

## Item 6

## Annual report of the Administrator

Adopted decision 2021/4 on the cumulative review of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, and annual report of the Administrator for 2020;

## Item 7

## Gender equality at UNDP

Took note of the annual report on the implementation of the UNDP gender equality strategy, 2018-2021 (<u>DP/2021/17</u>);

## Item 8

## UNDP country programmes and related matters

Approved the following UNDP country programmes in accordance with decision 2014/7:

Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States: Armenia (DP/DCP/ARM/5);

Latin America and the Caribbean: Argentina (DP/DCP/ARG/4);

Approved the third, three-month extension of the country programme for Madagascar ( $\frac{DP/2021/18}{2}$ ) and the fifth, six-month extension of the country programme for the Syrian Arab Republic from 30 June to 31 December 2021 ( $\frac{DP/2021/18}{Add.1}$ );

Took note of the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for the Central African Republic, Chad, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mongolia, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia, already approved by the Administrator (<u>DP/2021/18</u>);

## Item 9 UNDP evaluation

Adopted decision 2021/5 on UNDP evaluation (covering the annual report on evaluation, the evaluation of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2018-2021 and the third joint Global Environment Facility-UNDP evaluation of the Small Grants Programme);

## Item 10

## **United Nations Capital Development Fund**

Adopted decision 2021/6 on the report on results achieved by the United Nations Capital Development Fund in 2020;

## Item 11

## **United Nations Volunteers**

Adopted decision 2021/7 on the United Nations Volunteers programme: Report of the Administrator;

## **UNFPA** segment

#### Item 12

## Annual report of the Executive Director

Adopted decision 2021/8 on the implementation of the UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2018-2021: Report of the Executive Director;

## Item 13 UNFPA evaluation

Adopted decision 2021/9 on UNFPA evaluation;

## Item 14

#### Country programmes and related matters

Approved the following UNFPA country programme in accordance with decision 2014/7:

Armenia (DP/FPA/CPD/ARM/4/Rev.1);

Approved the third, three-month extension of the country programme for Madagascar from 1 July through 30 September 2021 and the fifth, six-month extension of the country programme for the Syrian Arab Republic from 1 July through 31 December 2021 (DP/FPA/2021/3);

## **UNOPS** segment

## Item 15

## Annual report of the Executive Director

Adopted decision 2021/10 on the United Nations Office for Project Services.

11 June 2021

## TENTATIVE WORKPLAN EXECUTIVE BOARD OF UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS SECOND REGULAR SESSION 2021 (30 August – 2 September 2021, New York)

Day/date	Time	Item	Subject
Monday,	10 a.m1 p.m.	1	ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
30 August			<ul><li>Adoption of the agenda and workplan for the session</li><li>Adoption of the report of the annual session 2021</li></ul>
			UNDP segment
			INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE WITH THE UNDP ADMINISTRATOR
		2	UNDP STRATEGIC PLAN, 2022-2025
			• UNDP Strategic Plan, 2022-2025
	3 – 5 p.m.	3	<ul> <li>FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS         <ul> <li>UNDP integrated resources plan and integrated budget estimates, 2022-2025</li> <li>Report of the ACABQ on the UNDP integrated resources plan and integrated budget estimates, 2022-2025</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Tuesday, 31 August	10 a.m. – 1 p.m.		UNFPA segment
			STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
		6	UNFPA STRATEGIC PLAN, 2022-2025
			• UNFPA strategic plan, 2022-2025
	3 – 5 p.m.	7	FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
			<ul> <li>UNFPA integrated budget, 2022-2025</li> <li>Report of the ACABQ on the UNFPA integrated budget, 2022-2025</li> </ul>
Wednesday,	10 a.m. – 1 p.m.		UNOPS segment
1 September			STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
		10, 11	<ul> <li>UNOPS strategic plan, 2022-2025</li> <li>UNOPS budget estimates for the biennium 2022-2023</li> <li>Report of the ACABQ on the UNOPS budget estimates for the biennium 2022-2023</li> <li>Annual statistical report on the procurement activities of United Nations system organizations, 2020</li> </ul>
	3 – 5 p.m.		UNDP segment (cont'd)
		4	UNDP STRUCTURED FUNDING DIALOGUE
			<ul> <li>Structured dialogue on financing the results of the UNDP Strategic Plan</li> </ul>
			• Annual review of the financial situation of the United Nations Capital Development Fund, 2020

			UNFPA segment (cont'd)
		8	UNFPA STRUCTURED FUNDING DIALOGUE
			Report on the UNFPA structured funding dialogue 2020-2021
Thursday,	10 a.m. – 1 p.m.		UNFPA segment (cont'd)
2 September		9	UNFPA COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS
			<ul> <li>Presentation and approval of country programme documents</li> <li>Extensions of country programmes</li> </ul>
			UNDP segment (cont'd)
		5	UNDP COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS
			<ul><li>Presentation and approval of country programme documents</li><li>Extensions of country programmes</li></ul>
	3 – 4 p.m.	12	OTHER MATTERS
			• Adoption of pending decisions
		1	ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
			<ul> <li>Draft annual workplan of the Executive Board for 2022</li> <li>Adoption of the tentative workplan for the first regular session 2022</li> </ul>